

# Roots *and* Shoots

## Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Last Updated: 3 Nov 2026

Next Update: 1st August 2026

Walnut Tree Walk, Kennington, SE11 6DN
Charity number: 1064070

## The Roots and Shoots Safeguarding Team

The whole Roots and Shoots safeguarding team can be contacted via:
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# Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Introduction

Roots and Shoots is an independent, award-winning educational and environmental charity based in Kennington, South London, which provides accessible and positive vocational and educational opportunities for young people in London with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Roots and Shoots is committed to safeguarding the welfare of young people who come into contact with its staff and others who take part in the charity's activities both on and offsite, and fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding.

For the purposes of this Policy, the term 'young people' is used to describe all children and adults on our educational programmes, all of whom have special educational needs and disabilities, and all of whom are considered vulnerable. The term 'staff' is used to describe Roots and Shoots employees, trustees and volunteers.

This Policy applies to all staff, visitors to the site and associated employers/work placements, and sets out everyone's responsibilities when working or coming into contact with young people in the course of their normal duties. All staff are responsible for the protection of young people, forming part of a wider safeguarding system, as laid down by the Department of Education and supported by our home borough Lambeth Council. No single professional can have a full picture of a young person's needs and circumstances, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Staff failure to comply with this policy will be taken extremely seriously and may result in action being taken under Roots and Shoots' disciplinary procedure.

## 2. Policy Statement

**Roots and Shoots defines Safeguarding as:**

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of young people as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting young people from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing impairment of young people's mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

**Roots and Shoots believes that:**

- All young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse.
- All young people with SEND are individuals with different needs and different ways of communicating who face different risks; they are not a single group.
- All must treat young people with care, respect and dignity.
- The welfare of young people is the paramount consideration.

**Roots and Shoots undertakes to:**

- Abide by established structured procedures which are followed by all staff, alongside systematic means of monitoring young people known or thought to be at risk of harm.
- Provide an environment in which young people feel safe, secure, valued and respected, where they can feel confident.
- Where relevant regarding its activities, that all risks are appropriately identified and assessed.
- Ensure that all staff recognise that they are perceived by young people as trusted representatives of Roots and Shoots.
- Communication with young people is open and clear, and relevant to each young person's communication abilities, and that, where appropriate, records of official communication are kept;
- Embed key concepts of Child Protection and Safeguarding within the educational curriculum of all young people (including digital technologies).
- Listen to young people and take their concerns seriously, escalating and

providing additional support where necessary.

- Look at the whole picture for every young person including and beyond their SEND to understand, question and evaluate the challenges and risks they may be experiencing.
- Acknowledge that not all young people will have the ability or desire to communicate that there is an issue, and that there is a need to monitor behaviour to identify potential concerns.
- Any concerns raised by staff in connection with the welfare of young people in Roots and Shoots' care are fully investigated.
- Suitable levels of support and training to staff are provided consistent with their involvement with young people both in educational settings and in work placements.

**Through this Policy, Roots and Shoots will ensure that:**

- We practice safe recruitment by checking the suitability of staff who work with young people using safe recruitment procedures.
- All staff are able to make informed responses to specific safeguarding issues, and understand their responsibilities in identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns.
- All staff are able to report any concerns through the appropriate channels.
- Any allegations of harm or abuse or concerns over the welfare of young people are taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately.
- Maintain positive ongoing working relationships with all other agencies involved in safeguarding young people.

In following this Policy, staff are always expected to maintain a sense of proportion and protect the young person's welfare as a priority.

## 3. Safer Recruitment

The vast majority of people who want to work or volunteer for Roots and Shoots are well motivated and enhance our charitable mission. Roots and Shoots adopts safer recruitment procedures that help deter, identify and reject people who might put vulnerable young people at risk.

