

KeshetUK Safeguarding Children Policy

Policy Code	K08
Drafted by	Alma Reisel with support from Dalia Fleming. Updated by Robin Moss
Version	1.3
Approved by board on	18 June 2024
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Notes	<i>This policy will override the K01 Safeguarding Policy for Children's Safeguarding. K01 will still be relevant for Adults until it's updated fully (Starting a different policy code as the safeguarding policy will be split between children and adults)</i>

KeshetUK works so no one is forced to choose between their LGBT+ and Jewish identity. We are the only charity in the UK working with Jewish schools, youth and young adult organisations, synagogues, and wider community organisations about the importance of LGBT+ inclusion through training and education.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework

(Definition provided by Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2023)

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of KeshetUK including staff, the Board of Trustees, volunteers¹, sessional workers and anyone representing KeshetUK. This policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children and young people who come into contact with KeshetUK
- to provide staff and volunteers with the principles and procedures that guide our approach to child protection.

Legislation:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England including:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE) 2023

¹ From this point, in this document all references to volunteers includes trustees.

- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners (DfE 2015)

A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from

<http://nspcc.org.uk/childprotection>

Charity Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from or working with their charity are not harmed in any way through contact with it. This policy has been approved and endorsed by the Board of Trustees.

Values:

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

For KeshetUK this means ...

1. Setting out clear **roles and responsibilities** for safeguarding including appointing a nominated safeguarding lead among the staff team, deputy safeguarding lead, and a lead trustee for safeguarding.
2. Developing **safeguarding policies and procedures** for identifying and reporting concerns or suspected cases of abuse or neglect, which reflect best practice.
3. Ensuring staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and understanding of safeguarding through induction and **training**.
4. Ensuring that KeshetUK practises **safe recruitment** in checking the suitability of staff, freelancers and volunteers to have contact with children.
5. Ensuring services are provided in **safe environments** and that sufficient safeguards are in place.
6. Using our procedures to **manage any allegations** against staff and volunteers appropriately.

1. Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and Child Protection Responsibilities are set out as follows:

- Trustees are accountable for KeshetUK and therefore all safeguarding within the organisation and will receive annual reports on safeguarding. Safeguarding will also be a standing item for trustee board meetings to

ensure that there is a prompt to both staff and trustees to remain up to date on any safeguarding concerns within KeshetUK's work.

- Trustees will promote awareness of our safeguarding approach through making this policy available through our website and stating that failure to follow it will be dealt with as a very serious matter. Safeguarding activities will be detailed in annual reports to charity commission
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is accountable to Trustees for safeguarding within KeshetUK and will ensure a clear framework for the management accountability for safeguarding is in operation.
- All safeguarding concerns within KeshetUK will be reported to the DSL (unless they are concerning the DSL in which case the named trustee for safeguarding will be responsible).
- The DSL will coordinate with partner agencies such as schools should concerns arise within their contexts and make referrals where necessary. The DSL will report to trustees on safeguarding concerns and keep a log of any referrals made.
- The DSL is also responsible for ensuring that all staff and volunteers are trained in the basic principles of safeguarding, are aware of this policy and implement it in their work.
- The DSL will stay abreast of developments on safeguarding best practice, advise on changes to policy and practice and coordinate Safeguarding reporting.
- All staff are required to read KeshetUK Safeguarding Policy and to know their responsibilities in their role and to provide signed confirmation of this on the Induction checklist.
- Staff and volunteers should be able to identify signs of abuse and know how to report concerns. This will be included in volunteer inductions.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Dalia Fleming – Executive Director.

Contact: dalia@keshetuk.org
07843 833 303

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Sarah Bronzite – Head of Education.

Contact: Sarah@keshetuk.org
07565 375 462

The named Trustee for safeguarding is Robin Moss

Contact: Robin@keshetuk.org
07939 660 073

2. Child protection procedures

KeshetUK staff and volunteers frequently come into contact with children and young people in schools and youth groups, and due to the nature of our work, sometimes discuss sensitive subjects.

As a rule of thumb, staff and volunteers should not need to have one-to-one unmediated/unsupervised contact with children, nor be the only adult(s) in a room/group of children, in the course of their duties. Whenever a visit to a client organisation is arranged, a staff member or volunteer from that organisation should accompany the KeshetUK staff member/volunteer throughout the visit.

If for whatever reason the KeshetUK staff member/volunteer does find themselves in one-to-one unmediated/unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults, they should:

- 1) Take common-sense, safe actions to remove themselves from that situation as quickly as possible (though if that would itself cause more potential harm to the children, they should consider a short delay)
- 2) Take simple measures to minimise the risk of an allegation being made against them (eg keeping a door open, opening curtains/blinds, never (except for safety reasons) having physical contact with children, standing in the doorway of the room (when we know there is CCTV in the corridor) to make yourself visible to others at all times.

