

New Opportunities for Community & Support (NOCS) charity: Safeguarding (Vulnerable People) Policy

1. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

New Opportunities for Community & Support (NOCS) supports and works with vulnerable children, young people and adults. We aim to make a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and we recognise the right of every individual to stay safe.

All NOCS members, volunteers, staff and trustees play an important part in promoting the welfare and protection of the vulnerable people with whom the Charity works. We recognise that Trustees have primary responsibility for safeguarding.

This policy seeks to ensure that NOCS undertakes its responsibilities with regard to the protection of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately in a timely manner. Any serious child protection matters will be passed immediately to social services. The policy establishes a framework to support Trustees and paid/unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

Legal Context (not exhaustive)

Some of the laws, regulations and guidance that affect safeguarding are:

Human Rights Act – 1998;
Care Standards Act – 2000;
Mental Capacity Act 2005;
The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act – 2006;
Dignity in Care Campaign – 2006;
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards – 2009;
Charity Commission - Strategy for Dealing with Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups including Children, Issues in Charities - 2013
Care Act – 2014
Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act – 2016

2. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is about embedding practices in NOCS to ensure the protection of children, young people and/or vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise for specific persons.

The Charity Commission defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups and children as:

- Protecting from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of health or development
- For children – ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Definition of a child

A child is under the age of 18, in line with Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act, 2014.

Definition of vulnerable adults

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm, or from being exploited.

This **may** include, for example, a person:

- Who has a disability or physical impairment
- With learning difficulties/disabilities
- With mental health needs
- With sensory impairments
- Who has suffered a head/brain injury
- Who misuses drugs and alcohol.
- Older people

Abuse: There is no overarching definition of abuse under the Care Act 2014. However abuse can be about:

- The violation of an individual's human and civil rights
- An action or inaction, either intentional or unintentional by another person or the person themselves
- The impact of the abuse affecting a person's wellbeing, which could be emotional, physical etc.

Recognising Types of abuse (examples):

- **Psychological** – includes emotional abuse / threats of harm or abandonment / deprivation of contact / humiliation / controlling behaviour / exploiting, corrupting/ cyber bullying / exposure to the ill treatment of someone else.
- **Discriminatory** – includes forms of harassment/slurs/less favourable treatment because of race/gender/gender identity/age/disability/sexual orientation or religion.
- **Physical** – includes assault/ hitting/ slapping/ pushing/ restraint/ inappropriate punishment/ shaking/ burning etc.

- **Financial/material** – includes theft/fraud/internet scams/coercion/misuse or misappropriation of property or possessions etc.
- **Neglect/acts of omission** – persistent ignoring of medical, emotional or physical care needs / failure to provide access to appropriate healthcare / withholding the necessities of life / unsupervised in inappropriate situations.
- **Sexual** – Includes indecent sexting or other sexually motivated use of the internet against another/ exposure / sexual harassment / exposure to pornography against the person's will or inappropriate to their mental capacity /rape and other sexual acts without consent etc.
- **Organisational** – covers neglect or poor practice within an organisation or in someone's own home. Can be through neglect or poor professional practice resulting from policies/culture/systems.
- **Self-neglect** – covers a wide range of behaviour e.g. Neglecting to care for one's own health/hygiene/surroundings/hoarding etc.
- **Domestic violence and abuse** – the definition of domestic abuse is “*Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional, controlling and coercive) between those aged 16 and over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality or other protected characteristics.*” This list is not exhaustive but provides examples.

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and it may be a single or repeated act. People at risk may be abused in more than one way. Many of the examples given are criminal offences.

Designated Person in NOCS

The person designated within NOCS to whom a charity user, staff member, volunteer or trustee should report any suspected abuse or neglect is: The GM, **Noc Lacey-Clarke**; the Volunteer Coordinator, **Francoise (Fran) Henon-Lees** or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) nominated trustee, **Jennie Fellowes**. DSL name to be displayed on posters in the main area of the premises.

3. PRINCIPLES

NOCS will ensure that:

- Safeguarding and the welfare of all our beneficiaries is embedded in everything that we do.
- Our recruitment, selection and training procedures for trustees, staff and volunteers take account of the need to safeguard vulnerable people.
- We conduct enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Checks on all those who are eligible, as defined by the Charity Commission.
- Any external agencies that we work with will be required to comply contractually with the Safeguarding policy.

- Induction of new trustees will include information and briefing on all relevant policies and procedures. On-going information will be provided to keep us up to date. We will ensure that staff and volunteers involved with issues relating to the Safeguarding Policy have access to appropriate support and guidance when required.
- All staff and Volunteers (not Game Leaders) will need to successfully complete Safeguarding Level 2 training. The designated Safeguarding Lead, GM and Volunteer Coordinator will all need to successfully complete the Safeguarding Level 3 training. A list is kept of training and DBS dates both completed and due for refreshing. Information and briefing on all relevant policies and procedures will be provided during induction. On-going information will be provided to keep us up to date.
- Service delivery contracting and sub-contracting: We will check the safeguarding arrangements of partner organisations. Contracts and other agreements for partnership delivery work will include clear safeguarding requirements.
- Procedures are in place to ensure that concerns of abuse are dealt with promptly, appropriately and that action is taken promptly. The Accident and Incident Book will be kept in a locked cabinet in NOCS office inside 27 Salisbury Street, Blandford. All incidents or accidents should be logged in the book and referred to the Safeguarding Trustee and GM.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

The promotion and protection of the welfare of vulnerable adults and children is central to the purpose of NOCS.

The trustees have overall responsibility to ensure that NOCS has an appropriate Safeguarding policy in place and that the policy is monitored and reviewed at least annually.

The designated Safeguard Lead working with the GM will ensure that all trustees, staff and volunteers have a copy of the policy, have signed to confirm that they have read it and they know how to report any suspected abuse. A further copy will be accessible to our service users and staff in the NOCS office.

The designated persons (see below) will receive any concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately.

Everyone involved in NOCS - paid or unpaid - has responsibility to follow the principles and guidance laid out in this policy and to pass on any welfare concerns to a designated person.

We expect all trustees, staff and volunteers to promote good practice by being a good role model and to positively involve members in developing safe practices. If you have a concern about your own safety, or anyone else's, you should always act on that concern.

5. RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS AND REPORTING ABUSE

The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the vulnerable person. To this end it is the responsibility of trustees, staff and volunteers to act on any suspicions of abuse and to pass on their concerns to the designated persons within NOCS.

Any suspected abuse must be reported as soon as is practically possible to a designated person so that appropriate action can be taken. You might want to speak to a friend, parent or guardian for advice and support in acting on your concern. All incidents will be recorded in the log.

NOCS designated Safeguarders are:

- The Trustee with responsibility for being the Lead Safeguarder (Level 3 certified) is **Jennie Fellowes**
- The General Manager (Level 3 certified) is **Noc Lacey-Clarke**
- The Volunteer Coordinator (Level 3 certified) is **Fran Henon-Lees**

Whilst not designated Safeguarders, **all** Volunteers (not Game Leaders) have successfully completed Safeguarding Level 2 training, so anyone wishing to disclose can choose from within that group if that feels most comfortable or convenient in the circumstances.

All staff, volunteers and trustees are required to act on any concerns by raising the matter promptly with either the GM or the DSL, who will ensure that a decision is made on the appropriate action to be taken in each case in collaboration with at least 1 other Safeguarder. (A Safeguarder in this context is a member of the team that has completed the Safeguard Training i.e. a Volunteer, not a Game Leader.) They are required to ensure that they act in line with NOCS policy and the law.

If anyone is suspected of abuse this must be brought to the immediate attention of one of the people named above as Designated Safeguarders. The trustees will suspend or remove from active service/membership the member, staff or volunteer pending the outcome of an investigation.

Personal information may have to be disclosed without the individual's consent during any investigation if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an individual is at risk of harm (see Data Protection Policy).

6. PREVENTING ABUSE

All staff and Volunteers (not Game Leaders) will have completed Safeguarding Level 2 training so that they know how to prevent, recognise and respond to allegations of abuse.

NOCS premises and clubs will not make available to our service users a public wifi system. When necessary for the purpose of checking rules or similar activity to allow the smooth running of clubs, volunteers, including Game Leaders, will be given access to the charity wifi but **must** do so only in line with the NOCS Communications and Internet Policy.

The NOCS website and social media use will be monitored. The website through use of passwords to limit access to those responsible for the upkeep of the website. The social media to be generally monitored during use by the General Manager and Volunteers.

All clubs will have a signing in and out procedure.

All non-adult service users will be requested to provide parental contact information.