Effective recruitment and selection processes can narrow out these risks. As a minimum Roots and Shoots commits that all recruitment procedures are as follows;

- Job descriptions are made so the individual understands what is expected of them.
- Adverts are posted so individuals understand how to apply and what is required of them.
- When applicants apply, they can self-declare any criminal convictions.
- At least two Roots and Shoots members of staff meet the applicant before offer and an interview takes place to make sure any gaps in their application are filled in.
- Staff require an enhanced DBS certificate, which includes a barred list check. All teaching staff employed to carry out work will require additional checks to ensure that they are not prohibited from teaching.
- All new staff attend an induction, and some have specific training. Through this they learn about Roots and Shoots policies and procedures to which they are expected to adhere.
- Where an individual starts work in regulated activity before the DBS certificate is available, we will ensure that the individual is appropriately supervised and that all other checks, including a separate barred list check, have been completed.
- All volunteers will be suitably supervised and are subject to an Enhanced DBS Check but without a check of the Barred list. Supervised activity does not fall under the definition of Regulated Activity.

All staff and trustees must read the Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education as part of their induction, and then annually, to keep up to date with current guidance, which is monitored by education managers. This Guidance informs our Safeguarding Policy.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

**The Role of Director**

The Director will ensure that Roots and Shoots meets its statutory duties with regard to safeguarding and protecting young people.

The Director will ensure that the following are in place:

- Safeguarding policies and procedures in place are consistent with Lambeth safeguarding children board procedures.
- A staff Code of Conduct Policy including policies covering staff/pupil

relationships and communication and staff use of social media.

The Director will ensure that a senior member of staff is appointed the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer with responsibilities for carrying out the statutory duties as set out in this policy.

## The Role of Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer

Roots and Shoots has appointed **Angela Barredo**, Head of Education and Operations to be Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer, and to have overall responsibility for compliance with this Policy.

For all Roots and Shoots organised or approved activities and events involving young people, the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will lead on safeguarding young people, raising awareness of this Policy and its guidelines among other staff where appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will:

- Be the main point of contact for all safeguarding concerns.
- Be the direct liaison between young people, families and other relevant agencies eg. social services, police, etc.
- Have responsibility to provide advice and guidance to staff who during the course of their work, believe that a young person may be at risk of harm and/or have concerns over a young person's welfare.
- Have oversight of the delivery of the recommendations within Educational, Health and Social Care Plans and/or Child Protection Plans and will disseminate information to relevant staff members as appropriate.
- Ensure that if staff members attend a specific safeguarding meeting, they have the authority to make decisions and commit resources on behalf of the organisation.

During term time the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer and or a Deputy Safeguarding Officer will be available during teaching hours for staff to discuss any safeguarding concerns. The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will ensure that there are adequate and appropriate cover arrangements when required.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer and any Deputies should undergo appropriate training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The training should be updated every two years.

**The Role of Deputy Safeguarding Officers**

Deputy Safeguarding Officers have also been appointed to take on the responsibility in the absence of the Safeguarding Lead Officer. The ultimate responsibility for safeguarding remains with the Safeguarding Lead Officer.

Roots and Shoots has appointed **Linda Phillips** and **Claire Binns** as Deputy Safeguarding Officers.

**The Role of Trustees**

Although Trustees are not operational, they have a duty to ensure that the policies and procedures are in place, and thus they also receive safeguarding training as part of their role with annual updates.

A named trustee will be designated to support the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer who has appropriate experience in this field.

The current designated Safeguarding Support Trustee is **Jacqueline Thomson**.

**The Role of Staff**

Roots and Shoots staff are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for young people, and prevent concerns from escalating. If staff members have any concerns about a young person's welfare they should report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer.

If a young person is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will refer to the relevant authorities and/or the police immediately.

Though the responsibility to refer to young people's social care lies with the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer, anyone can make a referral. Where referrals are not made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer should be informed, as soon as possible, that a referral has been made.

All staff members undergo safeguarding training at induction, and must renew their training annually.

All staff members will receive regular safeguarding updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, staff meetings), as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard young people effectively.

## 5. How do I raise a concern?

Staff should remember that they are not formally trained to deal with situations of abuse, concerns over a young person's welfare or to decide if abuse has occurred and should therefore immediately report any concerns following the procedures below.

All concerns, allegations or actual incidents under the supervision of Roots and Shoots shall be reported to the Safeguarding Officers. Safeguarding Officers can be reached in person or via email or phone (see Page 1 of this Policy for details), or by completing the **Safeguarding Report Form** on the Roots and Shoots Intranet (https://intranet.rootsandshoots.org.uk > Safeguarding > Raising a Concern).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will investigate the concerns and/or allegations, and keep an appropriate written record. The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will ensure that all such records are kept securely.

