



WILBERFORCE TRUST

Safeguarding Children Policy

1. Introduction

Safeguarding children is defined by the Government in "Working Together to Safeguard Children" as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children Act 2004, section 11 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions and any services that they contract out to others are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The difference between Safeguarding Children and Child Protection.

Safeguarding Children is the term used to cover all aspects of promoting a child welfare, including all the things listed in the definition above, such as protecting a child from maltreatment, aiding their development, keeping them safe and ensuring they have the best outcome in life.

Child protection is the single aspect of safeguarding children that focuses on protecting a child who is suffering from, or has the potential to suffer from, significant harm. Significant harm can include maltreatment, abuse and neglect, a single traumatic event or an accumulation of events that damage the child's physical and/or psychological development.

The well-being of children and young people is paramount to the work of Club Wilber ,created in 2019 at the Wilberforce Trust.

Disable children have the same human rights to be safe from abuse and neglect, to be protected from harm and able to achieve the same outcome, as non-disable children.

Disable children do however require additional action. This is because they experience grater and created vulnerability as a result of negative attitudes about disabled children and equal access to services and resources, and because they may have additional needs relating to physical, sensory, cognitive and/or communication impairment.

All employees and volunteers working with children that work for the Trust must read and understand this policy and procedure, be aware of their responsibilities, and undertake their duties with care for quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The Wilberforce Trust ensures that all employee and volunteers working with children have completed DBS checks and are provided with training and support to equip them to safeguard children at risk within their day to practice.

2. Policy Statement

The Wilberforce Trust will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing listening and respecting them
- Appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people,
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures, and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely by ensuring all necessary checks are made and safer recruiting processes are followed.
- Recording, storing, and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families

- Making sure that children, young people, and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for any children, young people, parents, and carers.
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place and that staff, volunteers and service users are made aware of them.
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people, and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

The Wilberforce Trust works in accordance with the Charity Commission and good governance for safeguarding¹ is ensuring that we:

¹ Good governance for safeguarding – A guide for UK NGO boards - Bond

- Ensure all trustee, employees, volunteers, and employees know about safeguarding and people protection including the 5 R's (Appendix 1)
- Have the appropriate policies and procedures in place, and access to relevant training.
- Ensure that people are suitable to act in their roles.
- Know how to spot and refer or report concerns.
- Have a clear system of referring or reporting to local authorities and other relevant authorities.
- Set out risks and how we will manage them in a risk register which is regularly reviewed.
- Be quick to respond to concerns and make initial enquiries.

3. Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to:

- raise awareness of the procedures within the Trust regarding how to keep children safe and how to report any concerns regarding children and young people.
- actively promote and safeguard the welfare of children, young adults, staff, volunteers, and others who encounter Wilberforce Trust, Club Wilber.
- ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children understand their duties in relation to children's safeguarding and understand when to respond to and report concerns.
- have clear procedures in place for dealing with and referring concerns of the welfare of any individual and/or allegation of abuse.
- To ensure robust appropriate actions is taken in timely manner to safeguard and promote children, young adults at risk's welfare.

4. Scope

This policy relates to all those working with children within the Trust, but specifically those discussed below under Roles and Responsibilities.

Staff and Volunteers involved in activities with children, young people at risk must obtain satisfactory disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) at Enhanced Level where required. There may be some instances, where a DBS is not required for Club Wilber activities , such ,as one off workshop with trained Wilberforce Staff and Parents/Guardian of the children involved are present at all the time. On those occasions, trained Wilberforce Trust staff will complete awareness of safeguarding induction specifically related to that event.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

The Wilberforce Trust Board of Trustees are accountable for ensuring that the organisation has appropriate structures, processes, and resources in place to ensure safeguarding is central to all the organisation does, and for monitoring compliance.

Trustees discharge their safeguarding responsibilities by:

- Convening the Compliance Committee, which maintains the oversight of safeguarding issues within the organisation on behalf of the Board of Trustees and will receive regular update reports which will also be discussed at Board level.
- Appointing a lead safeguarding trustee, who is a member of the Compliance Committee.
- Giving scrutiny and consideration to any concerns identified by the Compliance Committee.

The Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the senior accountable individual for all aspects of safeguarding across the organisation. This includes ensuring that there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the work of the Wilberforce Trust and that there are clear reporting processes and structures to safeguard children and adults at risk.

The CEO discharges their responsibilities by:

- Ensuring that the senior leadership team are held accountable for safeguarding within their respective directorates and across the organisation.
- Receiving regular safeguarding updates from the Operations Director and Head of Compliance, Governance and Quality.

