



Safeguarding Policy 2023/24

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults who access WYPC's services and;
- to provide adults with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

2. Introduction

Wolvercote Young People's Club (WYPC) ("the Club") believes that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. The safety and protection of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults supported by the Club is paramount, and has priority over all other interests. The Trustees and Management Committee have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults, keeping them safe from harm, and recognises its responsibility to promote the welfare of the same.

WYPC encourages a culture of listening where young people and vulnerable adults can engage in dialogue with any staff member/adult volunteer and where their disclosures are believed and acted upon immediately. The Club has a fundamental belief that the views and wishes of children, young people, and vulnerable adults are sought in ways that are appropriate to their age, culture, and understanding.

The WYPC Safeguarding Policy applies to paid staff, Trustees, committee members, helpers, sessional workers, young leaders, or anyone working on behalf of WYPC, who, as *loco parentis* are best placed to notice changes in behaviour and/or physical injuries to young people and who, at times, may be supporting vulnerable adults also.

All adults will be requested to indicate their commitment to the policy by signing a declaration to say that they have read, and will adhere to, it. Declarations will be stored securely according to General Data Protection Regulation regulations.

3. Legal Framework

The WYPC Safeguarding Policy is based on law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018

This Policy and accompanying procedures have been produced with regard to the March 2015 Working Together to Safeguard Children Legislation, the 2014 Safe Network Standards guidance and the 2016 Keeping Children Safe in Education document. This policy and accompanying procedures consider the Club's responsibilities under the July 2015 Prevent Duty and the October 2015 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) legislation. Relevant policies and procedures have been informed and shaped by the current best practice provided by the NSPCC (2017) and guidance from the National Youth Agency's Safeguarding and Risk Management Hub. This policy should be read alongside other relevant club policies.



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The Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their needs.

In practice this means that **all** children, young people, and vulnerable adults, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have a fundamental and universal right to be safe and not discriminated against through the decisions made regarding safeguarding and child protection.

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to always ensure the maximum protection from any kind of harm for all young people and vulnerable adults involved in any way with the Club.

For the purposes of this policy, WYPC defines harm as *“ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.”*

The Equality Act 2010 defines discrimination as:

- **Direct discrimination** – where someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic.
- **Associative discrimination** – this is direct discrimination against someone because they are associated with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- **Discrimination by perception** – this is direct discrimination against someone because others think that they possess a particular protected characteristic. They do not necessarily have to possess the characteristic, just be perceived to.
- **Indirect discrimination** – this can occur when you have a rule or policy that applies to everyone but disadvantages a person with a particular protected characteristic
- **Harassment** – this is behaviour that is deemed offensive by the recipient. Employees can now complain of the behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them.
- **Victimisation** – this occurs when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance under this legislation.

To escalate a (series of) concern(s) to a Section 47 child protection referral to the local authority, significant harm should be evidenced clearly. It is important to remember that often, only when information held by several professionals and agencies is put together, that a picture of child abuse emerges.

Evidencing significant harm is often a challenge and there are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Useful guidance for the consideration of what constitutes ‘significant harm’ can be found in London Child Protection Procedures 2016, 5th Edition;

- the severity of ill-treatment
- the degree and the extent of physical harm
- the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect
- the extent of premeditation
- the presence or degree of threat
- the level of coercion, sadism and bizarre or unusual elements

Locally, we refer to guidance from OSCB, OSAB, and the Threshold of Needs document. This document can be found here: <https://www.oscb.org.uk/documents/threshold-of-needs-2021/>



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Within the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018 document, and the later 2020 version, the following specific safeguarding themes are identified. The list is not exhaustive.

These include:

Breast Ironing	Hate crime
Bullying including cyberbullying	Mental Health
Child missing from home or care	Missing children and adult strategy
Child sexual exploitation (CSE)	Physical Abuse
Children missing education	Preventing radicalisation
Domestic violence	Private fostering
Drugs (inc. County Lines)	Relationship Abuse
Emotional Abuse	Resistant families/disguised compliance
Fabricated or induced illness	Self harm
Faith Abuse	Sexting
Female genital mutilation	Sexual Abuse
Forced marriage	Trafficking
Gangs and youth violence	Upskirting
Gender based violence/violence against women and girls	Young Carers

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

WYPC will:

- Report any unusual/inappropriate behaviour to the Designated Safeguarding Officer in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Ensure that children, young people, and vulnerable adults know they can approach any of the adults in our club if they are worried about something and that they will receive a consistent, supportive response.
- Share any relevant additional information in a timely manner in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Commit to upholding a climate where children, young people, and vulnerable adults are listened to, believed, and their feelings and wishes accounted for in any actions that may be taken.
- Never assume that others are monitoring a child, young person, or vulnerable adult. Others may have doubts, but you could be the only person taking action.
- If in any doubt about what action to take, staff must seek advice from a named Designated Safeguarding Officer.

