



Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy

Purpose

Our charitable activities include working with vulnerable people. The purpose of this policy is to protect them and provide stakeholders and the public with the overarching principles that guide our approach in doing so.

Version Control - Approval and Review

Version	Date Approved	Main Changes	Review date
1	Jan 2018	Initial draft approved.	Jan 2020
1.1	Feb 2022	Version dates of Reference documents updated, and locations in Reference documents inserted. Review interval changed to biennial. Some reformatting.	Feb 2024
1.2/1.3	Mar 2022	Training and contact details added.	Mar 2024
1.4	Oct 2024	Update terminology and references	Oct 2025
1.5	Oct 2025	Clarification of reporting process + form added to document.	Oct 2026

This policy will be reviewed as part of any safeguarding incident investigation, to test that it has been complied with and to see if any improvements might realistically be made to it.

Lead Trustee

The lead trustee provides oversight of safeguarding and will lead on any incident investigation and reporting. (See Appendix 1& 2)

Applicability

This policy applies to anyone working on our behalf, including our staff, trustees and other volunteers and will be used to support their work.

Definitions

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the 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

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

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” is defined as:



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- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Principles

We believe that:

- No one who is involved in our work should ever experience abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.
- We all have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all of our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, to keep them safe and to work in a way that protects them.
- We all have a collective responsibility for creating a culture in which our people not only feel safe, but are also able to speak up, if they have any concerns.

Our Policy

- WVFB has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.
- There are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk and children from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment.
- WVFB recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.
- The welfare of the child and/or adult at risk is paramount and everyone has the right to protection from abuse.
- We are committed to working with agencies including Northumberland Social Care, Northumberland Safeguarding Teams and the police etc. to ensure the reporting of abuse is right and in line with local, national and Charity Commission requirements and Information Sharing guidance. [Northumberland Adult safeguarding](#) and [Northumberland Children Safeguarding](#)
- We will create an environment where volunteers and staff feel able to raise safeguarding concerns and feel supported with their safeguarding responsibilities
- All volunteers and staff have an induction to the organisation, which includes awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and the procedures to be followed if they have a safeguarding concern
- Safeguarding training is available to volunteers and staff as part of their induction; and a safeguarding refresher course is expected every three years.
- All volunteers and staff must report any suspected abuse and be aware of the reporting and support procedures for safeguarding including the reporting of people at risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- All volunteers and staff must be clear on proper behaviour and responses and follow our agreed Code of Conduct/ Behaviour. Failure to keep standards will be dealt with using WVFB's Procedures.
- All volunteers and staff who come into contact with adults at risk of abuse, and children and their families as part of their duties will be alert to signs of abuse and consider whether there may be



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safeguarding concerns. They will discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, to get proper support.

- There is a Designated Lead for safeguarding at WVFB. Contact safeguard@wansbeckvalleyfoodbank.org.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer for WVFB will fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities in a way that ensures that adults and children are safeguarded from harm. The Safeguarding Lead handles the follow up and reporting of any suspected abuse.
- Appropriate recruitment of volunteers and staff is in place.
- This policy will be reviewed annually by the Board.

Signs of Abuse

Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts of suspected, disclosed or witnessed abuse or neglect.

The Care Act 2014 identifies the following categories of abuse and neglect that should be included within Safeguarding Adult policy and procedures.

It may be:

- **Physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual exploitation or acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefit.
- **Neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, clothing and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse**, including everything from individual acts of very poor professional practice to pervasive ill treatment, gross misconduct and systemic failure across a service.
- **Domestic abuse**, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and “honour” based violence.
- **Modern day slavery**, encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Self-neglect**, this covers a wide range of behaviours, including neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.
- **Radicalisation**, the abusive process whereby adults with care and support needs are radicalised.

Abuse can happen anywhere - in a person's own home, a public place, care homes, hospitals, day centres or in the community. Anyone can neglect or abuse - family members, friends, neighbours, social workers, health staff, carers, volunteers and strangers.

Stopping abuse or neglect is everyone’s responsibility and anyone can raise a concern.

If you are concerned about a vulnerable adult who is at risk of neglect or abuse in Northumberland, please contact Onecall: **01670 536 400** or onecall@northumberland.gov.uk



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Disclosure Procedure

If there is immediate danger to the child or Adult at Risk call 999 for the Police.

Staff / Volunteers may become aware of concerns regarding a child/adult's wellbeing in the course of their work. When this occurs the staff member must contact the Safeguarding Officer and ensure that a written record is made, so that it can be passed to the referring organisation, social services or the police.

Where abuse is disclosed to a member of staff/ volunteer they must:

- not promise confidentiality to anyone wishing to share a secret;
- request permission to take notes to ensure nothing is missed;
- not ask any leading questions;
- complete the Safeguarding Incident Report form (see Appendix 3);
- pass the record to the Safeguarding Officer.

The trustees are mindful of their reporting obligations to the Charity Commission in respect of [Serious Incident Reporting](#) and, if applicable, other regulators. They are aware of the Government [guidance on handling safeguarding allegations](#).

Reporting a Safeguarding Issue

Support and advice are available from the Safeguarding Lead or from staff.

There are 2 possible forms to be completed depending on the nature of the issue:

1. When a concern related to a client is identified, the form at Appendix 2 should be completed and passed to a member of staff.
2. With a safeguarding incident at the Foodbank / in connection with the Food Bank should be recorded using the form at Appendix 3.

Responsibilities

Trustees. This safeguarding policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board annually. Trustees should be aware of and comply with the Charity Commission guidance on [safeguarding and protecting people](#) and also the [10 actions trustee boards need to take](#) to ensure good safeguarding governance.

Everyone. To be aware of our procedures, undertake any necessary training, be aware of the risks and signs of potential abuse and, if you have concerns, to report these immediately (see above).

Statutory Guidance

[Gov.UK – The role of other agencies in safeguarding](#)

[CC: Safeguarding duties of charity trustees](#)

[CC: Safeguarding - policies and procedures](#)

[CC: How to protect vulnerable groups](#)

Useful Links

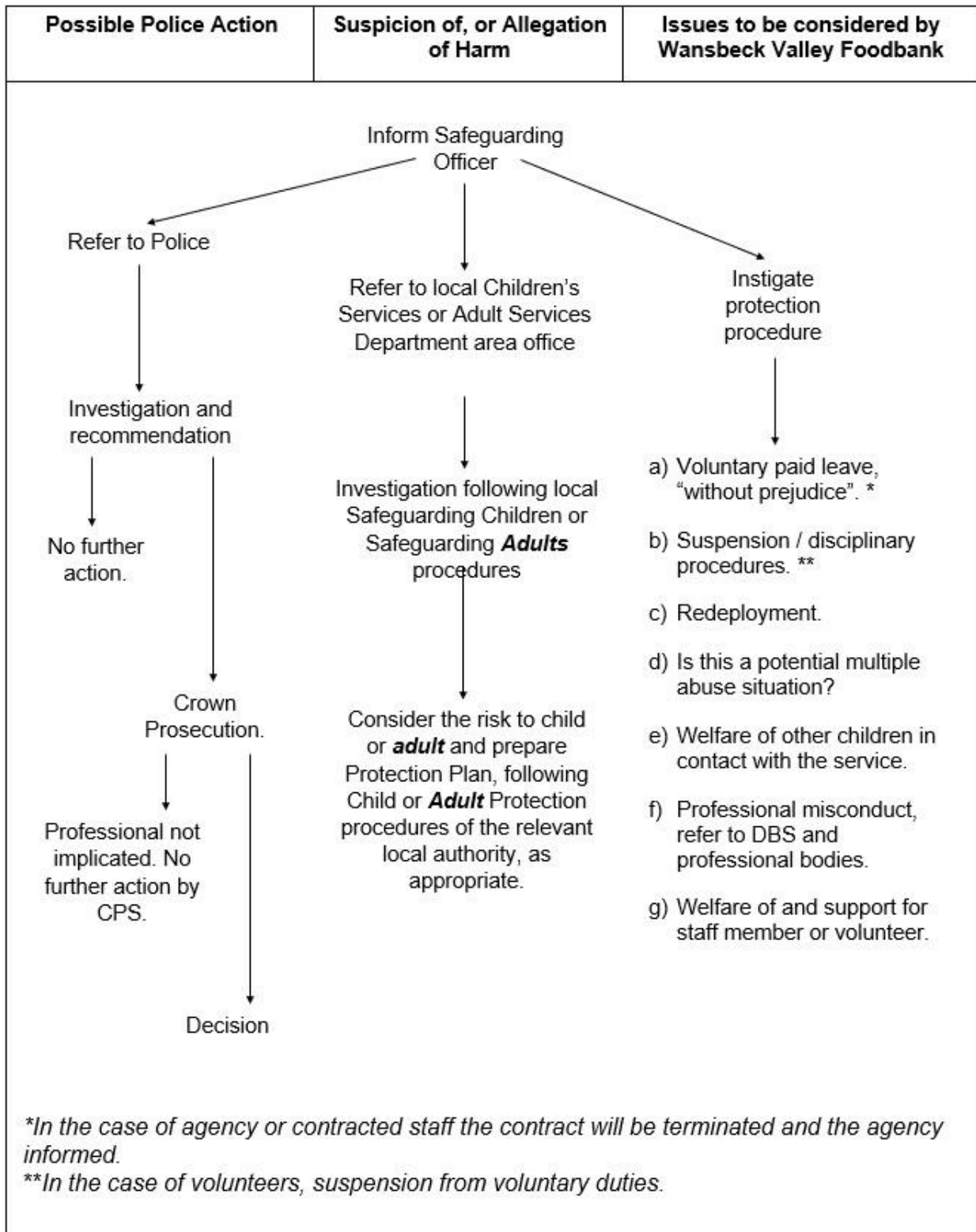
[NCVO: Online safeguarding resources.](#)

[NSPCC: Writing a safeguarding policy](#)



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Appendix 1: Process of Investigation



The outcomes of concerns involving members of staff will be notified to DBS, other regulatory bodies and funding partners, as appropriate.



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Appendix 2: Form for reporting concern

Date:	Name of volunteer reporting concern:
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Details of child/ adult:	
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Name:	Age:
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Address:

Details of concern:

Any further information:

Date form passed to Safeguarding Officer:
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Appendix 3 Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Section 1: Reporter Information

Name: _____

Position/Role: _____

Contact Information: _____

Date of Report: _____

Section 2: Details of the Incident

Date of Incident: _____

Time of Incident: _____

Location of Incident: _____

People Involved (including names, roles, and contact details if available):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Description of the Incident (provide as much detail as possible):

Section 3: Immediate Actions Taken

What actions were taken immediately after the incident? (e.g., first aid, contacting authorities):



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Were external authorities or services contacted? (e.g., police, social services): Yes / No

If yes, provide details: _____

Section 4: Witness Information

Were there any witnesses to the incident? Yes / No

If yes, please provide names and contact details:

Section 5: Follow-Up Actions

What follow-up actions are recommended or have been taken?

Section 6: Reporter's Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Reporter's Signature: _____

Date: _____



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Section 7: For Official Use Only

Received by (Name): _____

Position/Role: _____

Date/Time of Receipt: _____

Actions Taken:

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