Safeguarding Children Lead: Head of Compliance, Governance and Quality.

Head of Compliance, Governance and Quality is operationally accountable for safeguarding for children and young people at risk and holds corporate accountability for ensuring that safeguarding policy and practice is developed, implemented, managed, and monitored across the charity as well as providing specific advice.

In their absence the Operations Director will deputise as the Designated Children Lead.

Management of Activities and Events (including Club Wilber)

Manager of Activities and Events (including Club Wilber) and all the team have the responsibility for the safeguarding practice and improvement of all employees within the services and staff/volunteers they directly manage.

Employees and volunteers

All employees and volunteers have the responsibility to recognise, report, and record safeguarding concerns about children, young people, and adults at risk in line with this policy, the safeguarding adult's policy, and associated guidance. This includes a responsibility to work closely with local authorities to share current information and effectively take part in multi-agency discussion.

Volunteers must work with employees directly on the reporting of safeguarding concerns.

To ensure that their own behaviour is not misinterpreted staff and volunteers should adhere to the following:

- All conversations with children, young people or adults at risk must be conducted in a public place.
- Physical contact with children, young people or adults at risk must be avoided.
- Unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, do not take a child, young person, or adult at risk to the toilet unless either another staff member or volunteer is present.
- If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a child, young person, at risk wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- Avoid close personal relationships with a child, young person, at risk in relation to whom you are in a position of trust.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about a child, young person, or adult at risk even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted.
- If a child, young person, at risk accuses a volunteer or member of staff of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, you should report this immediately to the relevant person such as the Manager of Club Wilber or directly to Safeguarding Lead.
- The duty to report applies equally to complaints or accusations of historic, and not just recent, abuse/inappropriate behaviour.
- If physical restraint of a child, young person at risk is required for his or her own safety, or that of another child, young person at risk, the minimum

force should be used for the least possible time. An incident report on RADAR should be written and should include the names of staff and witnesses.

- If first aid is necessary and is administered by a trained first aider, an incident report should be completed on RADAR and the names of any staff and witnesses should be included.
- Staff/Volunteers must not take a child, young person at risk alone in a vehicle on journeys.
- If a child, young person at risk makes a complaint, or if there are other reasons for suspecting abuse, you should not attempt to investigate this yourself, but should report your concerns to the Club Wilber Manager and Safeguarding Children Lead.

Specific pointers

There are occasions when physical contact with a child, young person at risk may be proper or necessary, for example:

- To demonstrate exercise or techniques during instruction of activity to reassure safety. In such cases child, young person, and the parents of theirs should be warned beforehand.
- To provide prompts or help for young children and those with special educational needs.
- Where a child, young person at risk is in distress and needs comforting, although sometimes verbal comforting can be just as effective and should be tried in the first instance.

Two golden rules:

1. Be aware that physical contact with children, young people at risk is a sensitive issue that needs careful consideration.
2. If you are in any doubt, ask a member of Wilberforce staff present.

It can be an abuse of trust for an adult in a protective relationship with a younger person to form a close, personal relationship with him or her. Staff and Volunteers must avoid any suggestion that a close, personal relationship exists or is desired. Behaviour that could imply a special relationship, for example gifts or endearments, must be avoided.

6. What is Abuse?

Abuse can take many forms and the circumstance of the child/young person should always be considered. It may consist of a single act or repeated acts.

Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their daily lives. Abuse can take a variety of forms including those below.

Abuse can be categorised as below; this is not an exhaustive list.

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Physical Abuse is the deliberate intention to inflict pain. When someone hears the term "child abuse", they most commonly associate it with physical abuse. Wounds, bruises, burns, fractures, and sore muscles are signs of physical abuse, but abuse can also result from severe acts of discipline. Injuries that don't coincide with the explanation and untreated medical or dental needs are also red flags for physical abuse.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Behaviours toward the child that cause mental anguish are considered emotional abuse (also called [psychological abuse](#)). Examples of emotional abuse are shouting often at the child, withholding kindness or affection, extended periods of silence, and harsh jokes at the expense of the child. Calling the child names or making other demeaning remarks can be termed emotional abuse and usually results in low self-esteem. Children who have been emotionally abused may suffer from depression or desperately seek affection. Other symptoms include social withdrawal and delay or inappropriate emotional development.

