

Learnlife
Child Protection
Handbook
2021-2022

(Next scheduled review process - August 2022)

CONTENTS

CP.1 Learnlife Child Protection Policy	4
Accountability	4
Commitment	4
Learnlife Core Values	5
Responsibility & Action	5
Key Roles and Responsibilities	5
Reporting obligations by law	6
Child Response Team	6
Timeframes	7
Communication of Policy	7
Investigation and Reporting Procedures	7
Flow Chart for Taking Action	8
Key Response: Listen	8
Vulnerability	9
Investigating Procedures	10
1.1 Who to report to and when	10
1.2 Steps to be taken after having been notified of a case of abuse	10
1.3 Procedures for cases of domestic incidents Involving children	11
1.4 Procedures involving Learnlife employees	12
Procedures for reporting	13
Recording and Filing a Report & Central Records	14
People & Recruitment	15
Screening Candidates	15
HR employment processes	15
Ongoing Training	16
Appendix 1 - Employment Acknowledgement	17
Appendix 2 - Form for declarations on incidents involving children	18
Appendix 3 - Learnlife Code of Conduct in relation to Child Protection	19
Appendix 4 - Definitions	21
Appendix 5 - Resources: staff and parents	26
Resources for staff	27
Resources for Parents	27
Applicable staff names and contact details	28
Reporting Hotlines	28
CP.2 Restraint and seclusion policy	30
Definitions	30
1. When physical restraint or seclusion should not be used	30
2. When physical restraint or seclusion may be used	32

LearnHubs Roles

For information relating to operations and leadership roles, please see [G&O.1 LearnHubs Roles](#).

CP.1 Learnlife Child Protection Policy

A. Accountability

The LearnHubs Council and all team members are accountable for this policy

1. Commitment

The safety of our learners is our highest priority. In order for our learners to thrive, we must ensure their safety. Learnlife, in accordance with our core values, has a Child Protection Policy, with clear associated procedures, to guide the whole community in relation to the care, safety and health of our learners.

The policy aims to ensure consistency and equal access to learning for all learners regardless of age, gender identity, ability, religion, nationality, etc. and compliance with national laws and statutory guidance related to child safety.

The Learnlife Child Protection Policy is based on international law and on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of which Spain has been a signatory since 2014. Additionally, Learnlife is governed by the national laws of Spain. The two key articles from the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child that drive our Child Protection Policy are:

Article 19 - Protection from abuse and neglect

The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the care of the child and establish appropriate social programs for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

Article 34 - Sexual exploitation

The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

There is an Appendix that outlines more specific definitions and examples of child abuse in different contexts. [Appendix 4](#) covers the following areas:

- Definitions of abuse
- Possible indicators of physical abuse
- Identification of Abuse and Neglect
- Definition and examples of grooming
 - 3.1 Physical Abuse
 - 3.2 Emotional Abuse
 - 3.3 Sexual Abuse
 - 3.4 Neglect

Resources: staff and parents

Appendix 5 outlines resources for staff and parents. Appendix 5 is also Hub specific, providing names of relevant roles and people.

2. Learnlife Core Values

Learnlife's values include: positive relationships, empathetic collaboration, growth through adventure, fair communities, and authentic trust.

All staff must register that they have read the Learnlife Code of Conduct in relation to Child Protection ([Appendix 3](#)).

3. Responsibility & Action

Child abuse and neglect are violations of a child's human rights and are obstacles to physical, emotional, and cognitive development of the child. Educators have a professional, legal, and ethical obligation to identify children who are in need of help and protection and to take steps to ensure that the child and family avail themselves of the services needed to remedy any situation that constitutes child abuse or neglect. All team members employed at Learnlife must report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Learnlife seeks to work closely with parents to ensure the protection of their children.

To support this responsibility, all Learnlife employees must complete an annual update online course in order to be very cognisant of the policy and the associated laws.

4. Key Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility is a team process!

- Learnhubs Council: responsibility to ensure the policy and all procedures are implemented
- All team: responsibility to understand and implement all aspects of policy and procedure
- People Team: responsibility to check the child protection credentials of every employee; no person should be employed or commence work until such time as all background checks are completed

- Hubs Leads: ensure all employees undertake annual externally provided professional development updating knowledge and understandings; establish and maintain records of the annual completion of *Child Protection* professional development; ensure all contractors who have not provided valid working with children certification are supervised for 100% of their time on site or in contact with learners
- Programme Leads: ensure all Learning Guides implement all aspects of the policy and procedures
- Child Protection Officer: each hub will have at least one person who has undergone regular additional training in order to conduct any internal child protection related incidents, disclosures, suspicions or observations.
- External Child Protection Personnel: in the event of any disclosure, observation or incident involving a member of staff, an external child protection investigator must be contracted to conduct any investigations;
- All team members and wider employees: ensure that the provisions of this policy are fully understood and implemented; undertake mandatory annual professional development in child protection

Reporting obligations by law

Reporting validated incidents of child protection related matters is mandatory. In the first instance any disclosure must be reported to the designated Hub Child Protection Officer.

