



Keeping Children Safe in Out of School Settings

Clubs, classes and creative sessions are great ways for children and young people to have fun, play, learn new skills, make new friendships and gain useful life skills. Known as Out of School Settings*, these sessions involve a variety of activities that encourage children and young people's extracurricular interests, improve their physical, social and emotional well-being. They can include sport, art and drama, learning a musical instrument or language, joining a uniformed youth organisation, eg scouts and guides and religious instruction. Sports coaches, tutors, groups and religious leaders (offering education in their own faith) and other adults involved in these settings have an overriding responsibility to safeguard all children and young people using these provisions.

Considerations for parents and carers

The safety of children and young people is a priority and as a parent or carer most providers will expect you to ask them questions.

It is always worth a visit to observe how staff and/or volunteers interact with the children and young people, this will help you decide if the Out of School Setting is suitable for your child(ren) and that the activities they provide are safe and well managed. Another way of checking if the setting is safe and well managed is to speak to parents/carers already using the facility. Here are some questions to consider asking:

- do all the staff/volunteers have a valid Disclosure Baring Service check (DBS)?
- who has overall responsibility for safeguarding and may I/we have a copy of your safeguarding policy?
- are the premises safe, for example are fire notices displayed?
- who is responsible for first aid?
- is there a parental consent and emergency contact form that I/we need to complete?
- are the necessary building insurances in place, in date and available on request?





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Responsibilities for providers

It is great that so many volunteers give up their free time and offer learning and enjoyable experiences to children and young people.

An Out of School Setting has a duty of care to the children and young people who attend which means they have a legal obligation to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and protect them from harm. The steps taken may vary depending on the type of activity, where it is located and the age ranges of those attending.

As a minimum all settings should have:

- A safeguarding policy (including online and digital safety)
- Health and safety procedures including insurances and fire safety
- DBS checks for staff and volunteers
- It is important that settings are aware of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 as there are occasions when the sharing of information is part of keeping children and young people safe.

Worried about a child?

If you feel that a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm, please call the police on **999** who can provide an immediate response. Alternatively, you can contact your local police on **101** at any time.

If your concern does not require immediate action, please contact the Waltham Forest Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to discuss it, they can be contacted on:

Tel: **020 8496 2310** (Monday to Thursday 9am - 5.15pm, Friday 9am - 5pm)

Tel: **020 8496 3000** (out of hours)

For more information on Out of School Settings please visit:

www.walthamforest.gov.uk/outofschoolsettings