

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction

Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities are a priority for all charities. As such, ensuring appropriate and robust safeguarding measures are in place is a key part of governance, as laid out by the Charity Commission.

The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) is a practitioner-led network supporting individuals working with children in care and care experienced students. Whilst the services of the charity are focused on support for professionals, there may be occasions when young people and vulnerable adults from a care background engage with the charity and its services. This may include supporting training events, participating in research and sitting on a committee.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to set out the charity's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable people who are engaging with NNECL services, staff and volunteers;
- To put in place appropriate procedures to protect those at risk;
- To put in place appropriate procedures for raising and reporting safeguarding concerns.

This policy applies to anyone working for or volunteering on behalf of NNECL. This includes paid staff, the Board of Trustees, National Strategy Group and other volunteers

What is safeguarding?

According to the Charity Commission, safeguarding children means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment;
- preventing harm to children's health or development;
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

The NNECL Board of Trustees recognises its legal duties to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and harm and takes this role very seriously.

NNECL ensures it is meeting its safeguarding responsibilities by:

- Having appropriate policies and procedures in place, which are followed by all

- trustees, staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, and other identified stakeholders ;
- Making sure safeguarding is central to the charity’s culture and that everyone knows their role and responsibility regarding safeguarding;
 - Outlining the checks made to evidence people are suitable to act in their roles and ensuring quality staff induction;
 - Providing guidance, training, and support so everyone knows how to spot and handle concerns in a full and open manner;
 - Defining clear systems of referring or reporting as appropriate, including involving external agencies;
 - Identifying a systematic process for reviewing policies / guidance and a schedule for updating training;
 - Setting out the lines of accountability and governance for safeguarding;
 - Providing a clear process of investigation and review for major incidents or when things go wrong;
 - Keeping up to date with statutory guidance, good practice guidance and legislation relevant to the charity’s safeguarding function.

How we will protect people from harm

Young people engaging with NNECL activities are likely to have spent time in the care system at some point in their lives. Children in care and care experienced individuals are considered some of the most vulnerable groups in society. Consideration must be given at all times to ensure the appropriateness of activities in which young people from a care background are participating.

The Trustees recognise that they are ultimately responsible for making sure that those benefiting from, or working with, NNECL are not harmed in any way through contact with it and that they are treated in a safe, respectful, and appropriate manner. This responsibility particularly relates to permanently or temporarily vulnerable persons and young people (those under 18 years of age).

The following actions will be adopted by the charity and its staff:

- Ensure all staff and volunteers have access to and are familiar with safeguarding policies and procedures;
- Provide appropriate child protection training for staff and volunteers;
- Ensure safeguarding matters are considered at all times when recruiting and managing staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers will be required to complete an enhanced DBS check as part of the recruitment process;
- Appoint a nominated child protection/safeguarding lead (currently Co-Chair, Arron Pile) who will be the main point of contact for managing and reporting safeguarding concerns;

- Carefully plan all activities where young people and vulnerable adults may participate in a way that protects them from harm. Specifically, this includes the way information about individuals is gathered and shared;
- Regularly review the safeguarding procedures to ensure they are up to date, relevant and compliant with required legislation;
- Implement a code of conduct for staff and volunteers; and
- Record and store information securely in line with GDPR regulations.

Safeguarding and you

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and everyone has a role to play. It is about ensuring general safety and wellbeing whilst taking additional steps for those least able to protect themselves from harm or abuse. All staff, volunteers and other charity stakeholders have a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of all those coming into contact with the charity. Safeguarding means protecting a person's right to live in safety and free from abuse or neglect. As safeguarding is such a fundamental part of the charity's business it is essential that you are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet our safeguarding responsibilities in order to comply with legislation and regulation. This policy is issued with associated guidance on different aspects of safeguarding with which you must maintain an up-to-date knowledge. Further, you also have a responsibility to make sure that you comply with all training and refresher training requirements in relation to your position.

Taking action

Staff, contractors, and volunteers who have any safeguarding concerns should:

1. Respond - Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 for emergency services. - If a crime has been committed contact the police and preserve any forensic evidence - Get details about what has happened and what the person's wishes are, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation. - Where possible seek consent from the person to act and to report the concern. Consider whether the person may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. If a decision is made to act against their wishes or without their consent, a record of this, and the reasons, must be kept.
2. Record - As far as possible, records should be written as a reminder of what happened, dated, and signed.
3. Report - Reports of safeguarding concerns or incidents must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Arron Pile) as soon as possible and within 24 hours.

Safeguarding Team Contact List

Board of Trustees Safeguarding Lead
Arron Pile (Co-Chair) a.pile@salford.ac.uk

Executive Safeguarding Lead
Denise Rawls (Director) Denise@nnecl.org