NEGLECT

Parents or caregivers who are continually unavailable for the child are considered neglectful. Even if the parent is physically present but unavailable or refuses to care for the child or meet his/her needs, neglect occurs. Imagine a young child left at home alone for extended periods of time with no food in the house and an infant sibling to care for—this would be an example of child neglect. The parent may have a substance abuse problem, mental illness, or be too consumed with a job or another person to properly care for the child. The warning signs for neglect include poor growth, weight loss or gain, poor hygiene, lack of appropriate clothing or supplies to meet their needs, stuffing themselves at one meal and hiding food for later, or stealing food or money. [Neglect is the most common type of child abuse.](#)

SEXUAL ABUSE

Touching a child in a sexual manner or having sexual relations with the child is sexual abuse and includes any behaviour toward the child for sexual stimulation. This type of abuse is characterized by fondling, forced sexual acts, and indecent physical exposure. Whether the abuse occurs as an isolated incident or as repetitive conduct that continues for years, both types are considered sexual abuse of a child. Often, the perpetrators are the child's relatives or people closest to the family – individuals who no one imagined would commit such deeds. These behaviours in a child can signal sexual abuse: knowledge or promotion of sexual behaviour premature for his/her age; sudden difficulty with toilet habits in a young child; pain or itching, bruises or bleeding in the genital area. Other symptoms are trouble sitting or walking, blood in his/her underwear, and sexual abuse of other children.

For more information regarding types of Child Abuse, refer to this link :
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

All employees and volunteers working with children and young people must also be alert to any possible signs of abuse or early warnings of potential abuse such as:

- The parent or carer is misusing drugs or alcohol.
- The child is unkempt and dirty.

- The child is wearing inappropriate clothing for the weather such as summer clothes in winter or no coat.
- The child has bruises that cannot be explained
- The child is unusually withdrawn or is disruptive.
- The child's behaviour towards other children overtly sexualised or physically abusive
- A child abusing another child.

7. Safeguarding Procedures for Employees and Volunteers

Raising a safeguarding concern

Raising a concern means reporting concerns, suspicions, or allegations of harm from abuse or neglect.

If an employee or volunteer is informed about or concerned about the abuse of a child or young person, they must take the following steps:

- Be accessible and receptive.
- Listen carefully and actively to the person/child – at this stage, only basic questions should be asked to establish the concern, this should not be an investigation.
- What, where and when but not why questions.
- Take it seriously.
- Remain calm and reassure the person that they have done the right thing by talking to a responsible adult.
- Ensure the child/young person at risk understands what will happen next with their information.
- Consult immediately with the Activities and Events coordinator, Yorsensory manager or the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Make a careful record of what was said, paying particular attention to the following:
 - Dates and times
 - The names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses to an event.
 - What was said or done and by whom?

It is important that they do not do the following:

- Do not show shock at what is being said. This may discourage the child or adult from talking, as they may feel you are unable to deal with what they're saying, or perhaps that you're thinking badly of them.
- Do not investigate, if anything needs to be clarified to understand the safeguarding risk ask clear, open questions.
- Never promise to keep a secret or confidentiality.

The person receiving the concern must consider whether there are any immediate actions that need to be taken in order to keep the child, young person, or others, safe from harm. This involves taking actions in relation to the child or young person at risk including:

- Making an immediate evaluation of the risk to the child or young person.
- Make sure that others are not at risk.
- Consider if an immediate police presence is required to keep any person safe. If so, then they must liaise with the police to discuss any risk management issues.

If an allegation is historic, the steps above and below still need to be followed and reported to the Safeguarding Lead.

Recording a safeguarding concern

As soon as possible, employees/volunteers must factually record what the child has told them (in the child's own words) or what the employee/volunteer has observed. The date, time, place, and observations of behaviour must be included. This will need to be completed on the Children Safeguarding Incident Form (Appendix 1) and submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

If employees/volunteers fail to document accurately, or if they write down their interpretation of the child or young person's account (as opposed to a factual account), this may lead to inadmissible or unusable evidence should the information be required for court proceedings.

Employees/volunteers must not contact any individual about who an allegation or concern is being raised. This could be putting the person making the allegations in danger.

If the safeguarding lead decides that a referral to the local authority children's services or adults social care is not warranted, this decision must be recorded by the safeguarding lead with the reasons why the decision has been made.

Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers are recruited using our Safer Recruitment Policy, however, there may still be instances in which there is an allegation or concern about them.

Any allegation or concern that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child must be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly.