5. Child Response Team

A child response team exists to oversight any disclosures, incidents, suspicions or observations. This team may vary in its make-up depending on contexts. The team should include:

- The Child Protection Officer
- An additional learner-nominated (preferable, if appropriate) or team-nominated staff member
- Either the Hubs Lead or the Programme Lead
- Parent/s (if appropriate)
- External Child Protection investigator must be engaged if any disclosure, incident, suspicion or observation is in relation to a member of staff or a parent/guardian.

Depending on the context and/or complexity, a designated Child Protection Officer might continue with an investigation by themselves. However, they should consult with the Child Response Team and keep them fully updated. A file note should be created in relation to every disclosure, incident, suspicion or observation, even if it is decided to close an investigation. As mentioned above, an external Child Protection investigator must be engaged if any disclosure, incident or observation is in relation to a member of staff or a parent/guardian.

6. Timeframes

An disclosure, incident, suspicion or observation that suggests any physical or immediate psychological harm to a learner must be followed up immediately.

(When appropriate), parents must be informed as soon as possible. If a decision is made to not inform parents, possibly because of the risk of further abuse, an external child protection investigator must be contacted and engaged immediately.

An investigation should seek a conclusion or further action within 24 hours.

7. Communication of Policy

Learnlife seeks to be a safe environment for learners who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives:

- Learnlife distributes this policy annually to all parents and applicants;
- communicates this policy annually to learners;
- cites the policy on our website, parent and team pages, waiting lists, learner applications, and team employment announcements and applications;
- provides training for the entire team; and implements hiring practices to ensure the safety of our children.

Investigation and Reporting Procedures

In the case of an accusation, Learnlife will conduct a full investigation following a carefully designed course of due process, as outlined, keeping the safety of the child at the highest priority until the investigation has reached a satisfactory conclusion.

Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with the Learnlife administrative regulations with respect to the Child Protection Policy. Furthermore, cases of suspected child abuse or neglect may be reported to the appropriate child protection change agencies or local authorities.

As part of our wider programmes and to ensure that our learners are treated with respect and dignity at all times, Learnlife will:

- Provide age-appropriate learning experiences in each programme to help learners understand personal safety, personal needs, and personal rights.
- Provide parent materials and information sessions to help them better understand the relevant programmes and policy.

8. Flow Chart for Taking Action



9. Key Response: Listen

- If there is not an explicit disclosure about an abusive episode, but you identify a group of signs that might indicate a risk in a child (looks constantly sad, low self esteem, lack of appropriate sleeping routine, inappropriate nutrition habits, etc), make sure that in your interactions with the child you listen carefully, observe and keep record of any relevant information. Share with them your concern for their well-being and offer the possibility to talk to the organisation's Child Protection Officer. Even if the child chooses not to check-in with the Child Protection Officer, inform the Child Protection Response Team about your concern and about the possible risks. The risk can be related to any type of abuse or other risks to their well-being and safety. For example: drugs, depression, anxiety, etc. Having a preventive approach is always more beneficial than intervening only when there is a crisis.
- If a child explicitly starts disclosing an episode of abuse openly (physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect) by providing a spoken discourse, the adult should immediately start taking notes by hand avoiding asking any questions that might be conducive or that might interrupt the narration of the child. Active listening and documenting should be the focus at this moment. Provide a safe space for the child to express themselves and do not interrupt them with questions. If a legal process is carried out later on and the disclosure of the episode was influenced by inducing

questions, this can have legal ramifications and the validity of the disclosure could be questioned.

- Inform the person early in the interaction that could lead to a disclosure, that there may be a legal requirement to report the disclosure and check they are happy to proceed. Remind the child that confidentiality is no longer possible when their health or their safety is at risk. Once a child discloses explicitly an episode of abuse, the adult has the legal obligation and the responsibility to take action based on the child protection policies of the organisation, putting the safety of the child as the main priority, even if the child does not agree with these actions.
- Provide confidence that support will occur. A disclosure and all the actions that it might entail can be emotionally very stressful, let the child know that the community is there to support them and get consultation from the local Child Protection organisations to receive guidance about how to best support that child considering their specific context .
- Let the child know their safety is the most important thing and receiving help from adults and the community is key to achieve this.
- If a child communicates risk in any way, refer the conversation to the Child Protection Officer for further investigation. Outline the process for further conversation with the designated Child Protection Officer and let the child know that this is to ensure their well-being and safety.
- Ensure that you and the organisation will take all the required actions to advocate for their safety.

10. Vulnerability

There are certain groups of individuals who are more susceptible to abuse or child protection related danger:

- Disabled or have possible special educational needs
- Living in a domestic abuse situation
- Affected by parental substance misuse
- Asylum seekers
- Living away from home
- Vulnerable to being bullied, or engaging in bullying
- Living in temporary accommodation
- Living transient lifestyles
- Living in chaotic and unsupportive home situations
- Vulnerable to discrimination and maltreatment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, religion or sexuality
- Involved directly or indirectly in sexual exploitation, prostitution or child trafficking
- At risk of female genital mutilation (FGM) or forced marriage.

