INCLUSIVE LEARNING SUPPORT (ILS)

PUBLIC WEBSITE SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Protecting children and young people • Promoting welfare • Safe, inclusive and person-centred support

Organisation	Inclusive Learning Support (ILS)
Registered Office	Aylesham, Kent
Email	info@ils-kent.co.uk
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This is the public-facing version of the ILS Safeguarding & Child Protection Handbook. It explains our safeguarding commitments and key arrangements without publishing confidential case records, internal forms or staff-only operational procedures.

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Document status

The source handbook states that safeguarding is embedded within every aspect of ILS work, from recruitment and training to everyday interactions with children, families and partner agencies. This public version is designed for parents/carers, children and young people, schools, local authorities, professionals and other stakeholders who need a clear overview of ILS safeguarding arrangements.

The full handbook remains the controlled internal document for detailed staff procedures, decision pathways, recording requirements and operational guidance.

1. Purpose, Scope and Safeguarding Commitment

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is to ensure that Inclusive Learning Support (ILS) provides a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which every child and young person can learn, develop and thrive.

The policy sets out ILS's responsibilities and approach to identifying, responding to and reporting safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding is embedded within every aspect of our work and is central to our organisational culture.

1.2 Who this applies to

- Directors
- Employees
- Tutors
- Teaching Assistants
- Outreach Practitioners
- Volunteers
- Agency Staff
- Contractors
- Students on Placement
- Anyone working on behalf of ILS

1.3 Our commitment

ILS will:

- Put children's welfare first.
- Promote a culture of openness and vigilance.
- Recruit staff safely.
- Provide regular safeguarding training.
- Respond promptly to safeguarding concerns.
- Work collaboratively with families and professionals.
- Respect children's rights and voices.
- Maintain accurate safeguarding records.
- Share information appropriately to protect children.
- Continuously review and improve safeguarding practice.

2. About ILS

Inclusive Learning Support (ILS) is a specialist SEND outreach provider delivering personalised educational support for children and young people aged 7–18 years across Kent and surrounding coastal communities.

ILS supports learners who require additional help to access education, including those with:

- Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC)
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs
- Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)
- Additional learning needs
- School non-attendance
- Barriers to inclusion
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Our mission

ILS exists to provide reliable, compassionate and high-quality SEND and outreach support for children and young people across Kent and coastal communities.

Our mission is to improve attendance, engagement, emotional regulation, GCSE attainment and reintegration into education while helping learners feel safe, understood and able to succeed through personalised support.

Our vision and values

ILS believes that every child deserves access to high-quality education regardless of disability, disadvantage or previous educational experiences. Our approach is guided by child-centred practice, inclusion, compassion, professional excellence, partnership and accountability.

3. Safeguarding Principles

ILS believes every child has the right to:

- Be protected from harm.
- Feel safe and respected.
- Be listened to.
- Be treated with dignity.
- Receive support appropriate to their individual needs.
- Access education free from discrimination.

3.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

The ILS handbook makes clear that safeguarding is not solely the responsibility of one person. Every individual working for or on behalf of ILS has a legal, professional and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

3.2 Safeguarding and child protection

Safeguarding is broader than responding to abuse. It includes protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing impairment of health or development, providing safe and effective care, supporting children to achieve the best possible outcomes, promoting emotional wellbeing, encouraging resilience, supporting mental health and working with families.

Child protection forms part of safeguarding and refers specifically to activity undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Director

The ILS handbook identifies the Director as having overall accountability for ensuring that safeguarding arrangements within ILS are effective, proportionate and compliant with current legislation and guidance.

4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL has strategic and operational responsibility for safeguarding and child protection across ILS. The DSL ensures safeguarding concerns are recognised, responded to appropriately, recorded accurately and referred to appropriate agencies where necessary.

4.3 Deputy DSL

The Deputy DSL supports safeguarding leadership and provides additional safeguarding cover in accordance with ILS's internal arrangements.

4.4 All staff and people working for ILS

- Understand and follow safeguarding responsibilities before working with children.
- Remain vigilant and recognise safeguarding concerns.
- Take children and young people's concerns seriously.
- Report concerns promptly through ILS safeguarding arrangements.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Protect confidential information.
- Complete required safeguarding training.
- Co-operate with appropriate safeguarding processes and partner agencies.

5. Recognising Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

The ILS handbook recognises that children and young people may experience abuse, neglect, exploitation or other safeguarding risks at home, at school, in the community, within peer groups, during activities, through relationships, online, through organised criminal exploitation or through contact with adults or other children.