We will:

- have a designated lead staff member for safeguarding – see appendix 1.
- ensure that Designated Safeguarding Officers receive Specialist Safeguarding training, refreshed every two years, (the OSCB and OSAB Training Teams provide training which can be booked online: <http://learning.oscb.org.uk/online-booking-courses> or call 01865 810501.
- Ensure that all regular adult volunteers receive basic safeguarding training at least every three years.
- Ensure that all adults have read the WYPC Safeguarding policy and know who the Designated Safeguarding Officers are in case they need to pass on concerns.



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- Keep accurate written records of concerns for a child/young person, even in cases where a referral is not appropriate immediately in line with the General Data Protection Regulation.
- Ensure that all adults are recruited safely and have had the appropriate checks, which are re-checked regularly.
- All new adults are supervised until references have been verified and DBS checks received.
- Ensure that all adults are aware that they must refer any allegations against another adult to a Designated Safeguarding Officer who will then report to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01865 815232.
- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually and is in line with county procedures.

5. Action to Ensure Security

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage when involved with families and young people. In every case it is of paramount importance to take whatever actions are needed to ensure the safety of the child or young person involved.

- If emergency medical attention is required, either phone the emergency services or take the young person to the nearest Accident and Emergency department, following appropriate safeguards.
- If a child or young person is in immediate danger the police should be contacted, as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary.

6. Safeguarding of Adults including Vulnerable Adults

WYPC will not tolerate the abuse, in any form, of our adults, and is committed to safeguarding adults with specific needs from harm.

The Management Committee are aware that its adult helpers bring a plethora of useful skills, but in some cases will also present with access or disability needs, long-term health conditions, or other circumstances that could make undertaking duties on behalf of the organisation more challenging without further support being implemented.

WYPC will ensure that, when recruiting adults to the staff leadership team, appropriate measures are taken to ensure the process is as accessible as possible. *See Recruitment Policy.*

Adults accepted to the staff leadership team are bound by the same policies. Where necessary, reasonable adjustments shall be made to ensure that adults with support needs are able to fulfil their agreed duties to the best of their abilities.

Members of the leadership team who identify as requiring adjustments to the working environment or role they are to undertake will have the opportunity to discuss this with the Youth Leader or Charity Manager, confidentially and informally in the first instance if it is a direct contact role, or with the Charity Manager or Chair of the Trustees if a non-contact role. If more permanent adjustments are required, it may be necessary to convene a meeting, including the Chair, to ensure that the organisation is supporting the individual as fully as is reasonably possible.

At the time of updating this section of the policy, whilst members of the adult team have varying support needs to fulfil their duties, their needs are not classified as requiring further intervention from outside agencies nor specialist safeguarding trained members of the management committee or leadership team. This will continue to be monitored closely and actioned as necessary.

7. Virtual Meetings and Online Support

Use of online facilities, if appropriate, must be password-protected and the waiting room enabled. There must always be two leaders present during a session. An email, sent in advance, will provide login details



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and password. This may be sent directly to parents, or to the young peoples' email addresses, if known, copying in parents for information.

8. Radicalisation, Violent Extremism, and Terrorism

Radicalisation of children and young people is an area of growing concern within the UK.

- **Radicalisation** – the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism.
- **Extremism** – the holding of extreme political or religious views, fanaticism, notably where one advocates illegal, violent, or other extreme actions.
- **Terrorism** – an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system.

Holding extremist views is not, in and of itself, a crime, nor is it a safeguarding/child protection concern. Discovering and forming opinions about the world and society is a key part of normal development for children and young people. Concerns for the safeguarding of children and young people arise when the means to engage children and young people with an extremist agenda use abusive approaches, or when extremist views are used as justification for violent acts – which cause harm to the child or young person.

There is broad agreement over the factors influencing people's vulnerability to radicalisation, the relative influence of these factors, and the way in which they interact are not clear cut. As such, WYPC staff and regular volunteers are encouraged to undertake *Prevent* training to ensure they know how to spot the signs and how to record and report concerns. Those with direct contact roles should undertake training.

9. Reporting systems for young people and vulnerable adults

Reporting abuse

If abuse is suspected:

- Observations, conversations or concerns will be recorded, signed and dated in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Policy.
- The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than a Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will assess the information and will contact the LCSS team for advice and guidance. This may be in liaison with other DSL's and the Chair, where appropriate and necessary.

