



Wadhurst Institute, Hall & Field

Wadhurst Institute, Hall & Field CIO
Charitable Incorporated Organisation No. 1169908

Safeguarding Policy and Procedure:

Promoting the health and welfare of children and adults at risk

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SIGNED BY:		ROLE:	CHAIR
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1. Context

Against the background of the legal framework provided by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and the Care Act 2014, amongst others, the Charity Commission requires that Safeguarding be a governance priority for all charities; stating that:

‘Trustees should ensure their charity provides a safe environment and protects staff, volunteers, and anyone who comes into contact with it from abuse or maltreatment of any kind’.

and

‘Trustees should take steps to ensure no one who comes into contact with their charity suffers distress or harm, as well as safeguarding children and adults at risk’.

2. Policy Statement

This policy is a means of ensuring that Trustees understand their safeguarding responsibilities, have considered the potential risks and issues, and that hirers of the CIO facilities have also considered safeguarding in relation to their function and purpose.

The policy defines how Wadhurst Institute Hall & Field Charitable Incorporated Organisation (**‘the CIO’**) will operate to safeguard children, young people and adults who may be vulnerable and/or at risk of abuse or neglect.

The CIO has a duty of care and is committed to the protection and safety of everyone who enters its premises and uses its facilities as visitors, guests and/or as participants in activities and events.

The CIO also has a duty to safeguard and support its Trustees, staff, volunteers and contractors. This policy will be used to support their work.

3. Definitions

‘Children and young people’ are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

‘Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’ is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment and mental or physical abuse
- preventing impairment of children’s health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children have the best outcomes.

‘Adult at risk’ (of abuse or neglect) - For the purposes of this policy, an adult at risk is someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 14.2 of the **Care Act 2014**:

- has care and support needs (eg those with learning difficulties, neurodiversity, or mental/physical health challenges)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect, or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

‘Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)’ - The DBS undertakes and issues DBS checks for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. It maintains the adults’ and children’s Barred Lists, and makes decisions as to whether an individual should be included on one or both of these lists and barred from engaging in regulated activity.

‘Appointed Safeguarding Lead (ASL)’ - Nominated and Approved by the Trustees, the ASL will act as the main point of contact for all safeguarding matters. They are the named individual with responsibility for reporting any concerns that arise to the relevant safeguarding agency as a matter of urgency.

‘Abuse’ - The ‘violation of a person’s human and civil rights by any other person(s). It may be a single or repeated act(s), physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, institutional, discriminatory or financial (including modern slavery) and any act of neglect or failure to act’.

4. Persons affected/impacted by this Policy

Persons affected or impacted by this policy include (but are not limited to):

- All CIO Trustees, co-opted Committee members, staff and volunteers;
- All those attending any activity or service that is being delivered from the CIO’s premises or estate;
- All visitors, suppliers and contractors.

5. Policy Principles

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and the CIO has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. There is no excuse for failing to take all reasonable action to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, exploitation or mistreatment.

The Trustees of WIH&F CIO will uphold the following principles:

- The welfare and well-being of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount;
- All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse;
- For services to be effective every individual associated with the organisation needs to play their full part; and
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

The CIO recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the **Children Act 1989** and **2004**.

All UK citizens have their rights enshrined within the **Human Rights Act 1998**.

The CIO also recognises that under the **Care Act 2014** it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse.

To this end, the CIO will keep up-to-date on (i) the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children, young people and adults at risk, and (ii) the work of local Safeguarding authorities and other support organisations.

The CIO is committed to promoting wellbeing, preventing harm and to responding effectively if concerns are raised. The focus is on both **identifying and stopping abuse** where it is happening, and **preventing** abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

6. Procedures

- (i) All Trustees must sign the Charity Commission’s **Trustee Statement of Eligibility** form which includes a declaration that they have no convictions in relation to abuse.

- (ii) All Trustees, staff and members of the committee will:
- familiarise themselves with their safeguarding responsibilities;
 - ensure that they understand the principles set out in Section 5 above; and
 - where appropriate, undertake training on safeguarding issues (including whistle-blowing), provided by the local safeguarding board/partnership or other local support organisations such as the NSPCC.
- (iii) All Trustees, staff and members of the Committee will work together to promote a culture that enables issues and concerns about safeguarding and/or welfare to be addressed.
- (iv) A named Trustee will be appointed as the '**Appointed Safeguarding Lead**' (ASL) and act as the main point of contact for all safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency. The CIO's Appointed Safeguarding Lead is:

Name: **LINDA CARLESS**

Signature: _____

Effective From (date):

Until (date): _____

- (v) The CIO Committee will adhere to safe staff recruitment practices at all times eg through the completion of DBS checks and the take-up of at least two written references.
- (vi) Whilst working on CIO premises/estate, Trustees, members of the Committee, staff, helpers or other volunteers will not be permitted unsupervised/one-to-one access to children or adults at risk, even if appropriately vetted and cleared through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).¹
- (vii) All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
- (viii) The ASL will retain up-to-date information on who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to a complaint, a concern or an allegation about safeguarding and/or conduct or practice. This may involve a person who works with (or has access to) children or adults at risk, who has, for example, :
- behaved in a way that has (or may have) harmed a child or adult at risk;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or adult at risk; or
 - behaved towards a child/children or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk.

