

Children and Young People Safeguarding Policy

Protecting everyone under 18 who attends our workshops, performances, festivals or online activities, including young volunteers and youth leaders. Applies to all directors, staff, volunteers, contractors and delivery partners.

Version 1.1 | Approved effective 13 October 2026 | Document review 16 October 2026

Approval and effective date: 13 October 2026, as instructed by Marcia Marshall. Last document review and entry of authorised typed signatures: 16 October 2026. Next scheduled review: 13 October 2027, or sooner after a serious incident or relevant change. Record reference: LUL SG 2026 10 13, retained as an addendum to meeting minutes 01 of 15 October 2026.

Status: Approved. Implement the procedures, suitable staffing, training and checks before delivery. Approval does not itself confirm completed checks or training.

Safeguarding commitment

We will take concerns seriously, act promptly, respect people's dignity and challenge discrimination. Link Up & Live plans ongoing creative youth workshops in Thamesmead and South East London, including music production, sound engineering, DJing, dance and podcasting, supported by four community festivals each year. These procedures apply to activities in person, online and through partners.

Named safeguarding contacts

Child safeguarding lead: Kabichi Kabala (Ella), 07597 136755. Deputy: Marcia Marshall, 07902 950884. Adult safeguarding lead: Marcia Marshall, 07902 950884. Deputy: Kabichi Kabala (Ella), 07597 136755. Email for initial contact: info@linkupandlive.org.

Use direct telephone contact for urgent concerns and call 999 for immediate danger. The shared info@linkupandlive.org mailbox is for initial contact and is not an emergency or confidential case-record channel. Do not send detailed allegations, sensitive records or concerns about a mailbox user to that shared address. Contact an uninvolved lead or statutory services directly; keep case records in restricted storage accessible only to authorised, unconflicted people.

Kabichi Kabala (Ella) leads child safeguarding, with Marcia Marshall as deputy. Marcia Marshall leads adult safeguarding, with Kabichi Kabala (Ella) as deputy. These are the only designated leads and deputies. Each lead coordinates referrals, restricted records and follow-up in their area. Confirm trained cover and direct telephone access at every activity. Anyone may refer directly to statutory services without waiting for a director decision. Concerns about a lead go to an uninvolved deputy or directly to statutory services; conflicted people must not handle the case.

Immediate danger or urgent medical need: call 999 first. Anyone may contact police or social care directly; do not wait for a lead or board meeting.

Reporting concerns and responding to disclosures

- Make the person safe. Call 999 for immediate danger, serious injury or an urgent risk to life. Do not confront the alleged perpetrator.
- Listen calmly, take the person seriously and explain that you must share relevant information with people who can help. Do not promise secrecy, ask leading questions or investigate.
- Record the person's own words, date, time, location, observations and actions as soon as possible. Distinguish facts from opinion. Sign and date the record.
- Tell the DSL immediately, or the deputy if unavailable. Make a written record the same day. Urgent referrals must happen immediately; paperwork must not delay protection.
- If a lead is implicated, use the uninvolved safeguarding lead or appropriate external safeguarding service. If the organisation fails to act or all internal routes are conflicted, contact police, children's social care, adult social care or the LADO directly.
- The DSL seeks advice or refers to the appropriate local authority, records reasons and confirms receipt. If no response is received, chase promptly and use the authority's escalation route. Continued risk requires renewed contact, not closure by default.

Allegations against representatives

Report concerns about staff, volunteers, directors, contractors or partners immediately. Where a person may have harmed a child, committed a relevant offence, presented a risk to children or behaved in a way suggesting unsuitability, the uninvolved case manager contacts the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day, or sooner if urgent. Police and social care referrals are made alongside this where needed. Do not start substantive interviews or alert the accused before obtaining advice where doing so could prejudice protection or an investigation.

For harm to adults, seek adult social care and police advice as appropriate. Record lower-level boundary concerns too; review patterns and seek external advice where unsure. Put proportionate interim safeguards in place, including supervised duties, redeployment or suspension where justified. Resignation does not close the matter. Cooperate with agencies and make a DBS referral where the legal conditions are met. Support affected people and preserve fair treatment of the accused.