If abuse is reported/alleged

- 1) If a child/young person asks to speak to you about a problem, do not promise confidentiality, but explain that it may be necessary to consult a senior colleague. Explain this as soon as possible to the child/young person.
- 2) **RECEIVE** – Stop and listen if someone wants to tell you about suspicions of abuse. Listen quietly and actively, giving your undivided attention. Allow silences when needed. Do not show shock or disbelief and take what is said seriously.
- 3) **REASSURE** – Stay calm and give reassurance. Explain that they have done the right thing by telling you and that what has happened is not their fault.
- 4) **REACT** – Establish the facts of what has happened but do not ask leading questions. Keep questioning open, e.g. 'Is there anything else you want to say?' or 'Can you tell me more about



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that?' Do not criticise the perpetrator. Explain what you will do next, e.g. you will need to pass this information to your Designated Safeguarding Officer.

- 5) **RECORD** – If possible, make brief notes about what they have told you as they are speaking. If this is not appropriate, write down what was said, as soon as they have left. Record the date, time, place, your name and role and what was said, (rather than your interpretation of it). Use the child's/young person/vulnerable adult's language wherever possible. In most cases it is more appropriate to listen and record immediately afterwards.
- 6) **REPORT** – Report the incident to a Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and do not tell any other adults or children/young people about it. Ensure that your written notes are passed directly to a safeguarding lead. If they are not physically present, they should be secured in the office. If in any doubt what action should be taken, contact your Designated Safeguarding Officer. If the matter is regarded as critical it should be referred to MASH immediately – 0345 050 7666

The matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone outside the Club.

10. PROTECTING STAFF AND HELPERS

The Management Committee recognises the importance of protecting its adults from possible allegations of abuse and recommends the following guidelines:

Adults should not:

- Be alone with young people.
- Lock and unlock premises without another adult present.
- Transport young people in a car/minibus or other vehicle without another adult present.
- Take young people to their homes.
- Visit young people at their homes without prior agreement from all parties and not without another adult present.
- Make inappropriate contact with young people, i.e. develop relationships outside the club setting, including via personal social media sites or apps such as Facebook.
- Leave young people unattended.
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained.
- Leave young people in the presence of adults not known to them.
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who have not had relevant DBS checks.
- Leave young people in the presence of adults who do not hold a safeguarding certificate.
- Show favouritism to young people within the club.

Allegations about adults

If any allegation is made or suspicions emerge regarding any adult, this should be reported to a Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately, who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Oxfordshire County Council on 01865 815956, 07833 436649, or 01865 810603 **within 24 hours**.

If an allegation concerns a Designated Safeguarding Officer, the report should be made to an alternative Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or the Club Chairperson.

If further action is required, the following procedure will apply during which all information relating to the allegation will remain confidential:

- A detailed factual record of the allegation and action taken to be written in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).



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- Information will be passed to the Club Chairperson who may contact OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH on 01865 767 899.
- Consideration will be given to the suspension of the person involved, taking account of the risks to other young people, vulnerable adults, and the adult concerned.

If the allegation involves a club member (young person/youth volunteer), contact will be made with the young person's parent/guardian to advise them of the process, where appropriate. Relevant external bodies will be advised.

11. Photography

Since young people may be photographed while participating in club events and activities, written permission from parents/guardians will be obtained which will also allow photographic material to be used in the public domain. Photography must be in line with safeguarding practices and removed from devices as soon as reasonably practicable.

12. Confidentiality

Under no circumstances will any leader keep confidential any information that raises concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or young person. This statement relating to confidentiality must be made known to all who access any provision of WYPC. Adults must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Adults must be aware that they cannot promise a child, young person, or vulnerable adult that they will keep secrets.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees and Management Committee:

Signature:

Name: Dr Valerie E Tate, Chair of Trustees

Date: 08/11/23

Signature:

Name: Cheryl West, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Date: 08/11/23

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Document version history			Author: Valerie Tate, Trustee
Version	Date	Amendments	By whom
1.0			
2.0	8/11/23	Para 7: reference to pandemic removed; Safeguarding lead change to CW	VT



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13. Appendix 1 - Designated Safeguarding Officers

If a safeguarding suspicion or disclosure occurs, report to one of the club's Designated Safeguarding Officers:

Cheryl West	Senior Youth Worker	07714 270551 cheryl@wypc.org.uk
Russell Spivey	Youth Worker	07415 891949 russ@wypc.org.uk

If you cannot contact a Designated Safeguarding Officer, contact either LCSS (for advice and guidance) or MASH for an IMMEDIATE Concern. If a young person is in absolute immediate danger, contact the Police on 999.

LCSS North - 0345 2412703

LCSS South - 0345 2412608

LCSS Central - 0345 2412705

MASH - 0345 050 7666