Investigating Procedures

1. Procedures for investigating the suspect, observed or disclosed abuse

1.1 Who to report to and when

Most cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be handled by the designated Learnlife Child Protection Officer, such as those involving:

- learner relationships with peers
- Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home
- learner-parent relationships
- Mental health issues such as mild depression, low self-esteem, grieving

Some cases will be referred to outside resources, for example:

- Mental health issues such as severe depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicidal ideation or attempts

Cases mandatorily reported for investigation and outside resources:

- Severe and ongoing physical abuse or neglect
- Sexual abuse and incest

1.2 Steps to be taken after having been notified of a case of abuse

The Child Protection Officer must be immediately informed. They in turn will inform the Learnhub leadership (LearnHubs Council and relevant Hubs Lead).

From the moment when an accusation or suspicion has been reported, a file shall be opened by the Child Protection Officer. This file should include the content of the conversation and the matters subject to investigation. Confidentiality is fundamental and only the person responsible and the members of the Child Response Team have access to the investigation.

- Contact with the child's family should be made so that family and Learnlife are working together.
- Where relevant, the families of the children who witnessed the abuse shall be contacted.
- The investigation shall be carried out with utmost urgency and all the means in order to obtain the necessary information as quickly as possible.
- From the moment the investigation begins and until it concludes, the Hubs Lead or the Programme Lead, or any person given delegated management responsibilities, shall take steps to avoid contact and shared spaces between the alleged offender and the learner.

The person responsible for the investigation shall prudently evaluate the appropriateness of interviewing the learner involved and, should it be necessary and taking maximum precaution, other learners. Parents must be informed beforehand and given the opportunity to not consent, or to attend themselves. Parents can nominate a Learnlife employee to represent them.

Should the alleged offender be a learner, the person responsible for the investigation should:

- ensure there is no contact between the alleged offender and the person raising a concern; call an urgent meeting with the learner's parents in order to inform them of the situation;
- make a mutual decision with the parents about interviewing the learner to hear an explanation for what happened (in the presence of his/her parents).

1.3 Procedures for cases of domestic incidents Involving children

Response to indications of suspected or reported abuse

Should a learner inform a learning guide of domestic abuse to which he/she has been subjected, or if the learning guide becomes aware of abuse of this kind, the learning guide shall listen carefully and if required ask him/her about their current situation and their safety. . If questions are asked by the learning guide, they must be always asked as follow up questions to collect key information about the current situation without asking details about the event. Keep in mind that you should never interrupt a child while a disclosure is happening. Before carrying out a further investigation, refer this process to the Child Protection Team as soon as possible, by informing the Child Protection Officer. It is important to refrain from promising the informant that the conversation shall remain confidential. ([Appendix 2 - Form for declarations on incidents involving children](#))

Every conversation should be recorded by hand. Preferably this is done during an interview, at the very least immediately afterwards.

Steps to be taken after having been notified of a case of abuse:

- The Child Protection Officer will inform the Hub leads.
- From the very moment when an accusation or suspicion has been reported, a file shall be opened including the content of the conversation and the matters subject to investigation. Confidentiality is fundamental and only the person responsible and Hub Leads should have access to the investigation.
- Except in very clear cases in which reporting directly to the Government of Catalonia (Generalitat) authorities is advisable or required, contact with the child's family should be established. Should the offenders be the parents, or one of the parents, they shall be informed during the meeting that Learnlife is under the obligation to

inform the authorities of the situation as it is understood by Learnlife. This should not mean that Learnlife has made any judgement on the matter.

- Once a report has been filed with the authorities at the Generalitat, Learnlife passes over the matter fully, notwithstanding any support it may give the learner. Learnlife shall, however, collaborate with the authorities in any way necessary and to the benefit of the child.

1.4 Procedures involving Learnlife employees

If a learner informs a learning guide of abuse to which he/she has been subjected and which was carried out by any member of the team (Learnlife team or learners), the learning guide shall listen carefully, ask him/her about the event without getting into unnecessary details and communicate this to the LearnHubs Management Team immediately. It is important to refrain from promising the informant that the conversation shall remain confidential.

Write down a brief summary once the conversation with the learner is over as soon as practicable. It is important to take down the facts as accurately as possible and distinguish between what happened and how it has been interpreted. ([Appendix 2 - Form for declarations on incidents involving children](#))

Please note:

- Should the alleged offender be a Learning Guide or any other member of the Learnlife team, the person responsible for the investigation must engage an external investigator to conduct the investigation. If an external investigator is not immediately available, a member of the LearnHubs Council may interview an alleged offender and take down a written explanation of the accusation.
- In the event of an employee being accused of improper conduct, they should be given the opportunity to include a neutral support person in the process and seek legal advice. All possible steps shall be taken to manage the process in an efficient and confidential manner.
- Until the allegation is proven to be correct, all possible steps shall be taken to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the alleged offender.
- During any investigation process, the employee under investigation shall be temporarily suspended from their duties. Should the accused be a learner, appropriate precautionary measures shall be taken.
- Should the accusations made turn out to be false or ill-founded, the employee shall return to his/her usual role. Appropriate steps shall be taken with reference to the person who made the false accusation.

- If, following the initial investigation, the accusations appear to be true, all relevant external authorities shall be informed immediately, in compliance with current legislation.
- Should inappropriate and criminal acts within the field of child protection be confirmed, Learnlife shall immediately terminate the employee.
- Should it be confirmed that the person responsible for the inappropriate and criminal acts within the field of child protection is a learner, Learnlife shall begin the process for his/her immediate unenrolment.

Procedures for reporting

It is obligatory for all team members to report incidents of physical or psychological violence, aggression, harassment, and physical or sexual abuse immediately or if overnight, the start of the next day.

Learners are encouraged to report incidents for which they themselves or others may be the victims.

Reporting by a learner may be verbal or in writing and shared with any Learnlife employee, who, in turn, will communicate this information to a Child Protection Officer. That person must gather information and provide written documentation including the date, person or persons involved, and any additional relevant information. If there is reasonable cause to believe child abuse has occurred, the Child Protection Officer will report to the Hubs Leads who will follow the steps noted in these guidelines, documenting all aspects of the investigation and resulting actions. Such actions include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Conference with learners involved
- Parent notification
- Meeting with parents
- Meeting with others pertinent to the case, including the alleged perpetrator(s)
- Psychological assessment
- Mandatory counselling sessions
- Referral to the Child Protection Team
- Reporting to child protection services
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities
- Suspension or termination of employment (if a Learnlife employee)

Recording and Filing a Report & Central Records

Data protection considerations for retention and destruction:

- A standard declaration form shall be used for writing the report ([Appendix 2 - Form for declarations on incidents involving children](#)).
- Learnlife policy regarding confidentiality and management of Learnlife records applies to all aspects of the documentation of incidents of abuse.
- Learnlife operates under the auspices of local law, international law, and the advice of the Learnlife legal team and local community child protection resources/ personnel.
- All child records in relation to child protection issues are to be kept in a secure file system, whether digital or physical. Only authorised people are to have access to this level of information.
- If a child leaves Learnlife, only relevant child protection information based on legal requirements and possible liability for non-reporting should be conveyed. Note: child protection usually follows the child, especially if the problem is within the family; thus there is a moral obligation to pass on relevant information.
- Parents and guardians should be made aware of this requirement and indicate their agreement with this requirement in the admission contract.

People & Recruitment

The recruitment, employment and onboarding processes are a key time to ensure the ongoing protection of children. This is achieved by ensuring:

- diligent screening and selection of all employees, volunteers, and other Learnlife identified trusted adults;
- thorough cross referencing of any referees prior to employment;
- viewing and validating working with children checks from all relevant countries prior to the commencement of employment for all people; and a
- a formal requirement for all employees to complete an annual revision course from an accredited organisation.

Screening Candidates

The first and most effective means of preventing child abuse is screening out potential abusers before they come to Learnlife:

- All personnel, team, learning guides, volunteers, and other members of the community whose potential employment or volunteer service involves direct contact with, and/or the potential for unmonitored access to children (including any individuals who regularly provide transportation to children) should be given thorough reference and background checks, including review of criminal and sexual offender records.
- Likewise, organisations should require all contractors, vendors and service providers to provide evidence that a background check was completed on any individual sent by the contractor to provide onsite services.
- Further, in the context of excursions, incursions or any externally located learning experiences, if Learnlife enters into a contractual relationship with an external organisation where that external organisation will be allowing minor children onto its property, such organisations should be required to provide evidence beforehand that the adults who will be associating with the minors have undergone the appropriate background and criminal record checks.

HR employment processes

- A written application and a "statement of suitability" requiring a signature stating that the applicant knows of no reason or prior circumstance that would preclude him/her from working safely with minor children
- A personal interview
- Credential check depending on position being sought
- Reference checks

- Criminal history background check (local, state, multi-state, national, international options depending on where the applicant is coming from and the position being sought).
- Sex offender registry check (where such register exists in the country)
- Published procedures as to how and by whom criminal history records will be reviewed and evaluated (with criteria for disqualification) – including a description of the appeals process required by law
- A statement that all background screening accomplished by or on behalf of the organisation will comply with relevant privacy laws.
- Each employee must sign the 'Employee Acknowledgement' ([Appendix 1](#))

Ongoing Training

- All employees will be categorised as either:

Category 1: An employee who will come into a hub at some stage during any given year who may have 1-to-1 unsupervised contact with a learner; or

Category 2: An employee who would not be in Category 1 because, for example, they work remotely and have no cause to come on site at a physical Hub, or because they do not work with the learners unaccompanied by a learning guide.

- All Category 1 employees must complete the ECIS Level 2 Certificate in Child Protection online course. This must be renewed every 12 months.
- All Category 2 employees must complete the Learnlife internal training on the Learnlife Child Protection policy annually. There must be an annual register with sign off.
- Each new team member will receive this training within two weeks of joining.
- Tracking of completed training can be found [here](#).

Appendix 1 - Employment Acknowledgement

Learnlife Code of Conduct and Child Protection Handbook - acceptance and commitment form

In Barcelona on _____ (date)

I, Mr./Ms. _____, holder of National ID _____

and home address at:

hereby expressly declare that:

- as a team member employed by Learnlife, I have received a copy of, and am familiar with, the organisation's policies and characteristics, particularly regulating the relationships between the learning team and children and their families, the employee Code of Conduct, and the Child Protection Handbook.
- I respect and accept the terms of those Learnlife documents.
- when carrying out my professional activity and any associated activity, including those carried out outside the Learnlife hubs, I agree to adhere to them for the duration of my role within Learnlife.

I therefore sign this declaration and commitment in the place and on the date indicated above.

Signed: _____

Appendix 2 - Form for declarations on incidents involving children

Date of the report:

Name of the person making the report:

Relationship between the person making the report and the child:

Means used to provide the information (telephone call, conversation in person etc):

Data on the child's family (if known):

Child's Name:

Programme Group:

Name and surnames of the father and the mother

Address

Telephone numbers (landlines and mobile phones, should they have both)

Description of the incident:

If suspected child abuse is being reported, who is the person supposedly involved?

Attach the following information, if known:

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Address:

Relationship to the child:

How was this information obtained?

What proof is there for saying that there is a case of possible abuse?

Is there any factor in the learner's current situation and/or those of his/her parents/learning guides or administration or services staff that may be relevant to the suspected case of abuse (for example, a recent illness, death, separation, addiction or mental health issue or any other difficult circumstances)?

Do his/her parents know that an investigation is being carried out and, should there be indications of the alleged abuse, will the authorities be informed immediately?

Are protection measures necessary at the current time?

Would you like to add anything else?

Signature:

Appendix 3 - Learnlife Code of Conduct in relation to Child Protection

Learnlife Code of Conduct in relation to Child Protection

All staff will:

- Respect and comply with all Spanish laws and Learnlife policy & procedures;
- Act as a responsible citizen in their own actions and treat children/youth with respect;
- Be living and visible positive examples of the Learnlife values in action: positive relationships, empathetic collaboration, growth through adventure, fair communities, and authentic trust.
- Use appropriate language and interact in a professional manner.
- Respect the differences in others regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
- When alone with learners ensure there is appropriate visibility, including doors open so individuals in the room are visible from outside.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times.
- When touch is indicated, ensure it is appropriate, public, and non-sexual in nature.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.
- Engage in digital communication in a professional and appropriate manner and involve a third party via cc: when necessary.
- Remain in professional roles at all times in interactions with learners.
- Communicate concerns about possible misconduct to the Hubs Lead or a member of the LearnHubs Management Team.
- Keep learner information confidential.
- Use discretion when disclosing details about personal life.
- Report or question any suspicious person on site or off site (in connection with excursions or off site activities).
- Report any child protection concerns to the Hubs Lead or a member of the LearnHubs Management Team.

Learnlife Staff will not:

- Place learners into isolation or seclusion (see [Learnlife Policy Restraint & Seclusion](#))
- Engage in bullying behaviour.
- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in any sexual or inappropriate manner.
- Inflict physical or emotional harm on a child;
- Offer tobacco products, drugs (or paraphernalia), pornography, or alcohol to any child and/or youth.
- Engage in non Learnlife-related personal or private communication, with learners, using electronics including texting, email, Facebook, Twitter or other similar forms of electronic or social media.

- Disclose personal details of colleagues, learners or families outside educational purposes.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth at any time outside of educational purposes.
- Possess any weapon or illegal drugs at Learnlife.
- Threaten or intimidate another person.
- Cross over into a 'parenting role' (displaying rescuing behaviours) or peer role (acting more like a friend and less like an adult/professional).
- Build connections with learners that foster dependency.
- Use toilets or changing rooms where learners might be present
- Drink alcohol at any Learnlife-related event on or off site at which learners are present and where Learnlife Staff are responsible for learner health and safety.

Appendix 4 - Definitions

1. Definitions of abuse

Child protection concerns include suspected, alleged, self-disclosed, or witnessed abuse of a child by anyone associated within or outside Learnlife which must be investigated and followed by appropriate action. A person may abuse a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

According to the World Health Organization, child abuse constitutes:

“all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

Abuse is:

- Inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means, causing skin bruising, burns, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function, death.
- Creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child’s bodily functioning.
- Committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child’s pain and/or mental suffering.
- Assaulting or criminally mistreating a child as defined by either the criminal code or Learnlife policy.
- Engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury to, or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child.
- Failing to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above.

Possible indicators of physical abuse

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body
- Bruises of different ages (various colours) · Injuries reflecting shape of article used (electric cord, belt, buckle, ping pong paddle, hand)
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back, or buttocks
- Burns with a pattern from an electric burner, iron, or cigarette.
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Immersion burns with a distinct boundary line
- Unexplained laceration, abrasions or fractures

2. Identification of Abuse and Neglect

All staff must be able to clearly identify the signs and symptoms of abuse, and have the obligation to take the appropriate action. Definitions of abuse are complex and can differ across various cultures according to their child-rearing behaviours, gender and role responsibilities, and expectations.

The primary determination of abuse is that it is dependent on some form of a relationship that is used to meet the need of the more powerful person, typically either a member of the family, an adult, or a friend.

3. Definition and examples of grooming

To increase the Learnlife community's awareness, this policy focuses on four main categories of abuse and provides basic information about the physical and behavioural signs associated with each type.

3.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, punching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, biting, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing intentional physical harm to a child. (These symptoms could also indicate harm to self, such as, cutting and suicide ideation).

Signs of physical abuse:

- Bruises, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Improbable excuses given to explain injuries
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Injuries that occur to the body in places that are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Withdrawal from physical contact
- Arms and legs kept covered in hot weather
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Self-destructive tendencies
- Being aggressive towards others
- Being very passive and compliant
- Chronic running away

3.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child - so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve: conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved; that they are inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children; causing children frequently to feel frightened; or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may also occur alone. Signs of emotional abuse:

- Physical, mental and emotional development is delayed
- Highly anxious
- Showing delayed speech or sudden speech disorder
- Fear of new situations
- Low self-esteem
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Chronic running away
- Compulsive stealing
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Attention-seeking behaviour
- Persistent tiredness
- Lying

3.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is committing or allowing to be committed any sexual offense against a child as defined in the criminal code of the host country, or intentionally touching either directly or through clothing, the genitals, anus, or breasts of a child for other than hygiene or child care purposes.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production or viewing of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Children involved in commercial sex work are victims of sexual abuse, whether they perceive themselves as victims or not.

Many victims, through the process of grooming, are taught that the sex is a form of love, so tend to love their offender and often present as happy and well-adjusted children with no negative symptoms because of their perception of being loved.

Sexual abuse has some different characteristics of child abuse that warrant special attention. While physical abuse is often the result of immediate stress and not usually planned, sexual abuse requires planning with results that are more insidious. The planning, referred to as "grooming", often results in victims accepting the blame, responsibility, guilt and shame for the sexual behaviour of the offender. Sexual abuse requires far more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, so is more difficult to report.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse

- Sexual knowledge, behaviour, or use of language not appropriate to age level.
- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns

- Vaginal or penile discharge
- Difficulty with urination
- Infection, bleeding
- Venereal disease in a child of any age
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding the oral, genital, or anal areas
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Refusing to change into PE clothes, fear of bathrooms
- Child running away from the home and not giving any specific complaint
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual
- Pregnancy, especially at a young age
- Extremely protective parenting
- Fear of people or places
- Aggression
- Regressive behaviours, bed wetting or stranger anxiety
- Stomach pains or discomfort walking or sitting
- Being unusually quiet and withdrawn or unusually aggressive
- Suffering from what seem physical ailments that can't be explained medically
- Showing fear or distrust of a particular adult
- Mentioning receiving special attention from an adult or a new "secret" friendship with an adult or young person
- Refusal to continue with learning or usual social activities

Sexual abuse has some different characteristics of child abuse that warrant special attention. While physical abuse is often the result of immediate stress and not usually planned, sexual abuse requires planning with results that are more insidious. The planning, referred to as "grooming", often results in victims accepting the blame, responsibility, guilt and shame for the sexual behaviour of the offender. Sexual abuse requires far more secrecy than other forms of child abuse, so is more difficult to report.

3.4 Neglect

The definitions set out below provide some indicators of abuse and these should not be seen as an exhaustive list or as a check list. Neglect is failure to provide for a child's basic needs within their own environment.

Neglect may be:

- Physical e.g., failure to provide necessary food or shelter, or lack of appropriate supervision. This would include failure to provide proper adult guardianship such as leaving children unsupervised at home for any extended period of time.
- Medical e.g. failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment
- Emotional e.g., a pattern of actions, such as: inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, or permitting the child to use alcohol or other drugs. Specific examples may include verbal humiliation, refusing to acknowledge the presence of a child, invasion of privacy for no specific reason, violent threats, etc.

Possible indicators of neglect

- Child is unwashed or hungry
- Parents are uninterested in child's academic performance
- Parents do not respond to repeated communications from Learnlife
- Child does not want to go home
- Both parents or legal guardians are absent from home for any period of 24 hours or greater without appropriate provision made for child's care, and a temporary guardian named and notified
- Parents cannot be reached in the case of emergency

Appendix 5 - Resources: staff and parents

Resources for staff and parents

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a legally-binding international agreement setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

[Infancia de Barcelona](#)

Information about social rights of children of the Ajuntament of Barcelona. Through this portal, the Area of Social Rights wants to make known all the municipal programs and services aimed at children and their families. You will also find information related to children from other institutions and entities.

[Servicios Sociales de Atención Primaria de la Generalitat de Catalunya](#)

Primary social care is the most immediate access point in the Catalan system of social services, and the closest to people and their family and social environment. Primary care social services meet all the demands and social needs of citizens (economic, care for dependents, addictions, care for children, gender violence, etc.) from which professionals make a diagnosis and they prepare an action plan applying all available resources.

[Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género](#)

The Ministry of Equality, through the Government Delegation against Gender Violence, provides information, legal advice and immediate psychosocial attention by specialized personnel for all forms of violence against women.

[ICMEC: International Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#)

The ICMEC Global Educator Centre for Excellence and the International Task Force on Child Protection have joined forces to provide resources on how to prevent and respond to child abuse, neglect and sexual exploitation to ensure no child stands alone. You can Report child sexual exploitation in any country to NCMEC's CyberTipline at report.cybertip.org.

[It gets better](#)

The It Gets Better Project is a nonprofit organization with a mission to uplift, empower, and connect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer youth around the globe. Learn more about our work Includes videos, films, books, and more.

[Stop bullying](#)

Information about bullying prevention and intervention. Available in English and Spanish.

[Resources by Dr. Daniel Siegel](#)

Dr. Siegel is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine and the founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA. In this website

you can find free resources and visuals based on his books about child development, social-emotional learning, parenting, amongst others.

Resources for staff

Details for Infancia Respon:

http://sac.gencat.cat/sacgencat/AppJava/organisme_fitxa.jsp?codi=13458

Generalitat: [PROTOCOL D'ACTUACIÓ ENTRE ELS DEPARTAMENTS DE BENESTAR SOCIAL I FAMÍLIA I D'ENSENYAMENT, DE DETECCIÓ, NOTIFICACIÓ, DERIVACIÓ I COORDINACIÓ DE LES SITUACIONS DE MALTRACTAMENT INFANTIL I ADOLESCENT EN L'ÀMBIT EDUCATIU](#)

[Protocol of Action Maltreatment Catalunya](#)

Protocol for Detection, notification, derivation and Coordination of Situations of Child and Adolescent Abuse in the Educational Area.

[Peer on peer Abuse Tool Kit](#)

Template peer-on-peer abuse policy (template policy), which encapsulates a Contextual Safeguarding approach. Elaborated by The Safeguarding Unit at Farrer & Co has produced the attached t in collaboration with Dr Carlene Firmin, MBE.

[CASEL](#)

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a trusted source for knowledge about high-quality, evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL). As a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, CASEL supports educators and policy leaders and enhances the experiences and outcomes for all PreK-12 students.

[UNICEF Violence Prevention Hand Book for Schools](#)

Information for schools for building effective violence prevention protocols, policies and interventions.

[Guía de elaboración del protocolo para la prevención y abordaje del acoso sexual y por razón de sexo en la empresa](#)

Resources for Parents

[Confident Parents Confident Kids](#)

A site for parents who wish to support their kids' social and emotional development.

[Great Schools](#)

GreatSchools is the leading national nonprofit empowering parents to unlock educational opportunities for their child. It includes a search engine that allows access to diverse articles about parenting, emotional support and education

Applicable staff names and contact details

Devin Carberry - Hub Lead Urban Hub; Hub Lead EcoHub

devin@learnlife.com

Daniela Porta - Well-being Learning Guide - Child Protection Officer

daniela@learnlife.com

Gabriela Albano - Learning and Operations Champion - Parent Communication

gaby@learnlife.com

Reporting Hotlines

[Infancia Responde](#)

Phone Number: **116 111**

Call to get guidance on how to proceed in case you identify any signs of Child Abuse or Neglect. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (open every day of the year including national holidays). They work in Spanish and Catalán but you can schedule a call with an English speaker if needed. This organism works in alignment with the Direcció General d'Atenció a la Infància i Adolescència (DGAIA) of the [Department of Social Rights of the Generalitat de Catalunya](#).

[Mossos d'Esquadra](#)

Emergency phone number: **112**

Mossos d'Esquadra is the police of Catalonia. During the 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, you can go to any of the police units (police stations, police offices, citizen service offices, etc.) to report and to carry out any action related to police activity .

[Servicios Sociales](#)

Emergency Phone number: **900 703 030**

Social service centers (CSS) provide information, guidance and care centers with the aim of dealing with social problems that affect people and families.

[Delegación del Gobierno contra la Violencia de Género](#)

Emergency phone number: **016**

WhatsApp: **600 000 016**

General information: 24 hours Monday to Sunday) in 16 languages.

Legal advisory (8:00- 22:00 Monday to Sunday)

[NCMEC's CyberTipline](#)

You can Report child sexual exploitation in any country to NCMEC's CyberTipline at report.cybertip.org

CP.2 Restraint and seclusion policy

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure community members are informed about situations requiring learner restraint and/or seclusion and that, if necessary, appropriate standards and procedures are followed.

As a general understanding, Learnlife staff should avoid restraining any learner and solo seclusion is not a preferred practice at any time.

Definitions

Physical restraint

In this policy, physical restraint means the use of physical force to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of a learner's body or part of their body. Learners are not free to move away when they are being physically restrained. Physical restraint should only be used when it is immediately required to protect the safety of the learner or any other person.

Seclusion

Seclusion covers a context where a learner needs to move away from the rest of their peers. It should only happen with an adult present and with a second adult able to fully observe at all times. As outlined above, it may be appropriate to move outside with a learner needing seclusion and sit with them in a public space.

No physical restraint should be used. No learner should ever be left in solitary confinement.

1. When physical restraint or seclusion should not be used

Physical restraint and seclusion should not be used unless immediately required to protect the safety of the learner or any other person (refer to section below).

Duty of Care Judgement

The decision about whether to use physical restraint or seclusion rests with the professional judgement of the team member/s involved, who will need to take into account their duty of care to their learners.

In almost all cases there should not be restraint or seclusion. Team members should note that they will be individually legally responsible for their actions.