Confidentiality and escalation

Share only relevant information through secure channels with those who need it for protection. Explain sharing unless that increases risk. Record the purpose, lawful basis, recipient and reason for sharing or not sharing. Data protection does not prevent necessary safeguarding referrals. Ordinary complaints must not delay safeguarding action. A reporter may go directly to an external authority and will not be penalised for raising a genuine concern.

Safer recruitment and workforce safeguards

- Define each role, safeguarding duties, supervision, contact with children or adults and frequency before recruitment. Include safeguarding expectations in adverts and agreements.
- Use an application, identity verification, employment or volunteering history and explanation of gaps. Interview for suitability and safeguarding judgement. Obtain and verify two appropriate references, including a recent employer or volunteer supervisor where possible; resolve concerns before appointment.
- Check qualifications, eligibility to work where applicable and proportionate overseas checks for relevant periods abroad. Document decisions fairly and comply with equality and criminal-record filtering rules.
- Record the DBS eligibility assessment for the actual duties. Obtain Enhanced child-workforce DBS checks with Children's Barred List information for regulated activity; use Enhanced without barred-list information only where legally eligible. Do not request an ineligible check.
- From 1 September 2026, supervision does not exempt qualifying teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision from children's regulated activity when the frequency or overnight criteria are met. Assess weekly workshop roles accordingly using current DBS guidance.
- For adults, determine eligibility from duties, not age, disability or attendance at a family event. Where adult regulated activity applies, obtain the appropriate Enhanced and Adults' Barred List check. Public-facing roles do not automatically qualify.
- Inspect original certificates and verify identity. Use the Update Service only with consent and a compatible original certificate. No one starts regulated activity until required checks and suitability approval are complete. Unchecked visitors must not have sole charge or unapproved access.
- Record certificate number, level, workforce, barred-list status, check date and decision securely. Avoid routinely retaining certificate copies; where necessary, generally destroy within six months after the decision unless a justified exception applies. Reassess checks when duties change or concerns arise.

Training and support

Before work starts, all representatives receive induction on these policies, reporting, boundaries, online safety and inclusion, and sign an acknowledgement. Leads receive role-specific child and adult safeguarding training before appointment. Link Up & Live requires annual refreshers and updates after changes or incidents. Managers provide regular supervision, opportunities to raise concerns and debriefing after difficult incidents. Youth leaders under 18 remain children and must never replace responsible adults.

Supporting procedures: Read all three safeguarding policies together. Their recruitment, reporting, whistleblowing, complaints, anti-bullying, online safety, equality, data protection and activity safety procedures apply across the programme. The board must align any separate health and safety, complaints, equality and data protection policies with them before delivery.

Keeping young people safe during activities

Recognise physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, grooming, trafficking, domestic abuse, discriminatory harm and abuse between children. Warning signs can include fear of an adult, unexplained injuries, sudden withdrawal, unexplained gifts, sexualised behaviour or unsafe online contact. A single sign does not prove abuse; uncertainty is a reason to seek advice, not ignore concerns. Children experiencing racism, disability or communication barriers must receive equitable protection.

Supervision and safe delivery

For organised sessions Link Up & Live adopts minimum ratios of one checked and suitable adult to six children aged 4–8, one to eight aged 9–12 and one to ten aged 13–17, with at least two suitable adults present. These are organisational baselines informed by NSPCC recommendations, not universal legal ratios. Increase staffing for additional needs, outings, hazards, mixed ages or difficult layouts. Under-18 youth leaders never count as adults. Provision for under-4s or regulated childcare requires a separate assessment before being offered.

