

Child Protection Policy

LIFTeracy · Version 2.0 · October 2026

Replaces version 1.0 of 25 February 2026

In short

- Every child has the right to learn free from harm. The child's best interests come first in every decision we make.
- Children use LIFTeracy through a WhatsApp bot on a parent's phone, so most of the risks are digital: unsuitable content, recordings heard or shared too widely, contact outside approved channels, and things a child says in a recording.
- Anyone who sees or hears something worrying reports it to the Child Protection Officer the same day. If a child is in immediate danger, call **112** first. For child-specific help, call **CHILDLINE 1098**.

1. Who this policy covers

This policy applies to everyone who works on LIFTeracy or who reaches children or their data through it:

- LIFTeracy staff, contractors, interns and volunteers, including the technical team, who can hear recordings;
- partner organisations and their field staff, who visit schools and help teachers enrol families (partner organisations also comply with this policy);
- government teachers and officials who use LIFTeracy dashboards, in their use of LIFTeracy;
- researchers, evaluators, and any service provider that handles children's recordings.

Everyone signs the Code of Conduct in §5 before they are given access. For teachers and officials, accepting the Terms of Use when they first open the dashboard counts as signing.

2. Definitions

- **Child:** anyone under 18. Most children using LIFTeracy are 6 to 10.
- **Abuse:** physical, emotional or sexual harm, neglect or exploitation, online or offline. This includes offences under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012.
- **Child data:** a child's name, age, school, voice recordings, transcripts and scores, and the parent's phone number.
- **Child Protection Officer (CPO):** the person responsible for this policy and for handling every report. LIFTeracy's CPO is Thomas Delaney.

3. Our principles

- **Best interests of the child** come before programme targets, research or publicity.
- **Zero tolerance** of abuse, exploitation, grooming and corporal punishment.
- **Equal protection** for every child, whatever their gender, caste, religion, disability or language.
- **Parents stay in charge.** The account belongs to the parent, who can stop at any time. No family is ever pressured to join.

- **Least access.** Each adult sees only the child data their role requires, as set out in the Privacy Policy.

4. Risks specific to LIFTeracy, and what we do

Risk	What we do
Unsuitable content reaches a child	The bot teaches reading only and does not chat. Every reading passage, including those written with AI, is reviewed before children see it, and screened for violence, adult themes and anything that singles out caste or religion. A passage reported as unsuitable is removed within one working day.
An adult contacts a child through LIFTeracy	Children use a parent's phone, and the bot talks only to that number. Staff never message families from personal numbers. The dashboard cannot be used to message children.
Recordings are heard or shared too widely	Only the child's teacher, the officials and field staff responsible for that school, and technical staff can hear a recording. Recordings stream from private storage and cannot be downloaded from the dashboard. Any public use needs separate Part B consent, and the recording is never shown with the child's name or school.
A child reveals harm in a voice note	Anyone who hears it, whether a teacher, official, staff member or reviewer, follows §6.
A child is pressured or shamed over scores	Scores are framed as practice, not tests. Dashboard messages praise effort and never single out a struggling child. Teachers are asked not to rank children publicly.
A child answers the consent question	The bot checks that an adult is answering before it asks for consent. Field staff explain this to parents at enrolment.
Field staff in schools	Field staff work in classrooms or school grounds with a teacher present, and are never alone with a child. They do not visit homes unless invited by a parent, and then only with another adult present.

5. Code of Conduct

When working on LIFTeracy, I will:

- treat children with respect and patience, and use simple, kind language;
- contact families only through the LIFTeracy bot, the school, or an official LIFTeracy number, never through my personal WhatsApp, phone or social media;
- listen to children's recordings only when my role needs it, and never download, forward, screenshot or post them, or keep them on my own phone;
- take photos or videos of children only for LIFTeracy, with the head teacher's permission and the parent's Part B consent, and never in a way that links a child's face to their name or school;
- never give children gifts, money or special treatment, or arrange to meet a child alone;
- never hit, humiliate, threaten or shame a child, including over reading scores;
- report any concern about a child's safety the same day, even if I'm unsure, and keep it confidential.

Breaking this Code may lead to removal of access, termination of a contract or job, and a report to the police.

6. Reporting a concern

A concern might come from something said in a recording, a message, something seen on a school visit, or the behaviour of a staff member, teacher or official.

1. **If a child is in immediate danger**, call 112 or the local police first, then tell the CPO.
2. **Report to the CPO the same day**: Thomas Delaney, tom@lifteracy.ai. Say what you saw or heard and when. Teachers and officials can also report through the child's school.
3. **Do not investigate yourself**. Do not question the child or confront the person involved, and do not delete the recording. Write down what you know, in the words used.
4. **The CPO decides on next steps within 24 hours**. These may include contacting CHILDLINE (1098) or the District Child Protection Unit, or reporting to the police. Under section 19 of the POCSO Act, anyone who knows of a sexual offence against a child must report it to the police or the Special Juvenile Police Unit.
5. **If the concern is about someone working on LIFTeracy**, the CPO suspends their access immediately while the matter is looked into. If the concern is about the CPO, report it to another member of the LIFTeracy board.

Reports are kept in a restricted file, separate from programme data, that only the CPO can open. Nobody who reports a concern in good faith will be penalised.

7. Children's data

The Privacy Policy explains how child data is collected, who can see it, and how long it is kept. In short:

- a parent consents by voice before we ask for a child's name or start lessons;
- above the teacher, names and phone numbers are masked;
- child data never goes into shared folders, onto personal devices, or into WhatsApp groups;
- a suspected data breach is reported the same day to the CPO and the technical lead, who notify the Data Protection Board of India and affected families as the law requires.

8. Recruitment and training

- Before anyone gets access to children or recordings, we check two references and they sign a declaration that they have no record of offences against children. This includes partner organisations' field staff.
- Field staff are trained on this policy before their first school visit. Training covers consent, parent-only answers, photos, and reporting.
- Teachers receive a one-page Hindi summary of the Code of Conduct and how to report a concern.
- The technical team is trained on handling recordings, including what to do if a recording reveals harm.

9. Responsibilities

CPO	Handles reports, keeps records, runs training, and reviews risks every quarter
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LIFTeracy board	Approves this policy, appoints the CPO, and receives a yearly safeguarding report
Partner organisations	Comply with this policy, make sure their field staff are screened and trained, and report concerns to the CPO
Technical team	Builds the protections in §4 and §7 into the bot and dashboards, and maintains access controls
Everyone	Follows the Code of Conduct and reports concerns the same day

10. Review

We review this policy every year. We also review it after any serious incident, before any major new feature that changes how children interact with LIFTeracy, and after any change in Indian law.

Approved by the LIFTeracy Board: _____ Date: _____

Child Protection Officer: Thomas Delaney, tom@lifteracy.ai

Related policies: LIFTeracy Privacy Policy; LIFTeracy Terms of Use