

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. Overview

1.1 Safeguarding¹ is at the heart of what we do and fundamental to our existence as a charity. We are all ambassadors for the NSPCC and for safeguarding. Some of us in the services directorates are specialists in child safeguarding practice, others in fundraising have contact with many adults and children, whilst others seldom meet the public as part of their work. Whatever your role, from the point of view of the public we are all the NSPCC, and they expect us to know what to do if they, or we, have concerns about a child².

1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the NSPCC's approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk or vulnerable adults³.

1.3 It applies to everyone working and volunteering for the NSPCC or acting for or on our behalf and provides the framework to help us safeguard children and adults at risk with commitment and confidence. It describes some corporate and directorate safeguarding responsibilities so that you know who to ask for decisions or advice when you need to.

2. Our approach to safeguarding

The NSPCC has adopted the Child Safe Organisation framework as a driver for embedding a safeguarding culture throughout the Society. This enables us to promote a culture of openness and trust and ensures that safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do.

Our Child Safe Organisation framework is based on principles. These are informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, relevant legislation, and guidance, and by the NSPCC's values, behaviours and understanding of best practice.

¹ Definitions: Safeguarding children is the action we taken to promote the welfare (or wellbeing) of children and protect them from harm. Child protection is part of the safeguarding continuum and focusses on the activity that is undertaken to protect individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm

² Child: This policy is in respect of all children. A child includes babies, children, and young people from pre-birth up to 18 years. In Scotland, the definition of a child varies in different legal contexts, but statutory guidance which supports the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#), includes all children and young people up to the age of 18. Where a young person between the age of 16 and 18 requires support and protection, services will need to consider which legal framework best fits each person's needs and circumstances.

³ An adult at risk is '*any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support*' (Care Act 2014 [England]). This definition is broadly consistent with definitions across the devolved nations. In Scotland, the definition of an 'adult at risk' or 'vulnerable adult' applies to those aged 16 years and over. Institute of Fundraising Guidance refers to 'vulnerable adults'. In its 'A practical guide to dealing with donations' it says that 'It is important to recognise the distinction between an individual lacking the mental capacity to make a decision and someone who has capacity but may be vulnerable at that moment in time. While both situations require a fundraiser to respond appropriately, the fact that issues around mental capacity have a legal context means that this needs to be understood as a discrete part of this area'.

CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION PRINCIPLES

1. **Safeguarding children comes first and is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture** – This means the best interests of the child are paramount in all considerations about their welfare and protection, including when to maintain confidentiality and when to share information about them.
2. **Children are listened to, informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously** – Children have a right to participate in decisions about their lives. Their views, wishes, feelings and experiences are evident in our work with them.
3. **Families and communities are informed about and involved in promoting the safeguarding of children** – Working together with children, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential to promoting children’s welfare/wellbeing and ensuring their protection.
4. **Equality is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice** – All children have a right to protection from harm and abuse, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, identity, or additional vulnerabilities, including protected characteristics.
5. **People working for us are suitable and supported to promote the safeguarding of children in their work** – All those who work for or on behalf of the NSPCC, staff, and volunteers, are required to abide by the organisation’s Safeguarding policies including the Code of Conduct and Appropriate Professional Boundaries policy.
6. **Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to safeguard children through ongoing learning and training** – All staff and volunteers are required to complete a mandatory e-learning safeguarding module. Additional safeguarding training is undertaken commensurate to people’s roles.
7. **Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children, physically and online.** There are a suite of policy, procedure and guidance that is monitored, reviewed, and updated every three years.

3. The ‘building blocks’ of our safeguarding work

NSPCC safeguarding comprises the following seven key areas of activity referred to as our building blocks:

CULTURE AND VALUES

Safeguarding is at the heart of the culture and values of the NSPCC. Our culture supports, enables, and mandates our approach to safeguarding. Our values embody our charity and reflect what we stand for. Value-based behavioural framework sets out what we do for children and the expectations of staff and volunteers.

Our Child Safe Organisation framework acts as a driver to embed a safeguarding culture across the whole organisation.

Lead director: People director on behalf of the CEO and Executive Board.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

We apply a fair and consistent approach to recruitment to draw our workforce from the widest pool and select the best people on merit. As an organisation committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk, we have robust recruitment policies and procedure to ensure that we appoint staff and volunteers that are appropriately qualified and have the skills and knowledge to deliver a quality service. It minimises the risk of engaging anyone, as a staff member or volunteer, who may pose a risk to children.

Lead director: People director

EFFECTIVE POLICIES PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

We have safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance that set out the NSPCC's expectations of staff and volunteers. These are reviewed and updated every three years. Policies reflect new learning and are consistent with best safeguarding practice and legislation and guidance across the four United Kingdom (UK) nations (England, Northern Ireland, Wales, and Scotland) and Jersey.

Lead director: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

COMPETENT & CONFIDENT WORKFORCE

We provide mandatory safeguarding induction and refresher training and role-specific training. This includes the training and the developing of our workforce within professional regulatory requirements. We ensure that our frontline and specialist staff and volunteers have the skills they require, and we support everyone in the NSPCC to trust their judgement and act on safeguarding concerns.