- Register attendance, emergency contacts, medical needs and authorised collection arrangements. Agree written independent travel permission where appropriate. Maintain headcounts, arrival and departure records and a plan for late or uncollected children; do not leave a child alone.
- Risk-assess venues, equipment, sound levels, exits, toilets, dance spaces and public access. Provide first aid, accessible facilities and individual support plans. Adults covering toilets or first aid must not leave the remaining group below safe staffing.
- Keep one-to-one work visible and authorised, with another adult nearby and a recorded purpose. Do not meet children privately at home, provide personal gifts, favouritism or use private messaging. Physical contact must be necessary, appropriate and explained; no humiliating punishment.
- Agree a behaviour code: respect others, no bullying, discriminatory language, sexual harassment, violence or sharing private material. Address child-on-child harm through safety planning and support for all involved; never dismiss it as banter.
- For a missing child alert the event lead immediately, check safe locations and exits, contact carers where safe and call police promptly according to risk. Do not impose a waiting period. Record search actions and arrange a review.

If a parent may pose a risk, or collection is disputed, seek DSL and statutory advice before releasing the child. Notify parents about concerns unless this may increase danger or impede an investigation; consult social care or police. Do not mediate alleged abuse.

Online safety media and youth participation

Digital workshops and communication

Use organisation-approved accounts and platforms with privacy and moderation controls. Communicate through agreed organisational channels, including parent or carer arrangements where appropriate. No disappearing messages, personal friend requests or private late-night chats. Set safe session rules and an escalation plan for online bullying, grooming, threats or harmful content. Ensure young people know how to leave, mute or report. Preserve account names, dates and relevant messages safely; do not investigate or circulate material.

If sexual images of a child are suspected, do not ask to see them, download them, screenshot them or share them. Record the nature and location of the concern and obtain police and DSL advice. Take immediate steps to stop further exposure without handling illegal images.

Photography filming podcasts and performances

Before recording, explain the purpose, audience, storage and planned publication. Obtain specific written parent or carer permission and the child's agreement where appropriate. Respect a child's refusal even if an adult consents. Separate participation permission from publicity permission so a child is not excluded from activities because they decline images. Check for safeguarding restrictions and never reveal home addresses, schools, live location or sensitive family information.

Only authorised photographers use approved equipment. Obtain separate approval for livestreaming and media interviews, moderate comments and avoid unsupervised access. Use age-appropriate podcast topics; do not invite disclosures of trauma for content. Preview recordings before publication. Explain withdrawal arrangements and the limits of retrieving material already shared publicly. Never publish a fabricated youth endorsement or present generated images as actual participants.

Festivals and youth leadership

A named safeguarding lead and deputy must be contactable throughout each festival. Set clearly staffed youth performance and workshop zones, controlled backstage access, a lost-child point, safe collection and accessible reporting signs. Public attendees and vendors must not gain unsupervised access to youth areas. Separate parent-supervised attendance from booked activities where the CIC accepts supervision. Obtain consent and check any child performance licensing or chaperone requirements before performances.

Older teenagers can learn leadership skills through supervised roles. Give them clear limits, breaks and a named adult mentor. They must not manage disclosures, investigate concerns, provide intimate care or take sole charge of younger participants. Apply the family policy for adult participants and the workforce policy for personnel conduct.

Records governance and implementation

Safeguarding records are held separately from general attendance and personnel records in an encrypted access-controlled system or locked cabinet. Access is restricted to authorised leads and case managers, with a named substitute for absence. Use secure transfer; do not store case files in personal messaging accounts, shared family devices or general event folders. Maintain an access and referral log and a secure backup.

The retention schedule in section 6 of the Supporting safeguarding policies and procedures pack, version 1.1, is approved with effect from 13 October 2026 and forms part of this policy. Apply the category-specific review points and documented preservation holds. There is no universal statutory retention period for all safeguarding files. Record lawful reasons for extensions, consider specialist and insurer advice, and securely delete or anonymise only when the documented need ends.

Safeguarding concern record

Complete a separate secure record for each concern. Record: reporter and contact; person at risk and age; safe contact details; parent or carer details where appropriate; date, time and place; exact disclosure; observations and injuries without intrusive examination; alleged person and role; immediate action; consent or wishes; information shared and reasons; authority contacted and reference; advice received; follow-up owner and deadline; outcome and closure reason. Sign and date each entry; do not overwrite earlier entries.

Implementation before delivery

- Complete and confirm all named leads, direct contacts and independent reporting arrangements. Train leads and ensure absence cover.
- Approve the scope, session ages, staffing, risk assessments, checks and recruitment process. Complete vetting and induction before allocating duties.
- Approval record LUL SG 2026 10 13 incorporates the Link Up & Live CIC Supporting safeguarding policies and procedures pack, version 1.1, approved effective 13 October 2026. Its sections 1 to 13 form part of this policy, including retention and supervision ratios. Section 12 requires two suitable adults minimum and ratios of 1:6 for ages 4 to 8, 1:8 for ages 9 to 12 and 1:10 for ages 13 to 17; increase staffing where the risk assessment requires it.
- Publish an accessible summary and reporting contacts on the website and at sessions. Provide versions suitable for children, families and staff.
- Brief partners and vendors; make reporting routes, responsibilities and safeguarding conditions part of their agreements.
- Test the reporting route and maintain a log of training, checks, policy acknowledgements and review actions.

The board reviews this policy at least annually and sooner after a serious incident, new risk, material legal change or concern about effectiveness. Review includes feedback, anonymised themes, recruitment, training and partner compliance. Serious incidents are reported to police, social care, DBS, insurers and funders as required by law or agreement. CIC status alone does not create a Charity Commission serious-incident reporting duty.

Approval and acknowledgement

Marcia Marshall — Director and adult lead — typed signature: Marcia Marshall

Kabichi Kabala (Ella) — Director and child lead — typed signature: Kabichi Kabala

Approved effective 13 October 2026. Authorised typed signatures entered 16 October 2026 on Marcia Marshall's instruction; not independently authenticated digital signatures.

External contacts and reference guidance

Contact details checked against the sources below on 8 October 2026. The DSL must recheck them before adoption and before each new delivery location. Do not rely on email for urgent danger. Thamesmead spans boroughs: check where the person lives and where harm occurred; the receiving authority can advise and coordinate. Never delay urgent contact while deciding borough responsibility.

Emergency and national support

Police or ambulance emergency: 999. Police non-emergency: 101. Childline: 0800 1111. NSPCC safeguarding advice: 0808 800 5000. National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247. Helplines support people but do not replace statutory referrals.

Bexley

Children's MASH: 020 3045 5440. Out of hours: 020 8303 7777 or 020 8303 7171. LADO: use the official referral form via bexleysafeguardingpartnership.co.uk and send to LADO@bexley.gov.uk; MASH can route urgent queries. Adult concerns: screeners@bexley.gov.uk or 020 8303 7777; the council's general contact page also lists 020 3045 5159 for adult screeners. Confirm the preferred direct route when adopting; use the council main number for out-of-hours routing.

Greenwich

Children's MASH: 020 8921 3172; MASH-referrals@royalgreenwich.gov.uk. Out of hours: 020 8854 8888. LADO: 020 8921 3930; childrens-LADO@royalgreenwich.gov.uk. Adult concerns: contact Adult Social Care via 020 8921 2304; out of hours 020 8854 8888. Confirm the current adult referral form and secure submission route before adoption.

Framework and sources

Children Act 1989 and 2004; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026; Care Act 2014 and its statutory guidance; Mental Capacity Act 2005; Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended; Equality Act 2010; UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 as amended; applicable local safeguarding partnership procedures. School-specific guidance does not automatically apply to a community CIC.

London Community Foundation checklist

<https://londoncf.org.uk/apply/lcfs-safeguarding-checklist>

NSPCC policies and procedures

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement>

NSPCC responding to abuse

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse>

NSPCC supervision ratios

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/recommended-adult-child-ratios-working-with-children>

Government child safeguarding guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

Government DBS eligibility and referrals

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dbs-eligibility-guidance>

Local children's contacts

<https://www.londonscp.org.uk/contacts/childrens-safeguarding-contacts-london>