Depending on the situation, an appropriate response may involve:

- The police investigating a possible criminal offence.
- Local child protection services making enquiries and/or assessing whether a child is in need of support.
- The Trust's disciplinary procedures with individuals concerned.
- Any children involved must be given appropriate support.
- The reporting of concerns section in this policy to be adhered to

8. Making a referral

Once the safeguarding concern has been received by the Designated Safeguarding Lead it is then their responsibility to submit the referral to the Local Authority.

Referral must be made on the same day where harm or risk of harm had been identified. If concerns arise out of office hours, referrals must be made to the local authority out of office hours service.

Each local authority will have their own Children's Safeguarding team, documents, and processes. Therefore, the Local Authority in which the child lives will need to be the one that is contacted.

Where possible, the Designated Safeguarding Officer must discuss their concerns with the child's parent, and an agreement should be sought for a referral to the local authority children's social care. This must only be done if it does not pose an increased risk to the child through delay or the parents' possible actions.

The police should always be contacted if there are concerns that harm or potential harm could come to a child.

Where the concern is around a member of staff or volunteer at the Trust the local authority safeguarding team will advise how to proceed with the Trust's own HR enquires.

If the Safeguarding submission is a serious incident, then the DSO is required to inform the Charities Commission.

9. Contributing to a Section 47 enquiry

Initial strategy discussion

When a local authority has identified that a child has suffered or is potentially suffering from abuse a member of the Wilberforce Trust safeguarding team may be asked to attend a safeguarding multi-agency meeting but will not be expected to make enquiries in relation to the concern. The local authority will require the Trust to share available information.

Referring Children and Families to additional Support Services

There may be times in which an employee or volunteer feel that a child or family are in need of additional support services but are not at risk of harm.

The Wilberforce Trust will always advocate signposting to other charities, services, or local bodies to ensure that the people they serve receive the most help necessary. There will be several different services advertised within the Living and Learning Zone at Wilberforce House, however if there isn't a suitable service then volunteers are encouraged to speak to staff so that they can find the correct service together. If employees have difficulty finding the correct service from our resources, then they are encouraged to speak to Safeguarding Lead for support.

10. Storing information relating to Safeguarding Incidents

Storage of child protection records

Information about child protection concerns and referrals are kept in a separate child protection file for each child and entered onto Radar. The child protection file should be started as soon as we become aware of any concerns.

It's good practice to keep child protection files separate from a child's general records and so our general records are marked to indicate that there is a separate child protection file.

Retention periods: child protection records

In the voluntary and community sector, records relating to child protection should be kept for 7 years after our last contact with the child and their family.

If it is decided not to share our concerns about a child's welfare with the police or social services, we will keep a record of the issues that were raised.

Exceptions

In some cases, records can be kept for longer periods of time. For example, if:

- The information in the records is relevant to legal action that has been started but not finished; or
- The records have been archived for historical purposes (for example if the records are relevant to legal proceedings involving the organisation). Where there are legal proceedings, it is best to seek legal advice about how long to retain this record.

Some records are subject to statutory requirements and have a specific retention period. This includes records relating to:

- Children who have been 'looked after' by the local authority.
- Adopted children.
- Registered foster carers.
- Residential children's homes.

Organisations must keep any records that could be needed by an official inquiry (for example the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA, 2017). Enquiries will issue directions for records to be retained and these must be followed.

When records are being kept for longer than the recommended period, files will be clearly marked with the reasons for the extension period.

11. Health and safety

As discussed in previous sections, it is important to complete health and safety checks prior to each activity, this should include checks of equipment and the environment, and this must be recorded.

Risks assessments for activities must be appropriate and must be completed prior to each activity being undertaken.

Club Wilber encourages activities which engage children, young people at risk. The implementation of this policy does not seek to discourage such activities. Instead, it seeks to support these activities and to offer assurances that through its implementation, Wilberforce Trust seeks to protect children, young people at risk and to keep them safe from harm when in contact with Club Wilber staff and volunteers (whether acting in a paid or unpaid capacity).

All staff or volunteers who intend to, or may be put in the position of, working with children, young people at risk should ensure that they understand the implications of this policy before commencing any programme, event, visit or other activity.

All staff members and volunteers should have conducted sufficient safeguarding training and, where necessary, have a satisfactory disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) at Enhanced level, before they engage with any activities involving children, young people at risk.

All those involved in the risk assessment process should understand that the risk assessment is not only a way to mitigate or remove any potential risks but may also be a prompt to consider alternative working practices. The risk assessment process should encompass all aspects of health and safety e.g. fire etc.