Consideration will be given by the GM, Volunteer Coordinator and the DSL to the segregation of age ranges when providing NOCS services.

There will be NO one-to-one sessions involving a single adult and an unaccompanied child during any NOCS clubs or events. Drop ins by an unaccompanied child will only take place in the main front area of the premises and MUST NOT be allowed to move out of full public view.

7. GOOD PRACTICE AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The Charity's approach to protecting vulnerable people will be outlined in the Trustees' Annual Report.

The Charity will communicate its Safeguarding policy and supporting procedures to our service users in various ways that are accessible to them, including our website, wall posters at our clubs and during discussions when appropriate. In order to help prevent abuse all pertinent questions and enquiries should be taken seriously and answered promptly. If necessary, pass the question to the GM or DSL to respond.

The Charity will ensure that any external agencies it works with to provide fundraising activities have a Safeguarding (Vulnerable People) Policy.

The Charity will fully comply with the requirements relating to fundraising practice and vulnerable people as outlined in the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016.

All reported incidents will be recorded in the NOCS Safeguarding Incident and Disclosure Record Book in line with the Charity's Data Protection Policy and reported to the Trustees.

See Charity Commission Table for Trustees below.

8. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER POLICIES

Safeguarding overlaps with other policies. These include:

- Communications and Internet Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Whistleblowing

9. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

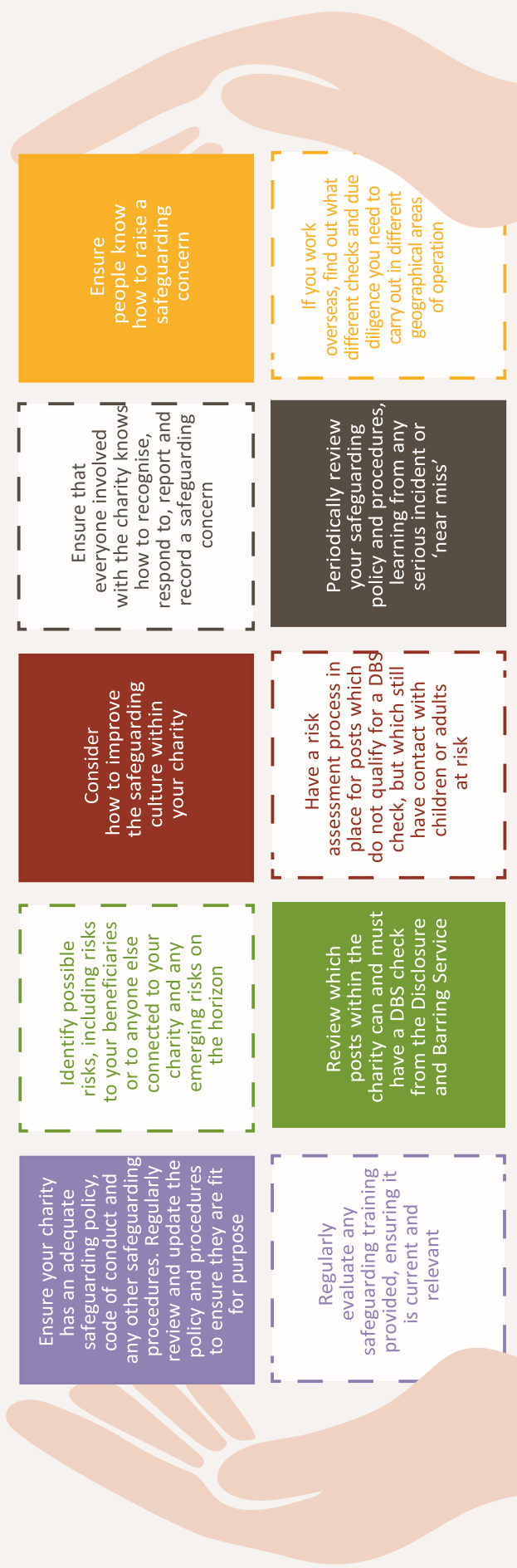
Policy agreed 25th October 2023

Next review October 2024

This policy will be reviewed by the GM/trustees annually, or sooner if there are changes in legislation or best practice.

10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance

Safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Safeguarding (Vulnerable People) Policy

To be completed by all trustees, staff and volunteers

I confirm that I have been made aware of and understand the contents of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for NOCS.

Please complete the details below. This form will be returned to the DSL.

Name:

Signature:

Position:

Date: