

# centre

Safeguarding code of conduct  
and procedures

Safeguarding and  
Complaints

centre

**Date these procedures came into effect:** 31/12/2021

**Date these procedures must be updated by:** 01/01/2023

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**This document sets out:** how we prevent safeguarding issues from occurring within Centre, how we deal with issues with our members and how we deal with issues for members of the public.

**Who is covered by this policy?** This policy is applicable to all members of Centre. This includes the: Administration, Spokespeople, Regional/State Chairs, members of Centre Students and members of the public.

**People mentioned in the procedure (our Complaints Team):**

See our full safeguarding, complaints and pastoral care team:

<https://centrethinktank.co.uk/safeguarding-complaints-and-pastoral-careteam/>

## Overview:

Centre's safeguarding policy is designed to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse or neglect. Safeguarding issues can occur within any organisation and Centre is no different in that respect. We are committed to protecting both young people and vulnerable adults within our organization. This also includes treating everyone the same regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We also seek to ensure those from minority backgrounds and those with disabilities are supported in any difficulties they may face with safeguarding issues.

## Definitions:

- A child is someone below the age of 18 in [England](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#). In [Scotland](#) child means someone under the age of 18 in most cases although for areas such as [child protection](#) it may be someone under the age of 16.
- An adult is someone who is over 18 is defined as an adult. As mentioned this can be anyone over 16 in some cases within Scotland.
- A vulnerable adult is someone "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation".
- Harm in the UK is defined as "[The ill-treatment or impairment of the physical or mental health or development of an individual, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another](#)". Abuse can mean suffering harm, being likely to suffer harm, being neglected, suffering physical injury and sexual, domestic or emotional abuse. You can see the definitions [here](#).
- Abuse can mean suffering harm, being likely to suffer harm, being neglected, suffering physical injury and sexual, domestic or emotional abuse. You can see the definitions [here](#).
- Safeguarding is protecting from abuse, harm or anything that breaks our safeguarding code of conduct and preventing these actions if possible.
- A safeguarding incident is where there is proof of or alleged to be a breach of our safeguarding code of conduct. This includes all of the sections below aside from the section on what to always ask yourself and the section on things you should try to do.

## **Risks to be aware of related to safeguarding and protecting people**

Sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation, criminal exploitation, cyber abuse, modern day slavery, negligent treatment, self-neglect, physical or emotional abuse, bullying or harassment, health and safety, commercial exploitation, extremism and radicalisation, forced marriage, human trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), discrimination on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010, people may target your charity, a charity's culture may allow poor behaviour and poor accountability, people may abuse a position of trust they hold within a charity and data breaches, including those under General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

From: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charitytrustees#children-adults-at-risk>

## **Safeguarding code of conduct:**

### **We do not allow:**

- Anything that breaks our code of conduct. All parts of the code of conduct still apply when dealing with vulnerable adults or those under 18.
- Relationships of a sexual or intimate nature or any sexual contact between those in a "position of trust" (Sexual Offences Act 2003) and members who are under 18 or are vulnerable adults. This includes romantic relationships with people you are safeguarding or have previously safeguarded.
- Giving, or encouraging the consumption of, cigarettes, alcohol, vaping, illegal substances, or any drugs that are not for medical reasons. This could also include allowing a child or vulnerable adults judgment to become impaired due to alcohol.
- Giving, or receiving, gifts of a high value from a vulnerable adult or someone under the age of 18.
- Unnecessary physical contact. If physical contact is medically necessary, then consent should be acquired if possible, from either them or their parent/carer if the person themselves is not capable of giving consent. Even then, physical contact needs to be kept to an absolute minimum. It must be recognised that any physical contact could be viewed as inappropriate. It should also be noted that vulnerable adults or children do not always want physical comfort if there is an issue.
- Shouting at, or using physical punishment towards, vulnerable adults or those under 18 by another member of Centre is unacceptable. It should only be used if it can prevent serious harm.
- Photographing or filming vulnerable adults or those under 18 without having written consent from either that person or, if needed, the parent or guardian.

- Use photographs or film of that person without having consent from either that person or, if needed, the parent or guardian.
- Using a position within Centre to protect themselves from complaints.
- Behaviour that is or may seem threatening or violent.
- Abusing or harming children or vulnerable adults. This could include physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Do not try to investigate safeguarding issues yourself, they need to be reported to our complaints team to deal with.
- Being sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory, swearing, insensitive, using sexual innuendo, bullying or intimidating either vulnerable adults or children.
- Committing or planning to commit a crime against either a vulnerable adult or child.
- Exploitation of children or vulnerable adults which can include financially
- Harming a child or vulnerable adult or attempting to harm them.
- Any kind of “sexting” or sending other types of inappropriate material through social media or the internet.

**Make sure to:**

- Always be professional, polite and respectful.
- Only use social media where a record can be kept of the conversation meaning platforms such as snapchat are not to be used.
- Avoid being alone with vulnerable members or those under the age of 18 when it is possible to do so.
- Always report safeguarding issues and allegations of behaviour where they occur.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour when its safe to do so.
- Maintain a professional relationship with children.

**Try to:**

- Use plain language when speaking to vulnerable adults or children and in text try to only use plain text without using symbols, abbreviations, emoticons or emojis.

**Always ask yourself:**

- Whether what you have said could be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- Whether you are disclosing confidential information about vulnerable members.

**For all podcasts:**

- If someone emails the Pastoral Care and Safeguarding Officer beforehand that they would like someone to attend the recording then either you or someone who is DBS checked should attend the event.

**For events make sure:**

- Risk assessments are carried out before events such as whether there are areas that cannot be kept under supervision, health and safety checks and travel arrangements are made. It should be sent to the Head of Events by a member of the safeguarding team. A template risk assessment can be found at the end of this document.
- Ensuring at least one member of the safeguarding team or a member who is DBS checked is present at all events.
- Ensuring there is access to first aid if needed.
- For smaller in person events those under 18 or who are vulnerable adults should have a parent, carer or two adults assigned to safeguard them during events taking reasonable steps to ensuring they are safe.
- For larger in person events a small safeguarding team should be appointed to check over any children or vulnerable adults by ensuring rooms where children or vulnerable adults are present are supervised.

## **Preventing issues from occurring:**

Within Centre, we want to create an atmosphere and culture that ensures as far as possible people are comfortable to make complaints and incidents do not occur to begin with.

We also have positions for a safeguarding team made up of a Head of Safeguarding, a Deputy Head and a number of members we have given some basic safeguarding training.

What resources they have:

- A list of all members who are under eighteen. They can request this from the Head of Membership Development each time they need to use it to ensure they always have the latest version.

Their roles include:

- Ensuring at least one is present at events or meetings where there are vulnerable members or those under 18 are safe.
- Giving basic training to other members of Centre in how what Centres safeguarding rules are and how to report or deal with issues.
- Pairs of safeguarding trained members will be assigned to each event where there are members or groups of people who are under 18 or vulnerable adults.
- Supporting members through the complaints process. They can contact them for support during complaints either as the person making the complaint or the person a complaint has been made against. During this they can give them advice about the complaints process or give them pastoral support they may need.
- If they are made aware of a safeguarding issue you need to report it to our complaints team.

Our main priority is to prevent issues from occurring to begin with, this includes:

- Checking in online groups and chats for actions that break our safeguarding rules. If they do this needs to be reported to the complaints team.
- Being present at events and meetings where there are vulnerable adults or under eighteens.
- You can arrange this in two ways. The first is to check the team hub which will include all of this information on including planned events or meeting. The second is to contact the Head of Membership Development to ensure they keep you up to date with meetings before they take place. You can also keep up to date with our meetings using our main Facebook group chat. For events

you can contact our Head of Events and Podcasts to ensure they update each time an event is being planned.

- Helping to train other members on safeguarding. This includes giving basic training to our membership through videos explaining what safeguarding is and how to report issues. You may also run small training sessions on safeguarding for either groups of members that ask one or where their role requires it.

## **If an issue arises for a member of Centre:**

Step 1: Provide the victim with support and ensure they are kept anonymous unless personal details are required or requested by the police or social care services. Inform the child or vulnerable adult that you are raising a safeguarding concern within Centre, explain what happens next and be clear that you may not be able to keep the information about safeguarding breaches relating to them confidential.

Step 2: Any member of Centre that is informed of a safeguarding incident has to report it to the Head of Complaints, Deputy Head of Complaints or a member of the Complaints Committee by the end of the next working day. This needs to be done through the form on Centre's website. This can include the name of the person raising the concern, their email address, what relationship they have with the person who they are raising the concern for, whether the person who is raising the concern is a member of Centre, whether they would like to remain anonymous. It also includes whether they are a vulnerable adult, whether they are under 18, if they are a member of Centre, details of the safeguarding concern, whether there is additional evidence they would like to pass on, whether there is a police investigation ongoing into the issue or social services have been contacted and whether they agree to our privacy policy.

The Complaints member it has been reported to will then look at the following:

Step 3: Has the law been broken? If the answer is "possibly" or "yes" then contact the police. If a child or vulnerable adult is at serious risk of abuse or neglect, then you can also contact the NSPCC helpline for advice by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). This should be done alongside contacting the police rather than instead of doing so. It may also be necessary to suspend the person who is implicated in the issue.

Step 4: Would it be relevant to inform social care services. If the answer is "possibly" or "yes" then contact them but, where possible, and if it is not of a legal nature, this should be consented to by the person that the safeguarding breach has happened to.

Finally, for the person who has experienced the safeguarding breach:

Step 5: Allegations of abuse, either by an adult or a child within the organisation, can go through our complaint's procedure.

## **If an issue arises for a member of the public:**

Step 1: Any member of Centre that is informed of, or finds a safeguarding incident, needs to report it to either the Head of Complaints, the Deputy Head of Complaints or a member of the Complaints Committee by the end of the next working day. This should use the same form used reporting safeguarding issues for members of Centre. Inform the child or vulnerable adult that you are raising a safeguarding concern within Centre, explain what happens next and be clear that you may not be able to keep the information about safeguarding breaches relating to them confidential.

Step 2: The Safeguarding and Complaints member it has been reported to should then decide if there is a concern that needs to be acted upon. This can be with advice from our safeguarding team if the individual is kept anonymous. It may also be necessary to suspend the person who is implicated in the issue.

Step 3: If it is a concern that needs to be acted upon, the complaints team should report the information to the parent or, if the parent is the alleged abuser, report it to social services and the police.

**If a member of the Centre team fails to investigate a safeguarding breach:**

- This can go through the complaint's procedure.

**Availability of these measures.** To ensure these measures are accessible to those that may need to consult them or to go through the processes in this document, this will be available on our website. A copy of this policy is also sent to every member of the Centre when it is updated via email.

**Other organisations:**

Child Line: <https://www.childline.org.uk/telephone> 0800 1111

NSPCC: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP):  
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Hourglass: <https://wearehourglass.org/?n>

Thinkuknow: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

## Template event safeguarding risk assessment:

Possible risks:

- Whether there are areas that cannot be kept under supervision.
- Health and safety checks.
- Travel arrangements that need to be made.

For each risk look at:

- The risk or activity.
- Who might be harmed and how?
- How likely it is someone may be harmed (one to ten, one being least likely to occur within one event and ten being the most likely to occur).
- Severity of the harm that would be caused if the issue occurred (one to ten, one being almost no harm and ten being very harmful).
- What you're already doing to control the risks.
- What further action you need to take to control the risks.
- Who needs to carry out the action?
- When the action is needed by.

**Availability and updates.** Ensuring these measures are kept up to date. These measures will be kept up to date to ensure our organisation can prevent mistakes from happening or to learn from them if they do occur. They will be reviewed once a year, if an incident occurs or if there is a 'near miss'. In order to improve these measures, we will also talk to survivors of incidents to ensure our practices are as effective as possible.

Availability of these measures. To ensure these measures are accessible to those that may need to consult them or to go through the processes in this document, this will be available on our website. A copy of this policy will also be sent to every member of the Centre when it is updated via email.

Have any ideas to make these procedures better? Let us know by submitting any ideas on the "Contact" page of our website.