5.1 What staff are expected to do

- Remain alert to changes in presentation, behaviour, circumstances or communication.
- Take disclosures and concerns seriously.
- Consider the wider context and cumulative concerns.
- Report concerns rather than attempting to prove abuse.
- Follow ILS safeguarding procedures and seek advice from the DSL.

5.2 Children and young people may communicate differently

ILS recognises that children, particularly children with SEND or communication differences, may communicate distress or concerns in different ways. Staff should consider communication needs, behaviour changes and individual circumstances when identifying possible risk.

A single indicator does not automatically establish abuse. Concerns should nevertheless be reported so that they can be assessed appropriately.

6. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

6.1 If a child tells you something concerning

- Listen and remain calm.
- Take the child seriously.
- Do not investigate the allegation yourself.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Do not promise secrecy.
- Explain, in an age-appropriate way, that information may need to be shared to help keep them safe.
- Record the concern accurately and, where possible, use the child's own words.
- Report the concern promptly to the DSL through ILS safeguarding arrangements.

6.2 Immediate danger

Where there is an immediate risk to a child's safety, the appropriate emergency or statutory safeguarding service should be contacted. The child's immediate safety takes priority.

6.3 Recording and escalation

The ILS handbook requires safeguarding concerns to be identified, recorded, assessed and acted upon appropriately and without delay. Safeguarding decisions should prioritise the safety and welfare of the child, be evidence-based and proportionate, and follow relevant statutory and multi-agency safeguarding processes.

Staff are not expected to investigate or prove abuse. Their responsibility is to notice, respond, record and report concerns appropriately.

7. Safeguarding Children and Young People with SEND

ILS recognises that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may face additional barriers to safety, communication and disclosure. ILS is committed to safeguarding practice that is fully inclusive, accessible and responsive to the individual needs of every child.

Our approach

- Adapt communication to the child's individual needs.
- Use inclusive communication methods when discussing concerns.
- Listen to children in ways that work for them.
- Do not dismiss concerning behaviour simply as a consequence of SEND.
- Consider vulnerability, previous concerns and cumulative harm.
- Work with families and relevant professionals where appropriate.
- Keep the child's welfare, rights and voice central to safeguarding decisions.

Our child-centred approach

ILS believes every child is unique and that support should be tailored to individual strengths, needs and aspirations. Safeguarding practice should therefore be person-centred while maintaining clear professional boundaries and appropriate escalation.

8. Safer Recruitment and Professional Standards

ILS considers safer recruitment a vital part of creating a safe environment and reducing the risk of unsuitable individuals gaining access to children. Recruitment decisions prioritise the safety and welfare of children and young people.

Safer recruitment includes

- Attracting suitable candidates and deterring unsuitable applicants.
- Appropriate identity and suitability checks.
- Relevant references and employment checks.
- Appropriate DBS and safeguarding checks.
- Verification of relevant qualifications where required.
- Safeguarding-focused recruitment and induction.
- Required safeguarding training.

Professional conduct

ILS expects staff, volunteers, contractors and others working on its behalf to maintain professional boundaries, communicate appropriately, protect confidentiality, use technology responsibly and report concerns. The handbook also contains specific requirements concerning one-to-one working, physical contact, social media, mobile devices, photography/video, gifts, transport, confidentiality, equality and respect.

Low-level concerns and allegations

ILS promotes a culture in which low-level concerns can be raised early. The purpose is to protect children, support professional standards, identify patterns before they become more serious and strengthen safeguarding culture. Allegations about staff, volunteers or contractors are taken seriously and managed promptly, fairly and confidentially.

9. Online Safety

ILS recognises that digital technology plays a central role in education, communication and safeguarding practice. Online safety is a safeguarding issue and all use of digital systems must prioritise the welfare of children and young people.

- Use digital technology safely, responsibly and professionally.
- Use approved systems and platforms where required.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in online communication.
- Protect personal information and devices.
- Do not engage in inappropriate private online communication with children.
- Report online safeguarding concerns promptly.

10. Lone Working, Home Visits and Community Safety

ILS's SEND outreach model may require staff to work in children's homes, schools, libraries, community centres, public venues, other agreed educational settings, online and sometimes on a one-to-one basis.

- Appropriate risk assessments should be completed.
- Staff should know where they are going and who they are meeting.
- Emergency contact and check-in arrangements should be followed.
- Professional boundaries must be maintained.
- Changes in circumstances or incidents should be reported.
- Safeguarding concerns must be escalated promptly.

