

Safer Culture North East

WRITING A SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Who is this factsheet for?

Organisations who are new to writing safeguarding policies and procedures. It is to be used as a guide, but all policies and procedures need to be particular to your organisation and the people who use your services.

Key Messages

- Safeguarding means keeping people – children and adults – safe from abuse.
- Anyone can be at risk of abuse.
- We all have a duty of care to keep people safe from harm.
- Types of abuse and harm include physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, neglect, radicalisation, discriminatory, financial.

Things to think about:

- Every voluntary sector organisation must have key documents that help it manage safeguarding well. You must have them if your organisation is a charity or if you work regularly with children or adults at risk. These documents set out what your organisation will do to keep people safe.
- You must make sure that everyone, no matter what their role, understands the documents and uses them in the day-to-day running of the organisation. Every year you must review how you're doing and address areas for improvement that have come up.
- Your policy should cover all the key risks for the groups you work with and the activities you do.
- The amount of detail in your policies and how often you review them depends on what your charity does, where it works, who with, and the level of risk. Everyone, including your staff, volunteers and people you work with, should be aware of how you manage safeguarding. Your policy and procedures should be easily available, either online or on paper (or both).
- Keep a record of any changes you make to your safeguarding policy. You must have a clear plan of how you'll make sure everyone knows about the changes and keep track of how effective they are.

What is a safeguarding policy statement?

A safeguarding or child protection policy statement makes it clear what your organisation or group will do to keep children safe. It should set out:

- your organisation's commitment to protecting all children
- the more detailed policies and procedures your organisation will put in place to keep children safe and respond to child protection concerns.

What are safeguarding and child protection procedures?

Safeguarding and child protection procedures are detailed guidelines and instructions that support your overarching safeguarding policy statement. They explain the steps that your organisation will take to keep children and young people safe and what to do when there are concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.

Writing a safeguarding and child protection policy statement

Purpose and aim of the policy statement

Identify the organisation, its purpose and function. Set out the organisation's overarching commitment to keeping children safe.

Scope of the policy statement

Be clear about who the policy applies to. It should cover all children under 18 but are all adults expected to comply with it? Should it just be staff and volunteers who work directly with children? What about those who have occasional contact with children such as a caretaker?

Context

Briefly state the main legislation and guidance that supports the policy statement. Explain how this policy statement links to more detailed child protection policies and procedures.

Policy statement

Set out your organisation's beliefs about the importance of child protection. Include a statement about equality and a commitment to anti-discriminatory practice. Make sure your policy statement recognises the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, for example with communication or the impact of discrimination. Explain how, in broad terms, the organisation will meet your commitment to keeping children safe.

Supporting documents

You need a set of more detailed policies and procedures which explain the steps adults within your organisation must take to keep children safe. Your policy statement should include a list of these.

Contact details

Include the names and contact details of the people responsible for safeguarding and child protection in your organisation.

Dates

It's important to keep the statement up to date so you should include review dates and make sure the review happens on time.

Signature

Your policy statement should be signed and dated by the most senior person in your organisation who has responsibility for safeguarding and child protection.

Next steps after completing your safeguarding policy statement

When you have completed your overarching safeguarding and child protection policy statement, you need to ensure that all adults and children are aware of, understand and can access your safeguarding policies.

Writing safeguarding and child protection procedures

Your overarching safeguarding and child protection policy statement should refer to a set of more detailed policies and procedures. These procedures should outline the steps that must be taken if there are any

concerns about a child's or young person's safety and wellbeing. It is essential that your procedures are clear and easy to follow. Make sure each procedure includes the items below:

Purpose and aim of the procedure

Every procedure you create should clearly state its aim and purpose and who it applies to.

Clear instructions

Each procedure should include clear steps of the action needed. If someone is concerned about a child's welfare they should tell the nominated child protection lead or their deputy.

What information to record

Ensure the procedure details how, when and what information needs to be recorded. You should also cover who should record this information and how the information is stored.

Contact details

Make sure the procedure includes contact details for anyone who needs to be informed, including any external agencies and make sure it's clear who is responsible for making any referrals. This should be your organisation's nominated child protection officer.

Confidentiality

Be clear about confidentiality. Information should only be shared with people who need to know. Make sure your procedures are clear about what should be shared and who with. Remember you must share any concerns you have about a child, even if they ask you not to.

Ensure your procedures are clear and accessible

Make sure that all adults and children are aware of, understand and can access your safeguarding and child protection procedures. Reading them should be part of your induction processes and training.

Legislation and guidance

In England, the Department for Education (DfE) provides the key statutory guidance for anyone working with children and young people: [Working together to safeguard children \(PDF\)](#) (DfE), 2018). This sets out how organisations should work together to keep children safe. Sections 57 – 62 set out the requirements for voluntary, charity, social enterprise, faith-based organisations and private sectors. If your organisation is a registered charity, you must also follow the Charity Commission's guidance.

Where to get more information

- Links to all North East local authority safeguarding partnerships and boards www.vonne.org.uk/safer-culture-north-east-resources-and-training
- Links to NCVO safeguarding resources and DCMS tool knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/safeguarding/
- NCVO: 'Involving volunteers' – information on safeguarding and data protection knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/coronavirus/involving-volunteers#section-7
- Safeguarding awareness for volunteers video www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHQG8CJROhU&feature=youtu.be
- NSPCC What is Child Abuse? learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1188/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf