

Safeguarding Children Policy

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The Safeguarding of children and young people is a priority for TCV. A significant number of volunteers, beneficiaries and visitors to TCV projects and services are children and young people.

This document sets out TCV policy with regards to safeguarding children and young people and its expectations of trustees, staff, key volunteers and volunteer officers. In this policy, we refer to 'child' or 'children' which also covers 'children and young people.'

This safeguarding policy applies to everyone involved in the delivery of projects and services for TCV, including trustees, staff, key volunteers, volunteer officers and contractors. This policy also applies to all Service Level Agreements, e.g. Partnership Agreement, and all such agreements will contain a reference to that effect.

Implementation of safeguarding policy and procedure is the responsibility of all staff. The term 'staff' used in this policy refers to staff, key volunteers and volunteer officers.

The abuse of children and young people; physically, emotionally, sexually and through neglect is a sad fact of life. Children may be abused regardless of their age, gender, religious belief, racial origin, culture or disability. They are often (but not always) abused by people they know and trust. TCV has a zero-tolerance of abuse wherever it occurs or whoever is responsible.

TCV acknowledges the rights of children and young people to be safeguarded from abuse of all types and makes a clear commitment to upholding those rights by creating and maintaining an environment which aims to ensure, as far as possible, that children and young people who access its services are kept free from abuse and neglect.

Responsibility for the Safeguarding policy lies with the Board of Trustees. The Board will appoint a Lead Trustee for Safeguarding, from ARC, to provide the board with additional assurance on its safeguarding responsibilities under any relevant legislation.

TCV's Safeguarding Champion is the Head of People Services. The Champion will ensure that suitable and sufficient procedures and information are made available to TCV's workers to enable effective safeguarding. The Champion will oversee safeguarding standards.

The Safeguarding and Volunteering Manager is line managed by a member of the Leadership Team and reports to the Board of Trustees via the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

The Safeguarding and Volunteering Manager will hold operational responsibility for safeguarding procedures and the monitoring of safeguarding practice across TCV.

Regional/Country support for safeguarding will be provided by nominated Safeguarding Advisors. Directors, Head of Departments and Operations Leaders are responsible for ensuring safeguarding is managed effectively within their business area.

1.0 Policy Statement

- TCV recognises its responsibilities to safeguard children under the terms of all country specific legislation and guidance with regards to the safeguarding of children.

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- TCV will record and refer all concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect to the lead agencies responsible for carrying out safeguarding assessments and enquiries, specifically the Local Authority or the police where appropriate.
- TCV will work in partnership with lead agencies and other relevant partners to respond to suspicions or incidents of abuse in accordance with statutory procedures.
- TCV will share information for the purposes of safeguarding with statutory services and other relevant agencies; and will comply with the statutory duty to supply information where requested.
- TCV will strive to raise awareness of safeguarding issues in the communities where it works through the provision of information and advice to its staff, volunteers and beneficiaries.
- TCV will ensure that data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. This allows for the sharing of information without consent, where there is a concern that a child is suffering abuse, is at risk of abuse, or where seeking consent to share information would place the child at further risk.
- TCV will ensure that it has in place internal procedures for staff that establish clear lines of accountability, responsibility and processes for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- TCV will provide staff with role appropriate training to enable them to understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and to ensure they can appropriately identify and report the signs of abuse.
- TCV will meet its responsibilities with regards to all disclosure and barring schemes in the recruitment and selection of staff. TCV will undertake checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and other country specific services, for all applicants to relevant posts.
- TCV will provide support and supervision for staff in order to create an environment in which they feel able to report safeguarding issues, including where they have concerns about the behaviour of other TCV staff.
- TCV will address any suspected abuse by its staff through formal statutory investigative procedures and its own internal disciplinary procedures.
- TCV will establish, support and maintain leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements at both operational and strategic levels. The Safeguarding and Volunteering Manager will be the operational lead for safeguarding. The Head of People services will be the strategic lead for safeguarding.

2.0 Definitions

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989 (TCV recognises that the legal definition in Scotland differs from that outlined above. However, for the purpose of child protection guidance produced by the Scottish Government accepts the above definition).

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3.0 Other Essential Information

None

4.0 Related Documents

- Prevent Policy
- Safeguarding Adults policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- SG-P01 – Safeguarding Procedure
- HS-P15 – Risk Assessment Procedure
- HR-P01 – Recruitment & Selection Procedure

5.0 Relevant Legislation

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007

6.0 Approval

This Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on 12 December 2022.