

# Safeguarding Policy

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NCEPOD is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults who engage with our services, activities, staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners.

We believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination, and harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all individuals working on behalf of NCEPOD are expected to share this commitment.

This policy outlines our approach to preventing harm, responding to safeguarding concerns, and ensuring that appropriate action is taken where abuse or neglect is suspected.

## 4.9.1 Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Provide staff and volunteers with clear safeguarding responsibilities and procedures.
- Promote a culture of vigilance, accountability, dignity, and respect.
- Ensure compliance with applicable safeguarding legislation and regulatory requirements.
- Establish procedures for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns.

## 4.9.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Trustees/directors
- Contractors and consultants
- Agency workers
- Any other partners engaged for specific purposes or studies.

The policy applies across all organisational activities, including in-person events, online engagement, and digital communications.

## 4.9.3 Definitions

### Child

A child is any person under the age of 18.

### Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult (also referred to as an "adult at risk") is a person aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs, and
- Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- Is unable to protect themselves because of those care and support needs.

## 4.9.4 Types of abuse

Abuse may include, but is not limited to:

### Children

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child exploitation
- Online abuse

- Grooming
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Domestic abuse exposure

#### **Vulnerable Adults**

- Physical abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery
- Self-neglect

#### **4.9.5 Safeguarding principles**

NCEPOD is committed to:

- Preventing harm before it occurs
- Taking all concerns seriously
- Acting promptly on safeguarding concerns
- Listening to and respecting the wishes of individuals where appropriate
- Working collaboratively with statutory agencies and safeguarding partners
- Maintaining confidentiality appropriately and lawfully
- Ensuring safer recruitment and safe working practices.

#### **4.9.6 Roles and responsibilities**

##### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**

The organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Dame Suzy Lishman, NCEPOD Chair. On a day-to-day basis she delegates initial responses to the Chief Executive Dr Marisa Mason [mmason@ncepod.org.uk](mailto:mmason@ncepod.org.uk) and she is responsible for and escalating any issues:

- Receiving safeguarding concerns and reports
- Maintaining safeguarding records
- Liaising with external safeguarding agencies
- Providing safeguarding guidance and support
- Ensuring safeguarding training is completed

##### **All Staff**

All staff must:

- Read and comply with this policy
- Undertake annual safeguarding training
- Report concerns immediately
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Promote a safe and inclusive environment

Managers are responsible for ensuring safeguarding procedures are implemented effectively within their areas.

#### **4.9.7 Safer recruitment**

NCEPOD is committed to safer recruitment practices, including:

- Appropriate job descriptions and safeguarding responsibilities
- Identity verification

- Employment history checks
- References
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required
- Risk assessments for roles involving vulnerable groups

No individual unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults will be knowingly employed or engaged.

#### **4.9.8 Code of conduct**

Staff must:

- Treat all individuals with dignity and respect
- Avoid inappropriate physical or emotional boundaries
- Never engage in abusive, exploitative, or discriminatory behaviour
- Avoid private or secretive communication with children or vulnerable adults
- Use organisational communication channels appropriately
- Report any unsafe behaviour or concerns.

#### **4.9.9 Recognising safeguarding concerns**

Indicators of abuse or neglect may include:

- Sudden behavioural changes
- Injuries inconsistent with explanations
- Withdrawal, fearfulness, or anxiety
- Poor hygiene or malnutrition
- Financial irregularities
- Disclosure of abuse
- Signs of coercion or control

Staff are not expected to investigate concerns but must report them.

#### **4.9.10 Reporting procedures**

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Chief Executive.

If a person is in immediate danger:

- Contact emergency services immediately.
- Then notify the DSL as soon as possible.

##### **Reporting process**

1. Observe or receive disclosure
2. Record factual information promptly
3. Report to DSL immediately
4. DSL assesses risk and determines next steps
5. Referral made to statutory authorities where appropriate

##### **Staff should never:**

- Promise confidentiality
- Investigate independently
- Delay reporting concerns.

#### **4.9.11 Confidentiality and information sharing**

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with applicable data protection laws.

Confidentiality must never prevent action being taken to protect a child or vulnerable adult from harm.

#### **4.9.12 Online safety**

NCEPOD recognises the importance of safeguarding in digital environments.

Measures include:

- Appropriate online conduct standards
- Monitoring of organisational communication platforms where appropriate
- Safe use of social media and digital technologies
- Reporting procedures for online abuse or exploitation.

#### **4.9.13 Allegations against staff**

Any allegation concerning staff, or representatives must be:

- Taken seriously
- Reported immediately to senior management and/or the DSL
- Referred to appropriate authorities where required.

Appropriate disciplinary procedures may apply.

#### **4.9.14 Training**

All staff and volunteers will receive:

- Annual safeguarding training
- Role-specific safeguarding guidance where necessary.

Training records will be maintained.

#### **4.9.15 Record keeping**

Safeguarding records will:

- Be accurate, factual, and timely
- Be stored securely and confidentially
- Be retained in accordance with data retention requirements.

#### **4.9.16 Whistleblowing**

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns regarding unsafe or unethical practices without fear of retaliation.

Concerns may be raised through:

- Internal reporting procedures
- Senior management
- External regulatory or safeguarding bodies where appropriate.

#### **4.9.17 Related policies in NCEPOD's staff handbook**

This policy should be read alongside:

- Code of Conduct
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Sexual harassment
- Bullying and harassment

#### **Appendix A – Key Contact Numbers**

- Emergency Services: 999
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Childline: 0800 1111