7. Third Party Hiring of CIO Facilities

Trustees need to understand how the CIO amenities will be used by outside parties, the proposed usage of the space, and the target audience. The CIO should also undertake a reasonable level of due diligence to ensure the third party (organisation or individual) is not going to be using its facilities for illegal activity or a purpose that potentially poses a risk for children and vulnerable people.

¹ In line with the requirements placed on other users of the CIO's facilities; periodically, the Safeguarding Policies of those Organisations making use of the Playing Fields will be checked by the Charity whilst also confirming that DBS Checks have been made, as necessary, for all members of the Organisation who have the potential to regularly come in contact with Children and Vulnerable Adults.

The Bookings Secretary, under the delegated authority of the Trustees, will ensure that all hirers of CIO premises have signed a hiring agreement and accepted the latest version of the CIO Terms and Conditions, which set out the CIO's expectations of those using the facilities and what the Hirer can expect in return.

All Hirers who wish to use the CIO's facilities for activities involving children and/or adults at risk must demonstrate that they have their own safeguarding policy and procedures in place and must produce a copy of these documents, on request, as a condition of hire. They must also produce evidence that they have carried out relevant checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Note: Organisers of one-off private parties arranged for invited friends and family are exempt from this requirement.

8. Reporting

Where abuse or neglect is suspected, the CIO will aim to respond to the situation in a way which is caring, effective and enabling.

The CIO will support the alleged victims and the alleged perpetrators of any abuse as well as any employee or volunteer who becomes aware of the abuse in as far as this does not compromise any safeguarding enquiry or investigation into the allegation or place other adults at risk.

While the CIO will make every effort to respect the confidentiality of any information that is disclosed under this Policy and Procedure, this cannot be guaranteed. Information will be recorded and stored securely in accordance with GDPR 2018 but confidentiality is not absolute, and information may have to be shared, on a 'need-to-know' basis only, to safeguard individual(s) or to facilitate the investigation of a serious crime. Guidance on the Reporting of Safeguarding Issues or Concerns (actual, alleged or suspected) can be found in **Appendix 1**.

9. Communication

This safeguarding policy aligns with the expectations set out in the CIO Hiring Terms and Conditions and a copy will be made available on the CIO website.

10. Review of this Policy

The CIO Committee will review this policy and procedure annually and update it as required, in line with any changes in legislation, organisational structures, and best practice.

Appendices:

1. Guidance on the Reporting of Safeguarding Issues and Concerns.

Appendix 1

Guidance on the Reporting of Safeguarding Issues and Concerns (Actual, Alleged or Suspected)

If the Trustees and Committee Members become aware of possible or actual abuse or neglect, it should ensure that the safety of the individual(s) at risk is secured as a first priority.

Any Trustee and Committee Member who becomes aware of possible or actual abuse should, as soon as possible, record the details of the alleged abuse, and advise the ASL immediately.

The ASL should satisfy themselves that the individual at risk is safe, and that the alleged perpetrator(s), if known, does not pose a threat to others.

The Trustees will decide whether or not to refer the alleged or actual abuse to the local authority and/or the Police. When a crime may have been committed, the Police must be contacted as soon as possible. If the decision is to not refer, the reasons for this must be fully documented for future reference. As far as possible, the wishes of the individuals(s) at risk will be respected but it may be necessary to override these wishes for the safety of others.

If someone raises a safeguarding concern or discloses abuse:

DO:

- Stay calm and try not to show shock or disbelief
- Listen carefully to what they are saying
- Be sympathetic (I'm sorry that this has happened to you')
- Be aware of the possibility that medical evidence might be needed
- Tell the person that:
 - They did the right thing to tell you
 - You are treating the information seriously. It was not their fault
 - You are going to inform the appropriate people
 - You will take steps to protect and support them.
- Record and report the disclosure in line with the agreed procedure.

DO NOT:

- Do not press the person for more details; this will be done at a later date
- Do not stop someone who is freely recalling significant events (Don't say 'hold on, we'll come back to that later'; they may not tell you or anybody else again)
- Do not promise to keep secrets; you cannot keep this kind of information to yourself
- Do not make promises you cannot keep (such as 'This will never happen to you again')
- Do not contact the alleged abuser
- Do not be judgemental
- Do not disclose this information to others, except those with a legitimate 'need-to-know'.

In your record of the disclosure:

You should aim to:

- Note what the individual(s) actually said, using their own words and phrases;

- Describe the circumstances in which the disclosure came about;
- Note the setting and anyone else who was there (witnesses) at the time of the abuse or the disclosure;
- Remain objective, separate factual information from your own or others' opinions and interpretations;
- Use pen or biro with black ink so that the report can be photocopied if needed;
- Be aware that your report may be required later as part of a legal action or disciplinary procedure.