

**COMMUNITY
ACTION
SUFFOLK**

Strengthening the voluntary and community sector



Supporting healthier, safer and sustainable
Voluntary, Community, Faith, Social
Enterprise (VCFSE) organisations.

REALLY USEFUL GUIDE TO...

WRITING A SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURE

v. 2023

This guide is designed to answer some of the most Frequently Asked Questions and provide some Top Tips about developing an appropriate safeguarding policy and procedure for a Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise (VCFSE) organisation or group.

1. What is a safeguarding policy?

The safeguarding policy is your organisation's public commitment to keeping children and adults at risk of harm safe.

It tells your staff, volunteers, service users/ customers, funders et c. that you take safeguarding seriously.

2. What is a safeguarding procedure?

The safeguarding procedure is your organisation's 'route map' of how you will keep children and adults at risk of harm safe. It sets out how you expect staff, volunteers and contractors et c. to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

It accompanies your safeguarding policy and sets out the information and steps to be taken to protect people from harm. It should be a 'go to' document that clearly sets out what needs to be done when someone has a safeguarding concern. Having a 'woolly' vague document won't help when you really need it.

They are designed to reduce risks of abuse and even stop abuse from happening to people when they are in contact with your organisation. They also help you to see, recognise and respond to abuse that people may be experiencing outside of your organisation.

3. Do we need a safeguarding policy and procedure?

Yes you do. the Charity Commission makes it very clear that, 'Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all charities'.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>. A safeguarding policy and procedure that is fit for the purpose of your organisation is a part of meeting your safeguarding governance responsibilities.

Funders may also expect you to have it.

Your Insurers may also expect you to have it.

4. Do we need a safeguarding policy and procedure if we don't work with children or adults?

Yes. You are probably working or volunteering alongside peers/ colleagues who are adults and you have a responsibility to them to ensure that no one who comes into contact with your organisation experiences harm.

Remember too that people very rarely live in total isolation, they have families, neighbours and communities around them that will likely include children and adults.

You may 'only work with adults' but... here are some examples where you may have safeguarding concerns about a child as a result...

- ! that adult may reveal something about a child that leads you to think that the child may be being abused or at risk of harm
- ! they may be accompanied by a child or grandchild to an event and you see or hear something that worries you.
- ! they may be pregnant and you are concerned about the unborn child.

You may only work with children but they might reveal something about an adult they know, an older brother or sister, friend et c. that leads you to believe someone is at risk of harm.

5. Where do we start?

The CAS Safeguarding resource page has example safeguarding policies and procedures that are tailored to Suffolk organisations.

<https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/safeguarding/>

You can also email us your safeguarding policy and procedure for review and feedback or arrange a 1 to 1 discussion with us about your safeguarding policy and procedure.

email: jacqui.wilkinson@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

6. Top Tips

- Use it. It won't help keep anyone safe if no one knows about it or uses it.
- The policy only needs to be a couple of pages long. It will need to be accompanied by a longer, detailed operational safeguarding procedure that you can follow, if and when needed.
- Write a safeguarding policy that is fit for purpose and that people understand.
- Have a clear opening policy statement of your organisation's commitment to safeguarding and its safeguarding responsibilities including what action your organisation will take concerning safeguarding.
- Involve people across the organisation in its development, then it belongs to everyone. 'Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility' not just those who have 'safeguarding' in their role title.
- Reference relevant law and reflect guidance from the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership.
- Be clear about who the policy applies to (paid staff, volunteers, contractors et c.).
- Use words to show the intent of the policy/procedure e.g. using 'must' or 'will' significantly changes the context and effectiveness of the policy; as opposed to using 'should' or 'could'. The latter implies it is optional, in which case it isn't a policy or a procedure.
- Make sure it is accessible and clear to the people your organisation supports e.g. is there a separate version that children or adults at risk who use your organisation can understand?
- Have it available on your website.
- The document identifies your named Designated Safeguarding Lead Deputy and Safeguarding Trustee, or equivalent. Name and contact details.
- Have it approved, signed off and supported by your senior leadership team and Board of Trustees. Include a review date and history of amendments. It should be reviewed at least annually and or after any serious incident.

7. 'Foundation' policies and procedures

Building a sustainable and safe organisation requires strong foundations.

Your safeguarding children and adults at risk of harm policy and procedure is a core foundation but won't be enough on their own. Below are some more core policies and procedures to have in place to help embed strong governance (ways of doing the right thing) in a sustainable and safer organisation.

The exact list you will need will depend on what your organisation/ group wants to achieve, the people it is being set up to benefit. To discuss the exact needs of your organisation you can contact Community Action Suffolk (CAS).

Each VCFSE organisation should have the following policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding children and adults
- Behaviour and Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Health & Safety
- Risk Assessment
- First Aid
- Lone Working
- Complaints/ Grievance
- Recruitment (including volunteers and trustees) and compliance with DBS
- Finance

The CAS Quality Framework has tailored levels of support including the HealthCheck Plus and Quality Standard that contain additional guidance and example documents to help you develop and embed these policies and procedures.
<https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/quality-framework/>

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Contact CAS

www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk
tel: 01473 345400
Ask for the VCFSE Organisation
Development Team

For more information on the Quality
Framework
[Click here](#)