The full ILS handbook contains the detailed lone-working and home-visit procedures. Those operational details are intentionally not published in this public policy.

11. Confidentiality, Data Protection and Information Sharing

ILS recognises that safeguarding and SEND support require staff to handle sensitive information about children, young people, parents/carers, staff and other professionals.

- Protect personal and confidential information.
- Comply with applicable UK data-protection requirements.
- Prevent unauthorised access.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Store information securely.
- Dispose of information appropriately.
- Respect the rights of children, young people and families.

The handbook states that ILS complies with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Information sharing

Safeguarding does not mean promising secrecy. Where there is a lawful and appropriate basis to share information and sharing is necessary to safeguard a child, information may need to be shared through appropriate safeguarding processes. Information should be handled carefully and shared appropriately to protect children.

12. Prevent, Radicalisation and Extremism

ILS is committed to protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation, extremism and involvement in terrorism. The handbook recognises exposure to extremist ideologies and harmful influences as safeguarding risks.

ILS will:

- Promote a safe and inclusive environment.
- Support children to develop critical-thinking skills.
- Respect freedom of expression while maintaining appropriate safeguarding boundaries.
- Recognise signs that a child may be vulnerable to radicalisation.
- Respond proportionately to concerns.
- Work with parents/carers and partner agencies where appropriate.
- Make safeguarding referrals where necessary.

13. Missing or Absent Learners

ILS is committed to ensuring that every learner is accounted for throughout the provision of support. Safeguarding procedures apply when a child fails to attend an agreed session, cannot be located during a session, leaves without permission, goes missing from a home, school or community venue, fails to return after an authorised break, does not arrive at an agreed meeting point, cannot be contacted when attendance is expected, or is absent in circumstances that raise safeguarding concerns.

14. First Aid, Medical Needs and Medication Safeguarding

ILS recognises that first aid, medical needs and medication can form an important part of safeguarding children and young people.

ILS will take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that learners:

- Receive appropriate first aid when required.
- Have known medical needs identified.
- Are supported in accordance with agreed care arrangements.
- Receive medication only where appropriate procedures and authorisation are in place.
- Are treated with dignity and respect.
- Are protected from avoidable harm.
- Have emergency arrangements in place where necessary.

ILS staff must never undertake medical procedures or administer medication unless they have the appropriate training, authorisation and information to do so.

15. Whistleblowing and Professional Challenge

ILS is committed to maintaining high standards of safeguarding practice and professional integrity. Staff must be able to raise concerns about poor practice, unsafe systems or safeguarding failures without fear of victimisation or reprisal.

Where concerns cannot be resolved internally, staff have a right and responsibility to escalate them externally in line with safeguarding procedures and applicable whistleblowing requirements.

16. Governance, Training, Recording and Quality Assurance

16.1 Training and supervision

ILS is committed to ensuring that people working with children and young people are appropriately trained, supported and supervised in relation to safeguarding. The organisation promotes a culture where staff can raise concerns, reflect on practice and maintain professional standards.

16.2 Governance and accountability

The ILS handbook identifies safeguarding as a core leadership function. Senior leadership and governance arrangements are intended to ensure that safeguarding is prioritised, monitored and continuously improved.

16.3 Recording standards

Accurate, clear and timely documentation is a fundamental part of safeguarding practice. Good recording supports decision-making, protects children and young people, ensures accountability and enables effective multi-agency working. Safeguarding records must be factual, professional and securely maintained.

16.4 Continuous improvement

ILS reviews safeguarding practice in response to learning from practice, changes in legislation and guidance, feedback from staff and partners, and outcomes from safeguarding incidents and reviews. The organisation promotes reflective practice, accountability and continuous improvement.

17. Legal Framework, Contact and Document Control

17.1 Legal and guidance framework referenced in the ILS handbook

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition)
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Education Act 2002 (where applicable)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice

17.2 Safeguarding contact

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Neo Matsoso-Ndlovu

Inclusive Learning Support (ILS)
Registered Office: Aylesham, Kent
Email: NMatsosoNlovu@ils-kent.co.uk

If a child is in immediate danger, use the appropriate emergency or statutory safeguarding route. Do not wait for a website response.

17.3 Document control

Document	Public Website Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Organisation	Inclusive Learning Support (ILS)
Version	1.0
Approved by	Director
Effective date	September 2026
Review	Annually / sooner if required

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This public policy should be read alongside the relevant ILS policies and procedures. The full safeguarding handbook remains the controlled source for detailed internal processes.