The investigation may result in other agencies being contacted. In other instances it may result in procedures being invoked, such as the disciplinary and/or grievance procedures.

All information in relation to such incidents should be recorded and must include as a minimum:

- The date and time of the disclosure, concern, allegation or actual abuse incident.
- Details given about the incident.
- An indication of the parties involved.
- Details of any action that Roots and Shoots has taken.
- Details of further reporting actions (e.g. to relevant agencies and organisations).

Any concern raised will be treated confidentially. It will be passed by the specialist organisation to the Safeguarding Officer who will review the information and determine how best to address the issues raised.

## 6. Raising a concern about Safeguarding Practice

Initial concerns should be raised with the Director. Where staff feel unable to raise an issue or feel that their concern is not being addressed, follow the Whistle Blowing procedures outlined in the Staff Behaviour Policy.

## 7. Working With Parents and Carers

Roots and Shoots recognises the importance of working together in partnership with parents and carers to ensure the welfare and safety of young people.

Roots and Shoots will:

- Make parents and carers aware of our statutory role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people, including the duty to refer young people onto the relevant agencies/health professionals where necessary.
- Ensure a robust complaints procedure is in place to deal with issues raised by parents and carers.
- That parents and carers are aware that Policies are available on the website or on request.

## 8. Work Placements and Offsite Activities

As part of their vocational training, young people at Roots and Shoots take part in a range of activities and work placement opportunities both on and offsite. These range from onsite activities to London-wide public educational visits to work placements with local employers.

Roots and Shoots ensures that all Offsite Visits are:

- Pre-planned and risk-assessed.
- Supervised by at least one teacher and one learning support assistant per group, including at least one staff member with first aid training.
- Monitored and recorded by office administration.

Roots and Shoots ensures that all Work Placements are:

- Inspected by qualified staff regarding health and safety with a risk assessment, as well as for appropriateness in regards to each young person's needs and development.
- Covered under the Roots and Shoots insurance policies.
- Monitored by the Roots and Shoots careers team, including attendance for each session.
- When young people are being transported to and from work placements they must be accompanied by a member of staff, parent, carer or relevant Local Authority-organised transportation, or trained to travel independently.

Allegations regarding an incident at a work placement will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer, and if necessary, the police.

## 9. Teaching Young People About Safeguarding

Roots and Shoots ensures that young people are taught about keeping themselves safe, through embedded teaching, as well as both group and individual counselling sessions.

We offer a range of personal and professional educational classes including First Aid, Food Hygiene and Safety, Fire Awareness, Anti-bullying, Digital Safety and Relationships and Sex Education. We also invite educational visits from relevant organisations such as the local community police and other specialists to engage with young people on relevant topics.

## 10. Online Safety

The use of technology and social media has become a significant component of safeguarding young people - technology often provides a platform to facilitate harm in a wide range of areas. It is essential that young people are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material.

As such, Roots and Shoots ensures that:

- Appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place on all digital equipment at Roots and Shoots.
- Young people are not permitted to use personal mobile phones while onsite, including on breaks.
- Young people are aware that as well as in person, we have a zero tolerance policy for bullying and inappropriate behaviour via social media.
- Embedded within their educational programmes, young people are taught to recognise risk and build resilience in online spaces in order to manage potential risk themselves and recognise where they need to ask for advice from staff.

## 11. PREVENT Duty

Protecting young people from the risk of radicalisation is part of Roots and Shoots wider safeguarding duties. Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. The internet and the use of social media in particular has become a major factor in the radicalisation of young people.

The Government's **PREVENT strategy** focuses on stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It is part of the Government's counter terrorism strategy CONTEST, which is led by the Home Office.

Roots and Shoots recognise their role in the PREVENT duty which has 3 national objectives:

- **Objective 1**: respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.
- **Objective 2:** prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.
- **Objective 3:** work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

In respect of the PREVENT agenda, Roots and Shoots will ensure that:

- Staff have adequate training and know how to safeguard and support vulnerable individuals who they feel may be at risk of being radicalised by extremists.
- Appropriate systems are in place for staff to raise concerns if they think this form of exploitation is taking place.
- Roots and Shoots promotes and operates safe environments where extremists are unable to operate.
- British Values are promoted and embedded within educational programmes.

