

Safeguarding Policy - online activities



The scope of this policy:

This document is an addition to, and should be read in conjunction with, Learn to Love to Read's (L2L2R) safeguarding policy. It specifically covers online activities which were initially developed in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and remain a key feature of our work. L2L2R has developed an online version of our one-to-one reading support using video conferencing software (Zoom). We are also running preschool classes and parent training using this same software.

L2L2R takes the safeguarding of the children and families it works with, and of its staff and volunteers, extremely seriously. We believe that children should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

This policy applies to all staff, including the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of L2L2R.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children who receive L2L2R's services via video conferencing.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection online.

Contact details

Designated safeguarding lead

Teresa Harris

teresa@learn2love2read.org.uk

Deputy safeguarding lead

Anna Culwick

anna@learn2love2read.org.uk

Designated safeguarding trustee

Wendy Livingstone

safeguarding@learn2love2read.org.uk

The designated safeguarding lead and deputy and the designated safeguarding trustee have received safeguarding training, either from Wandsworth Council or the NSPCC.

Anyone who wishes to report a safeguarding incident about a member of L2L2R staff or one of our volunteers should use the email address specifically set up for this purpose:

safeguarding@learn2love2read.org.uk.

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Safer staff and volunteers

Training

All existing in-school volunteers wishing to take part in virtual reading sessions will receive additional safeguarding training prior to starting. This will include a refresher on L2L2R's safeguarding policy and the latest policies set out by the relevant partner organisations and the government as appropriate. They must declare these documents have been read and understood by completing an online survey.

All new volunteers must undertake L2L2R's full safeguarding training as stated in L2L2R's safeguarding policy, as well as undergoing an enhanced DBS check. They must declare these documents have been read and understood by completing an online survey.

All staff members and volunteers will have online access to L2L2R's safeguarding policies, the Department for Education's '*Keeping Children Safe in Education*' document and the NSPCC Signs and Definitions of Abuse. This information will include details of steps to take if a staff member or volunteer is concerned.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF

Additions for online work

L2L2R's volunteer and staff code of conduct outlined in the safeguarding policy applies in the same way when working online with children.

The following additions have been made for online working via video conferencing:

THINGS TO DO:

- Ensure your background while video conferencing is neutral and avoids displaying personal information such as family photographs.
- Ensure you show your L2L2R lanyard to confirm your identity
- Use L2L2R's Zoom accounts when sending invitations and running online reading sessions
- Ensure your location is quiet and interruption-free
- Ensure your phone is on silent and not in view
- Only communicate via agreed channels
- Only contact families at the agreed time
- Report allegations or suspicions of abuse following L2L2R's reporting procedures

THINGS TO AVOID:

- Do not use personal Zoom accounts to contact families
- Do not record virtual reading sessions unless agreed in writing beforehand with all parties
- Do not allow concerns or allegations to go unreported

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Keeping children safe online

L2L2R is committed to keeping children safe during its virtual reading sessions. Parents/carers will first be approached about taking part in the sessions by their children's school or by another partner organisation. We will only instigate contact when parents/carers have consented to their contact information being shared with L2L2R.

All parents/carers are required to give L2L2R their consent for virtual volunteering via an online form before children can take part in a session. The consent form sets out our expectations and how we aim to safeguard children during these sessions.

We ask parents/carers to agree that:

- A parent or carer must be visible to the volunteer at all times during the session
- Children must be in a suitable space (ideally sitting room or kitchen, not bedroom) where they can see and hear the volunteer clearly
- Children should be suitably dressed in appropriate daywear (no night clothes)
- Children under 16 are not allowed to set up their own Zoom account
- Volunteers will only contact parents and children at the agreed times
- Volunteers should not be invited to Zoom meetings by parents or children
- Parents/carers understand that Zoom collects data from users (www.zoom.us/privacy)
- L2L2R will store contact details in order to contact parents about their child's reading support

Reporting online safeguarding concerns

- As outlined in L2L2R's safeguarding policy, volunteers will need to share any concerns with L2L2R's designated safeguarding lead.
- Volunteers must report the incident to L2L2R's designated safeguarding lead **immediately**. L2L2R designated safeguarding lead will then decide whether any information needs to be shared with the child's school. If necessary a volunteer may need to respond personally to any questions the school may have.
- All incidents are documented in our confidential Safeguarding Report document. This document is intended to ensure that correct procedures were followed and to highlight any further action required on our part.
- **Do not** discuss the incident with anyone else.
If the incident has merited reporting to a child's school, within one week L2L2R will check with the designated safeguarding lead at the relevant partner school that appropriate follow up action has been taken.