If an activity is held at an external organisation, Wilberforce Trust Activity Coordinators will ensure a Partnership Agreement has been signed to confirm that appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place and relevant risk assessments have been carried out.

Staff and volunteers should be aware of risks involved in activities. While delivering activities at Wilberforce Trust grounds, volunteers must ensure that they are aware of emergency procedures including emergency exits and that in the event of any emergency requiring evacuation all volunteers leave the building in accordance with agreed procedure.

12. Managing complaints

Complaints are taken seriously and should be made in writing to the Head of Compliance, Governance and Quality, please see the Complaints Policy for more information.

13. Whistleblowing

If the person raising the concern does not feel that they can speak to a member of the children's team (Club Wilber) for whatever reason the following people can be contacted:

Kate Danielkiewicz

Head of Compliance, Governance and Quality
Designated Safeguarding Officer
Telephone: 07580750290.
Email: k.danielkiewicz@wilberfroctrust.org.uk

Samantha Scholey-Dyson

Operations Director
Secondary Designated Safeguarding Officer
Telephone: 07790736745
Email: s.scholey@wilberfroctrust.org.uk

Alternatively, if the allegation is against the people listed above, please use the following numbers:

0808 800 5000 NSPCC ChildLine

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the child's area. See Appendix 4.

Please refer to the Whistleblowing policy for more information.

14. Legal framework and Guidance

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children.

The Care Act 2014 – provides clear guidance and a legal framework for Local Authorities and other stakeholders regarding the protection of Children and Adults from abuse. These safeguarding duties include the requirement for a multiagency, local adult safeguarding system that seeks to prevent abuse and neglect and stop it quickly when it happens.

This policy reflects the legal framework set out in the Children Act 1989.

This policy and procedures are in line with the NSPCC National Safeguarding and Child Protection Standards which is a framework of standards for all organisations to adhere to in regard to children's safeguarding. [nspcc.org.uk/standards/](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/standards/)

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 – this policy is in line with the guidance in this document.

15. Sharing of information/Photos taken

Wilberforce Trust employers will seek to avoid situations where images can be inappropriately misused, adapted, or circulated. Organisers of any event involving children, young people at risk need to:

- Obtain written consent from parents or carers prior to the event for any young person under the age of 16 years old.
- Obtain written consent from the young person themselves between the ages of 16 and 18 years old.
- Include photography and video section in the Risk Assessment for the event.
- Make sure they do not publish personal details alongside an image.
- Give young people guidance on expectations regarding their own taking of images.
- Treat images as confidential information, store them appropriately and delete once they are no longer required.

Ensure the information for parents, children, young people, states that Wilberforce Trust is not responsible for:

- Any photography/filming taken on individual mobile phones or digital cameras.

16. Resources

Training for all relevant staff to be undertaken, including training for safeguarding leads/officers.

Training of the board of Trustees in Children's Safeguarding.

17. Review

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of Compliance and Quality , unless change in law.

18. Appendix 1. Children Safeguarding Incident Form

Incident/Disclosure Form

All allegations, complaints or suspicions of abuse should be recorded as close as possible to the time of the incident. Details of incidents should be recorded in as much detail, and as accurately as possible. Any disclosures of abuse being made by children and young people should be a reflection of what was actually said. Do not try and interpret any of the information. Just record what was said or witnessed.



Date and time of incident or disclosure
Name, age, ethnicity or religion, any disabilities of person(s) involved
Names of parents or carers, address and telephone numbers of person(s) involved
Names, ages, telephone numbers and addresses of any witnesses
Name, role and contact details of person completing this form
Details of what happened or disclosure of allegations (do not interpret information – use the same language that was used by the young person or child). Are you reporting your own concerns or those reported by somebody else?

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What action was taken (if no action was taken explain why)

--

Who did you report the incident to (names and contact details)

Within Wilberforce Trust?

Other agencies?

Parents or Carers?

Are any other young people potentially at risk?

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Any other relevant information

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Signed:

Date:

Time:

This form should be kept in a secure and safe place, in compliance with Wilberforce Trust GDPR policy.

You should seek further guidance and support from:

- Kate Danielkiewicz, Wilberforce Trust the Designated Safeguarding Officer – k.danielkiewicz@wilberforcetrust.org.uk
- Samantha Scholey-Dyson, Wilberforce Trust, Second Designated Safeguarding Officer – s.scholey@wilberforcetrust.org.uk
- Children Safeguarding Policy
- The child's Local Children's Safeguarding Board or Local Authority Designated Officer
- NSPCC on 0808 800 5000

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