

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

SENbetweeners Hub UK

Version: 1.0

Date: June 2026

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Applicable to: All staff, volunteers, trustees, associates, partners, and users of SENbetweeners Hub UK.

Compliance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025), Working Together to Safeguard Children, Children Act 2004/2023, SEND Code of Practice 2015, Ofsted and DfE statutory guidance.

1. Policy Statement

SENbetweeners Hub UK exists to support children, young people, and families with undiagnosed, hidden, or emerging Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We prioritise the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of all children and young people we engage with, especially those with SEN/SEMH who may be more vulnerable to harm, neglect, or missed support.

We commit to:

- Working to prevent harm before it occurs.
- Acting promptly and appropriately if concerns arise.
- Following all UK statutory guidance and local authority procedures.
- Creating a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for all.

2. Key Definitions

- **Child/Young Person:** Anyone under the age of 18, including those with or without formal SEND diagnoses or Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

- **SENbetweeners:** Children and young people with unmet, undiagnosed, or emerging needs who fall outside official SEND registers.
- **Safeguarding:** Protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- **Significant Harm:** Ill-treatment or impairment of health or development (including physical, intellectual, emotional, social, or behavioural development) that is severe or persistent.

3. Statutory & Regulatory Framework

This policy aligns with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989, 2004 & 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2025)
- SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures

4. Safeguarding Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- **Role:** Lead point of contact for all safeguarding concerns.
- **Responsibilities:**
 - Receive, record, and escalate all concerns.
 - Liaise with Local Authority Children's Services, police, and health professionals.
 - Arrange safeguarding training for the team.
 - Maintain up-to-date policy and procedures.
 - Act as a source of advice and support for staff and volunteers.

4.2 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Covers the DSL when they are unavailable.
- Shares the same authority and reporting duties as the DSL.

4.3 All Staff & Volunteers

- Understand this policy and act in line with it at all times.
- Recognise signs of abuse, neglect, or vulnerability.
- Report any concern immediately—no matter how small—to the DSL.
- Maintain professional boundaries with children, young people, and families.
- Complete mandatory safeguarding training every 2 years.

5. Recognising Signs of Harm (SEN/SEMH Specific)

Young people with hidden or undiagnosed needs may show different or misunderstood signs of risk. We remain vigilant for:

- **Changes in behaviour:** Withdrawal, aggression, regression, or emotional outbursts.
- **Attendance issues:** Unexplained absences, poor attendance, or sudden disengagement.
- **Wellbeing:** Deterioration in mental health, self-esteem, or self-care.
- **Neglect:** Unmet basic needs including food, warmth, and safety.
- **Communication:** Delays or changes in communication or social interaction.
- **Social factors:** Exclusion or isolation from peers and support networks.

Note: Behaviour linked to undiagnosed SEN/SEMH must never be mistaken for "bad behaviour"—it may be a sign of unmet need or risk.

6. Reporting Procedure

6.1 Immediate Action

- **Do not investigate yourself:** This is the role of trained professionals.
- **Listen carefully:** Reassure the young person but do not promise secrecy.
- **Record accurately:** Write down exactly what was said, seen, or heard. Include facts, dates, times, people involved, and your own observations.
- **Report:** Notify the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately.

6.2 Escalation Flowchart

1. **Concern raised:** Report immediately to DSL/Deputy.
2. **Assessment:** DSL assesses the concern and consults LSCP guidance.
3. **Harm/Danger:** If there is a risk of harm, refer to Local Authority Children's Social Care within 24 hours. Contact the police if there is immediate danger.
4. **Unmet Needs:** If the issue is an unmet SEN/SEMH need, signpost the family to local SEND services, education welfare, or health teams.
5. **Record Keeping:** All referrals and actions are recorded and followed up to ensure a resolution.

7. Online Safety & Digital Safeguarding

Given our online hub and digital resources, we maintain strict digital safety standards:

- We do not share personal data of young people without explicit consent or a clear legal basis.
- All communications via the hub are transparent and supervised.
- We actively monitor our platforms for inappropriate content or contact.
- We provide guidance to families on safe internet use, especially for vulnerable users.
- We comply fully with UK GDPR and data protection rules.

8. Safer Recruitment

To ensure the safety of our community:

- All staff and volunteers working with children or young people must undergo enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Professional references are taken and verified before any appointment.
- Specific safeguarding questions are an integral part of all recruitment interviews.
- Mandatory safeguarding training must be completed before any work commences.

9. Confidentiality & Information Sharing

- Information is shared only where there is a clear need to protect a child.
- We follow the principle: "Share what you need to, with those who need to know."
- We comply with UK GDPR and statutory guidance on sharing information for the purposes of safeguarding.

10. Training & Review

- All team members must complete Level 1/2 Safeguarding and SEN/SEMH Awareness training.
- The DSL must hold current Level 3 Safeguarding Lead Training.
- This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation changes or a significant concern arises.

11. Contact Details

Role	Name / Organization	Contact Information
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Chris Ineson	07386179410
NSPCC Helpline	National	0808 800 5000
Childline	National	0800 1111