If any member of Roots and Shoots has concerns regarding the radicalisation of an individual, they should report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer.

## 12. Physical Intervention/Positive Handling

All staff are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with young people and their families. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and young people, staff should avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.

## 13. Safeguarding Visitors and Contractors

Roots and Shoots' regular activities include a venue hire service for reputable organisations and charities to hire out our hall and meeting rooms, as well as regular

corporate volunteer groups who do outdoor site maintenance, and so we regularly have a range of visitors on site.

- Organisations are pre-screened to ensure they fit the ethos of the organisation and are appropriate for young people before a booking is made.
- All visitors are asked to wear a Visitor or Volunteer lanyard while on the premises on arrival.
- All visitors not wearing a lanyard onsite will be challenged by staff.
- Visitors are made aware of the primary activities of vocational training for young people with special educational needs which take place onsite, and that they must act appropriately at all times.
- Visitors are not permitted to interact with young people.
- Visitors have no access to classrooms and educational areas.

Roots and Shoots also regularly has contractors on site for site and building maintenance and improvements.

- Contractors must sign in at reception on arrival and wear the Contractor badge at all times while onsite.
- Contractors are supported by site and office staff and are regularly monitored.
- Contractors are mostly onsite during holiday periods when young people are not onsite. Regular contractors are enhanced DBS-checked.
- Contractors are asked to protect their working space and tools in line with health and safety procedures.

## 14. Allegation of Abuse Made Against Roots and Shoots Staff

Parents and carers have the right to make a formal complaint against the action of Roots and Shoots and such complaints will be dealt with in line with the organisation's Complaints Procedures.

Where it is alleged that a member of staff (including volunteers) at Roots and Shoots has:

- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a young person.
- Indicated a potential risk of harm to a young person.

The matter will be dealt with in line with the allegations procedures as set out in Part Four of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016.

Allegations against staff must be brought immediately to the attention of the Director, not the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer. The Director will only carry out initial enquiries (**not an investigation**) prior to a discussion with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Any allegation relating to the Director **must** be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Roots and Shoots' Trustees who will consult LADO.

**All referrals relating to an allegation against an adult working with young people will be made to social care via Local Authority Designated Officer using the LADO referral form.**

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching or allegations that are historical will be referred to the police.

## 15. Policy Reviews

This policy is reviewed as necessary, always following a serious incident or near miss, and at least once a year.

# APPENDIX

## A. Good Practice Guidelines

The following are common sense examples of how staff can create a positive culture when engaging with young people at Roots and Shoots.

Good Practice means:

- Never making gratuitous physical contact with a young person. There may be occasions where a distressed participant needs comfort which may include physical comforting and staff should use their discretion to ensure that it is appropriate and not unnecessary or unjustified contact.
- Treat all young people equally, and with respect and dignity. Roots and Shoots takes positive action to eliminate discrimination against any person or group of people. Staff should ensure that young people are protected from discrimination on any grounds, including ability and challenge discriminating comments and behaviour. Activities should be designed to include all young people and to promote positive attitudes towards differences.
- Be clear about what the objectives of the activity are before it begins and always put the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintain safe and appropriate boundaries with young people (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship).
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers young people to share in the decision-making process.
- Conduct yourself in a manner that sets a good example to the participants. Be an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol or swearing in the company of/whilst responsible for young people.
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Never use physical force against a young person, unless it constitutes reasonable restraint to protect them or another person or to protect property. If it is necessary to restrain a young person because they are an immediate danger to themselves, others or to property, then the minimum amount of force should be used for the shortest amount of time. Remain calm and get the attention and support of other staff. The incident should be recorded in writing, with a witness statement (where possible), immediately afterwards.
- Always refer any problems to the Safeguarding Officer.

- Questioning any unknown adult who enters Roots and Shoots premises without a lanyard and/or who attempts to engage with a young person.
- Escalating any concerns about young people at risk of radicalisation to the Safeguarding Officer, who can assess whether a referral to the Channel programme is appropriate.

Practices never to be sanctioned:

- Engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Young person's inappropriate use of language and/or behaviour. This should always be challenged.
- Reducing a young person to tears as a form of control.
- Allegations made by a young person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature for young people that they can do for themselves (e.g. apply sunscreen).

## B. Responding to a Disclosure of Abuse

- Always stop and listen to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse, without displaying shock and disbelief.
- Take the young person seriously. Always assume that they are telling the truth.
- Do not promise confidentiality; you have a duty to discuss the concern/disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt. For example you could say; "you are not to blame." "You have done the right thing to tell someone."
- Do not ask leading questions. In cases where criminal proceedings occur, such questioning can cause evidence to become invalid.
- Do not ask the young person to repeat the incident for another member of staff.
- The young person may well have to tell the story again, and to do so repeatedly can cause undue stress.
- End by summarising what has been said and what action has been agreed.
- Be clear about what you intend to do next - reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer.
- Record carefully what has been said and what actions have been agreed.

## C. London Borough Safeguarding Team Contact Details

We work with young people from across London, who live in different boroughs. Below are the contact details of the 8 borough's Safeguarding Teams we work with the most.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Lambeth Safeguarding Team** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>**Professionals:** 02079 263 100<br>**Public:** 02079 265 555 | **About an adult**<br><br>**Professionals:** 02079 265 555<br>**Public:** 02079 265 555 |
| **Southwark Safeguarding Team** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>**Southwark MASH**<br>(Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)<br><br>02075 251 921<br>02075 255 000 (out of hours) | **About an adult with physical disabilities**<br>02075 253 324<br><br>**With a mental illness or impairment**<br>02075 250 088<br><br>**For adults with learning disabilities or living with autism**<br>02075 252 333 |
| **Croydon Safeguarding Team** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>**Professionals:** 02087 266 464<br>**Public:** 02082 552 888 | **About an adult**<br><br>02087 266 500 |
| **Wandsworth Safeguarding Team** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>**Initial point of contact** (IPOC)<br>02088 716 622<br>02088 716 000 (out of hours) | **About an adult**<br><br>02088 717 707 |
| **Lewisham & Greenwich Trust** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>**Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust Safeguarding Children Advice Line** (SCAL)<br>07867 843 532<br><br>**Lewisham Council Multiagency Safeguarding Hub** (MASH)<br>02083 146 660<br><br>02083 146 000 (out of hours) | **About an Adult**<br><br>**Adult Social Care Access & Information Team** (SCAIT)<br>02083 147 777 |

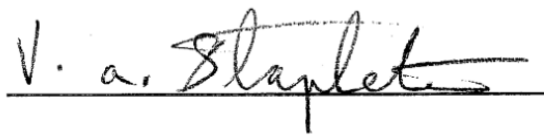
| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Greenwich Safeguarding Team** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>02089 213 172<br>02088 548 888 (out of hours)<br><br>**For Professionals**<br>02089 212 267 | **About an adult**<br><br>02089 212 304<br>02088 548 888 (out of hours) |
| **Westminster Social Services** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>02076 414 000<br>02076 416 000 (out of hours) | **About an adult**<br><br>**Westminster Social Services**<br>02076 412 176<br>02076 411 175<br>02076 411 444<br>02076 416 000 (out of hours) |
| **Brent Safeguarding Team** | **About a child or young person**<br><br>**Office hours**<br>(Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm)<br>02089 374 300 (option 1)<br><br>**Outside office hours**<br>Call our emergency duty team on<br>020 8863 5250 | **About an adult**<br><br>**Brent Adult Safeguarding team**<br>**Office hours**<br>(Mon – Fri 9am - 5pm)<br>02089 374 300<br>(select Adult Social Care)<br><br>**Outside office hours**<br>(weekends, bank holidays and weekdays 5pm - 9am)<br>Emergency Duty Team<br>020 8863 5250<br><br>You can also email:<br>safeguardingadults@brent.gov.uk |

**Signed by the Director:**



**Date:** 3 Nov 2026

**Signed by the Chair of Trustees:**



**Date:** 3 Nov 2026