Restraint and seclusion **must never** be seen as routine behaviour management techniques, to punish or discipline a learner. The challenge to use professional judgement in the middle of an incident can be challenging. These examples should help:

- If a learner refuses to comply with a direction, means other than physical restraint or seclusion should be employed. The key exemption to this advice would be if any refusal to comply creates an imminent risk to the safety of the learner or another person (e.g. a young child stepping out in front of a vehicle on a road).

NB: in almost every context, restraint should not be used. Rather stay in contact with the person and have another adult in direct visible connection.

- a learner leaving the space without permission would not warrant restraint or seclusion:

unless that conduct causes an imminent risk to the safety of the learner or another person.

NB: In practice this means that you would not restrain a learner who leaves a space without permission, rather an adult may choose to stay with a learner if they demonstrate emotional instability. In such circumstances seek to have another adult directly viewing the context.

- verbal threats of harm from a learner would not necessarily warrant restraint or seclusion. An exception may be where there is a reasonable and clear belief that the threat will be immediately enacted.

NB: if the learner threatens physical harm to self or others, a lockdown or evacuation should occur and police and parent/guardian immediately contacted.

- property destruction caused by the learner would not necessarily warrant restraint or seclusion. An exception may be where it is clear that destruction is placing any person at immediate risk of harm.

NB: if any person is at risk from property destruction, a lockdown or evacuation may be the better action, leaving someone in contact with the person.

Types of physical restraint which must never be used include:

- any restraint which covers the learner's mouth or nose, and in any way restricts breathing.
- the application of pressure to a learner's neck, chest, abdomen, joints or pressure points to cause pain or which involves the hyperextension of joints.
- holding a learner's head forward, headlocks, or choke holds.
- take-downs which allow learners to free-fall to the ground whether or not in a prone or supine position or otherwise.
- wrestling holds (including 'full or half nelsons'), using a hog-tied position or straddling any part of a learner's body.

- basket holds, bear hugs, or 'therapeutic holding'.

2. When physical restraint or seclusion may be used

Restraint

Learnlife team members may only use physical restraint on a learner when there is an imminent threat of physical harm or danger to the learner or others; and where such action would be considered reasonable in all the circumstances and there is no other less restrictive means of responding under the circumstances.

e.g. a young learner potentially stepping in front of a vehicle. However, normal outdoor activity protocols should remove the risk of such an occurrence almost entirely.

During Restraint

If applying physical restraint in the very limited circumstances set out above, team members must:

- use the minimum force required to avoid the dangerous behaviour or risk of harm.
- only restrain the learner for the minimum duration required and stop restraining the learner once the danger has passed.
- touch only the shoulders of the person

Team members should ensure the type of restraint used is consistent with a learner's individual needs and circumstances, including:

- the age/size of the learner.
- gender of the learner.
- any impairment of the learner e.g. physical, intellectual, neurological, behavioural, sensory (visual or hearing), or communication.
- any mental or psychological conditions of the learner, including any experience of trauma.
- any other medical conditions of the learner.
- the likely response of the learner.
- the environment in which the restraint is taking place.

Team members should monitor the learner for any indicators or distress. Team members should talk to the learner throughout the incident, making it clear to the learner why the physical restraint is being applied.

NB: Prolonged restraint should never be used.

Seclusion

As a general rule, seclusion should not be used. If a learner needs space, an adult should stay with them. This may also be best outside and away from the view of other learners. A

second adult should maintain direct vision at all times. Any parents/guardians should be informed as soon as practicable.

2.1 Actions after restraint has been used

Action: Reporting of the physical restraint/seclusion.

Description: The team member(s) involved in the incident must immediately notify the Hub Lead of the incident. A team member should contact the learner's parents and provide them with details of the incident as soon as possible.

Action: Providing supports for those involved

Description: Following the use of restraint on a learner, appropriate supports must be offered to the following people:

- the learner who has been restrained and their parents/guardians.
- other learners and team members who were involved in or witnessed the incident. This may include a debriefing in relation to the incident, and counselling support.

Action: Maintain records of the incident

Description: A written record of the incident and the physical restraint or seclusion used must be made by the Hub Lead, together with an employee immediately involved in the incident, as soon as practicable.

The Hub Lead should also arrange for all team members who were involved/present at the incident to prepare a statement/record of their involvement or observations of the incident.

The record should detail:

- the name of the learner/s and team member/s involved
- date, time and location of the incident
- a written statement from the team member
- names of witnesses (team and other learners)
- what exactly happened, for example, a brief factual account
- any action taken to de-escalate the situation
- why physical intervention was used (if applicable)
- the nature of any physical intervention used
- how long the physical intervention lasted
- names of witnesses (team and other learners)
- the learner's response and the outcome of the incident
- any injuries or damage to property
- immediate post incident actions, such as first aid or contact with emergency services
- details of contact with the learner's parent/representative
- details of any post-incident support provided or organised

Action: Plan for the future

Description: Post-incident, the team should consider the preventative and de-escalation strategies that might reduce the likelihood of an incident happening again. For example, considering the training needs of team members working closely with the learner/s involved in the incident.