Lead director: CEO for corporate safeguarding training and for social work regulatory requirements; Fundraising and Engagement and Communications for fundraising regulatory requirements

ACTIVELY MANAGING SAFEGUARDING RISK

Managing risk is central to how we safeguard children and vulnerable adults through our local services and helplines. Working within a multi-agency approach we escalate our concerns as necessary to be satisfied that the child or adult at risk has been protected. We oversee risk management in directorates through quality assurance processes, and at a corporate level through independent inspection and the active management of safeguarding as a strategic risk is owned by the chief executive officer.

The organisation has a Managing Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers procedure for investigating allegations against staff and volunteers and to report significant incidents to the Charity Commission and relevant local authority/trust.

SUPERVISION AND ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS

There is an expectation that all supervision and one-to-one meetings include safeguarding, proportionate to the role undertaken by staff and volunteers.

Lead director: CEO is the owner of the strategic safeguarding risk.

4. Corporate policies and procedures including mandatory reading

In addition to this policy, all staff and volunteers must read and understand the following corporate safeguarding policies and procedures and guidance:

THE MANDATORY READS ARE:

What to do if you have concerns about a child Procedure

Code of Conduct

Appropriate Professional Boundaries Policy

OTHER SIGNIFICANT SAFEGUARDING POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE ARE:

Adults at Risk of Abuse Policy and Procedure

Case Review Procedures

Dignity at Work Policy

Female Genital Mutilation Policy Procedure and Guidance

Procedure for Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers

Historical Abuse Policy and Procedures

Online Safety Guidance

Radicalisation and Extremism Guidance

Recruitment and Selection Policy

In addition to these corporate policies, procedures and guidance individual directorates may require staff and volunteers to read and understand their specific safeguarding procedures.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Trustees

Are required to comply with the legal duties of charity trustees in the administration of the NSPCC's purpose and activities. Trustees have a general duty to take reasonable steps to govern and assess risks to the NSPCC's activities, beneficiaries, property, work or reputation. It is the role of the lead safeguarding trustee to oversee, champion, and challenge this work in relation to safeguarding.

5.2 CEO and Executive Board

The Executive Board (chief executive and the directors) are the accountable senior managers responsible for the management of serious safeguarding incidents. They work closely with the Trustees and carries out the day-to-day running of the organisation. The CEO is the risk owner of the strategic safeguarding risk register.

5.3 Directorates and Directorate Leads

Safeguarding practice in directorates is the responsibility of respective directors.

The role of the directorate safeguarding lead is to act as a focal point for safeguarding practice within the directorate, to advocate for implementation and communication of policy, and to advise colleagues and volunteers in the absence of other line managers.

Line managers, supervisors or co-ordinators staff and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding and child protection concerns are addressed through respective line management structures in accordance with this Policy and 'What to do if you are concerned about a child Procedure and the Adult at Risk policy and procedure.

5.4 Safeguarding Unit

The safeguarding unit acts as a champion and conscience for safeguarding in the NSPCC. They oversee corporate safeguarding ensuring that the NSPCC complies with legal, professional, and Charity Commission requirements of good practice. They support practice improvement in directorates when required and liaise with the safeguarding lead trustee on behalf of the Chief Executive.

They ensure corporate safeguarding policies, procedures and training are up to date in the light of new legislation, guidance and learning from practice. They are responsible for supporting the development of high-quality safeguarding practice and providing professional expertise in matters relating to safeguarding and social work practice. Based on a 'right to know' they are required to flag concerns and gaps in corporate and directorate safeguarding policy and practice when appropriate.

The safeguarding unit is directly involved in and supports NSPCC staff who have been working with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships through local representation and wider organisational engagement to raise the profile and understanding of the corporate strategic direction. The Safeguarding Unit monitors compliance with Section 11(England) and devolved nations equivalents.

5.5 Inspection Unit

The Inspection Unit provides an independent and objective inspection service to the NSPCC. The purpose of inspection is to provide an impartial view of the quality of services to children and families to the Board of Trustees and managers. The Inspection Unit provides this assurance through an agreed programme of inspections each year. The Inspection Unit derives its authority from the Board of Trustees and the Chief Executive. The Inspection Unit is managed by the Head

of Inspection who reports directly to the Chief Executive. The Head of Inspection also has direct access to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Inspectors are authorised to have, for the purpose of their work, unrestricted access at any time to all the NSPCC personnel, property, and operations records, with strict responsibility for safekeeping and confidentiality. The Inspection Unit does not have any direct responsibility for, or authority over, the activities it reviews.

To ensure that all risks are managed properly and our services work in the best interest of children and their families, the Inspection Unit routinely review organisational activities from a standard, quality, and a risk perspective. Inspections make recommendations based on their findings and subsequently check whether these are being implemented to support continuous improvement. Recommendations and their progress are reported Audit and Risk committee currently but will be reported to Service Development Committee from the Autumn onwards.