Except in an emergency, or if instructed to by a responsible authority, KeshetUK staff/volunteers should never have children or vulnerable adults in their car.

In general, when visiting a client organisation, their Safeguarding Policy and procedures should be adhered to at all times.

Staff and volunteers will sometimes observe directly, infer from statements made or hear information that raises concerns about a child's welfare. Information related to what is abuse and neglect and what could cause concern are detailed at the end of this policy document.

If a representative of KeshetUK has any concerns about a child or young person, they will do the following:

- If you suspect a child or young person is in immediate danger or is at immediate risk of harm, you should contact the police by calling 999 without delay.
- In all other situations:
 - when at a host organisation, share anything concerning with a professional there at the time if possible, and
 - report concerns to the designated safeguarding lead on the same day and make a written, dated note which the DSL will keep.

- They can also use this form to write more detail:
<https://bit.ly/KeshetUKSafeguardingForm>
- The DSL will decide if consultation with either the host organisation (ie. school, youth movement) or a local authority children's services is required and seek advice if they are unsure. In most cases, any relevant information will be passed to the host organisation, and referrals will be made by the host organisation (ie. school, synagogue, youth movement).
- KeshetUK's DSL will ensure that in addition to verbally updating the host organisation within 1 day of any concerns, all discussion are written up and included in an email to the host organisation all within 1 week.
- If it is necessary for KeshetUK to make a referral this will be done by the DSL / deputy DSL. Parental consent will usually be sought unless this would increase the risk of harm to the child. Referrals are made to the local authority in which the child lives. Referrals will be made within 1 working day of KeshetUK becoming aware of a concern. In urgent situations, out of office hours the referral should be made to the Emergency Duty/Out of Hours Team of the relevant Local Authority.
- Where a concern is raised but it does not meet a threshold for a referral, appropriate signposting may be done to organisations that provide children and families with support, such as registered counsellors or phone support lines.
- The phone number of the DSL or deputy is available whenever staff or volunteers are doing work for KeshetUK, however, should there be a situation where a volunteer is unable to reach the DSL and is worried about a child, they should share directly with the host organisation and can contact the local children's services themselves should this be necessary.
- Should a volunteer or staff member disagree with the DSL's decision not to refer a concern, they can refer directly to a Local Authority themselves.
- The DSL will record actions taken from any reported incidents in an internal document.

Where available the following information should be given at the time of referring, although the absence of information should not delay referrals:

- Full names, dates of birth and gender of the child/ren
- Family address
- Names of persons with parental responsibility
- Names and dates of birth of all household members
- Ethnicity, first language and religion of children and parents/carers
- Any need for an interpreter, signer or other communication aid
- Any known significant recent or historical incidents in the child or family's life
- The cause for concern including details of any allegations, their sources, timing and location
- The child's current location and emotional and physical condition

- The referrer's relationship and knowledge of the child and parents/carers
- Any known current or previous involvement of other agencies or professionals
- Information regarding the parental knowledge of and agreement to the referral.

The referrer should confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing within 48 hours. If Children's Social Care has not acknowledged receipt of this within three working days, the referrer should contact them again.

Online contact with children or young people

KeshetUK has professional Instagram, Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Should a child or young person contact a volunteer or staff member on their personal accounts, they should be directed to use the professional accounts, and the DSL informed within one working day. Given the nature of the Jewish community, there may sometimes be personal or familial connections between young people we work with and volunteers or staff. Any communication with young people in relation to KeshetUK's work should be discussed with the DSL. KeshetUK staff and volunteers should err on the side of caution in this respect, and contact the DSL if they have any questions or concerns.

Should a child or young person raise something concerning with KeshetUK staff via an online channel the following actions will be taken:

- The DSL should be informed within one day. (If a child is at immediate danger call 999)
- The DSL will log all concerns and refer on to the relevant Local Authority (where the child lives) if necessary

The DSL will keep in a safe place a written record of all safeguarding concerns including:

- Discussions with the child
- Discussions with the parent
- Discussions with staff / volunteers
- Discussions with host organisation
- Any information provided to Local Authority
- Decisions taken (clearly timed, dated and signed)

3. Training

The DSL is responsible for ensuring all staff and volunteers are trained to the levels outlined below:

- The DSL, deputy and named trustee for safeguarding will attend an advanced safeguarding training / refresher training at least once every three years.
- All other staff working with children will attend a Level 1 safeguarding training or refresher training within three months of starting and then refresh it at least every three years

- All other staff and trustees will attend introductory safeguarding training within three months of starting and then at least every three years. This may be delivered by the DSL or a sufficiently knowledgeable volunteer.
- All staff and volunteers will be introduced to the basics of safeguarding as part of their training and induction. This may be delivered by the DSL or a sufficiently knowledgeable volunteer.

4. Safe recruitment

Staff and volunteers

KeshetUK will ensure that thorough checks are made prior to appointment of staff, volunteers and freelance consultants, in order to prevent a person using their position to harm a child.

For all posts at KeshetUK the following vetting checks are carried out prior to confirming the appointment:

- a self-disclosure form to disclose previous spent/unspent convictions and disciplinary or capability procedures. This can be found here: <https://bit.ly/KeshetUKSelfDisclosure>
- Identity documents including photographic identity.
- References (including a professional reference) if relevant.
- Proof of right to work in the UK where relevant.
- Qualification certificates if required for the role.
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if eligible. All staff appointments (and volunteers) to posts involving regular direct work with children will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS, and agreement to re-check every year.
- As our school sessions are very spaced out across the year, it means the majority of our volunteers do not volunteer with us regularly enough to be eligible for an Enhanced DBS check. All volunteers that aren't eligible for an Enhanced DBS check, as our DBS policy states, will agree to a Basic DBS check

Volunteers and freelance consultants working with children will complete a self-disclosure form to disclose previous spent/unspent convictions and will always be supervised by a member of staff / volunteer or a professional from within the schools who is DBS checked when in contact with children and young people. This is in-line with our DBS policy.

KeshetUK ensures new staff and volunteers into the organisation complete an induction. As part of the induction, the staff and volunteers must read all relevant policies, and understand their personal responsibilities within these, and any training needs are identified and addressed.

5. Safe Environments

In order to ensure that children's safety paramount in all KeshetUK activities the following procedures are in place:

- All staff and volunteers to have a good basic understanding of safeguarding, know who to contact should they be worried and what to look out for.
- KeshetUK staff and volunteers will not be alone with children during activities.
- When visiting schools, a teacher or other school staff member will be present at all times.
- All staff and volunteers are expected to be familiar with the code of conduct², which is included in their induction, and adhere to it.
- KeshetUK will ensure that where we are the host of an event, the environment where activities are delivered has been risk-assessed to minimise risk to children. Should staff or volunteers attend an environment of another organisation that they deem unsafe, they will report this to the host organisation and to KeshetUK's DSL and consideration to suspending the activity will be given.
- KeshetUK will only use images, attributable quotations or case studies when informed consent is given in advance.
- All staff and volunteers will be made aware of the NSPCC's whistleblowing advice line 0800 028 0285.
- An annual audit of safeguarding concerns will be undertaken by the safeguarding trustee, considering action taken, staff training and support. The safeguarding policy and procedures will be reviewed every two years or in the light of significant changes to best practice or legislation.

Meetings with individual young people

At KeshetUK, there may be times where staff need to enter an individual's home for example to meet an adult such as a rabbi or community leader who for whatever reason does not wish to meet in public. There would not usually be any safeguarding issues in that situation, as they are non-vulnerable adults.

In exceptionally rare moments, KeshetUK may be asked by an adult connected with a young person – such as a parent, or teacher - to talk with that young person either in person or on a video call.

KeshetUK does not offer individual support for young people or adults, but where necessary can offer on an individual basis the same content and approach we would offer in an education or training session. Content could include a staff member sharing their own story and answering questions about LGBT+ topics or KeshetUK's work, or signposting towards publicly available resources as well as giving the young person an opportunity to talk about their own experiences. We will make it clear that this conversation would not be for a therapeutic purpose or counselling.

If this request happens, the DSL will:

- weigh up appropriateness of age development,
- risk and
- nature of the request.

² [Staff Code of Conduct can be found here.](#) And [Volunteer Code of Conduct can be found here.](#)

In the first instance, the DSL will suggest signposting to other organisations or individuals. If despite this a conversation is thought to still be required, we will put safeguards in place.

In all situations:

- All requests for meetings with individual young people should be approved by the DSL
- There must be written consent from a parent/guardian before any individual conversation with a young person;
- KeshetUK must ensure that an adult representative from the requesting organisation and/or a parent/guardian of the young person is visibly present (either in person, or on a video call) throughout the conversation;
- At least one KeshetUK staff member must be present throughout the conversation, accompanied by an additional staff member where the DSL decides this is required, along with any volunteers as appropriate;
- If any point the parent/guardian/professional adult isn't visibly present, or if any KeshetUK representative present has concerns about the safety or appropriateness of the conversation, then the conversation must end, and the KeshetUK representatives must leave the room or video call;
- If the meeting is happening in a private home then another KeshetUK staff member or Trustee who is not present must be aware of where the KeshetUK representatives are, the time they are arriving and informed when they leave the home;
- All KeshetUK representatives present will debrief with the DSL afterwards within two working days.

6. Complaints or allegations made against staff/volunteers

KeshetUK takes seriously all complaints made against staff/volunteers in accordance with our complaints procedure. All complaints related to safeguarding will be brought to the immediate attention of the DSL who will report it to the Trustees. If the DSL is the subject of an allegation report direct to the named trustee for safeguarding.

It is the personal and professional responsibility of all volunteers / staff to report any concerns about professionals or volunteers working with children or young people that involve individuals:

- behaving in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child or young person;
- committing a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or young person; or
- behaving towards a child or young person, or groups of children and young people in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The guidance in this policy should also be applied where such concerns arise in the context of a professional's or volunteer's personal life.

The DSL or any person connected to KeshetUK can also seek advice at any time from the NSPCC helpline – help@nspcc.org.uk or **0808 800 5000**. The NSPCC can help make a determination on what action is required.

When informed of a concern or allegation, the DSL should not investigate the matter or interview the member of staff, child concerned or potential witnesses. They should:

- Obtain written details of the concern / allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving (not the child / adult making the allegation);
- Approve and date the written details;
- Record any information about times, dates and location of incident/s and names of any potential witnesses;
- Record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.
- The DSL must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) of any allegation in the relevant local authority area where the professional or volunteer works within one working day. For concerns relating to KeshetUK volunteers the DSL will seek advice from the Camden Council LADO 020 7974 6999.
- If an allegation requires immediate attention, but is received outside normal office hours, the DSL should consult the relevant Local Authority Children's Social Care emergency duty team or local police and inform the LADO as soon as possible.
- At the earliest opportunity, the DSL should seek advice from the Camden LADO, the police and / or Local Authority Children's Social Care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person. The LADO will provide further instructions about meetings and arrangements after being notified, which will be followed by the KeshetUK. If the LADO determines that the allegation does not meet their threshold for involvement, there may still be disciplinary matters that the KeshetUK will consider with the Trustees.
- Confidentiality must apply throughout the process and information must only be shared within the KeshetUK on need to know basis.

7. Appendix: What is child abuse and neglect

The first step is to be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, to have read this policy and to understand the procedures set out within it. Being alert to signs of abuse and neglect requires regular training and a culture of safeguarding being discussed as part of normal business in KeshetUK

It is not the job of volunteers or trustees in the KeshetUK to decide whether a child or young person has been abused. Neither is it the role of the KeshetUK to investigate any disclosures, allegations or information about harm or abuse of children and young people that they are made aware of. It is, however, the responsibility of all staff and volunteers (as representatives of KeshetUK) to report any concerns that suggest a child or young person has been abused, is at risk of being abused or that their welfare may be compromised.

Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Abuse and neglect can happen over a period of time but can also be a one-off event. Child abuse and neglect can have major long-term impacts on all aspects of a child's health, development and wellbeing. The warning signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect can vary from child to child. Disabled children may be especially vulnerable to abuse, including because they may have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse.

There are four main categories of abuse and neglect: **physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect**. Each has its own specific warning indicators, which you should be alert to. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) statutory guidance sets out full descriptions. Definitions below are taken from this guidance.

The definitions and indicators are not meant to be definitive but only to serve as a guide to assist you and so that you can seek further advice. It is important too, to remember that many children and young people may exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and that the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

There may well be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death in their family, or the birth of a new baby, relationship problems between their parents/carers etc. In assessing whether indicators are related to abuse or not, those assessing will always want to understand them in relation to the child's development and context.

Physical Abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries;
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones; and
- Children with unexplained: bruises or cuts; burns, scalds or bite marks.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not

giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong;
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder';
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child; and
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Child Sexual Abuse and Child Sexual Exploitation

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age;
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have;
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games; and
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for

the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends;
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant;
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- Children who regularly miss school or education or don't take part in education.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: a. provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) b. protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger c. ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers) d. ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

It is important to remember that neglect is not simply confined to "poor parents". Neglect can also happen in families that are affluent and this needs to be considered during all interventions.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe;
- Children who are left hungry or dirty;
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat;
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence;