

Volunteer Cornwall

Children, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2025

Vision & Purpose

Volunteer Cornwall believes that everyone has a right to contribute to and receive support from society, free from the fear of abuse or harm and to be able to work or volunteer with children, young people or adults without the risk of good intentions being misconstrued.

This policy sets out the approach we will take to safeguard the welfare of those who use or deliver our services, or those peripheral to us. Our goal is to be an exemplary organisation in the voluntary sector in Cornwall on the issue of safeguarding.

Key Principles

- The safety of children, young people and adults is paramount.
- All children and adults, regardless of age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity can exercise their right to protection from harm or abuse when working with Volunteer Cornwall
- All suspicions and allegations will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- Volunteer Cornwall have a safe recruitment process for staff and volunteers which adheres to best practice.
- Staff undertake risk management of programmes and undertake individual risk assessments for activities and specific cases.
- All staff and volunteers at Volunteer Cornwall will have safeguarding training and understand how to report concerns through the appropriate channels.
- Volunteer Cornwall will work to support the voluntary sector through exemplary behaviour and offering support and training.

Policy Statement

“Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities should be a governance priority for all charities. It is a fundamental part of operating as a charity for the public benefit.” (Gov.uk, 2022)

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that, when working with children, young people and adults, it is the individual’s welfare that is paramount, and our over-riding aim is to conduct our activities in a way which will keep them safe from harm and exploitation and uphold their rights.

In the legal context Volunteer Cornwall will uphold the rights of everyone as prescribed in the following acts of parliament (inclusive but not exhaustive):

Children’s Acts 1989, 2004 & 2006, Children & Families Act 2014, Children & Social Work Act 2017, Human Rights Act 1998, Education Act 2002, Serious Crime Act 2015, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Mental Capacity Act 2005 (and amendments 2019), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, the Care Act 2014, Modern Slavery Act 2015, Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Counterterrorism & Security Act 2015, Charities Act 2011, Charity Commission and Worker Protection Act 2023 (Amendment of Equality Act 2010 and in force from October 2024).

We also adopt best practice as set out in the following guidance:

Keeping Children Safe in Education – 2023

Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children – December 2023.

What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused – March 2015 (non-statutory advice).

Information Sharing – July 2018 (under revision as at July 2023).

Changes to Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 arising from the Serious Crime Act 2015 – May 2015
Care and Support statutory guidance - Care Act 2014
Charity Commission Guidance – updates 17 November 2021

Definitions

Children: For the purposes of this policy and our related procedures, the term ‘child’ means any person under the age of 18 years. Child protection guidance refers to anyone under the age of 18.

“In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2023).” NSPCC, 2024

Definition of abuse: A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Source: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Safeguarding children means to:

- protect children from abuse and maltreatment.
- prevent harm to children’s health or development.
- ensure children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.
- take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Adults: Definition of an adult at risk: An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and/or support. Where someone is over 18 but still receiving children’s services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with as a matter of course by the adult safeguarding team.

‘Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons. This could be a single act or repeated over time and may be deliberate or happen by mistake. The individual may not fully understand the consequences of what is happening to them.’ No Secrets, 2000.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs, and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect. (Care Act guidance 14:2)

Extract from Care and Support Statutory Guidance Chapter 14:

“Protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect 14.7 “Safeguarding means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult’s wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.”

Professional Boundaries

We recognise that a key risk area within close communities is the erosion of boundaries which may lead to possible inappropriate behaviours (even if there is no safeguarding intent). VC acknowledges that this needs to be monitored with staff and volunteers, with consideration to training, inductions and contact. Regular discussion within the Safeguarding team of DSOs with any concerns around trends, complaints or compliments that may indicate we need to consider more options to keep both children and adults safe from harm from abuse and neglect. All reports to be logged and safeguarding allegations to be reported to LADO or PiPOT teams as necessary.

Links to Other Volunteer Cornwall Policies

Confidentiality

Any potential or actual safeguarding concern will naturally require the sharing of personal and sensitive information. This will always be done in accordance with our procedures on Confidentiality (contained within our Data Protection and Security policies) and the Confidentiality Code of Conduct.

Whilst the confidential nature of discussions between staff or volunteers and service users is normally protected, safeguarding concerns can over-ride this where we have cause to believe criminal activity may have taken or be taking place and/or where we consider that there is a risk of harm to an individual. This is reflected in our written and verbal agreements with service users and should be explained when a child, young person or adult wishes to make a disclosure to us.

Complaints

Volunteer Cornwall aims to give the highest possible standard of client satisfaction and service. If there is a complaint about how we have handled a safeguarding concern, there is a formal process to record and report this. The process makes a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice, or a complaint.

On-line Behaviour & Operating Online

Risks to a child, young person or adult are not restricted to the physical world but increasingly come from the ‘virtual’ world of online activity such as chatrooms, multi-player games and social media. Around 1 in 8 young people have been bullied on social media (Ofcom (2017) [Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report \(PDF\)](#)) and in 2017, the Internet Watch Foundation identified over 78,000 URLs containing child sexual abuse images (Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) (2018) [Annual report 2017 \(PDF\)](#)).

Our Data Protection and Security policies informs staff and volunteers about expectations on online behaviour. This includes what is and is not acceptable and covers things such as not making or accepting ‘friend requests’ with service users and not discussing the nature of the work or volunteering carried out on behalf of Volunteer Cornwall.

Volunteer Cornwall complete an annual Data Security self-assessment tool for the NHS and all staff and trustees complete annual training. This includes the online staff training from the National Cyber Security Centre. There are policies and processes in place to protect staff, volunteers, clients and the organisation from external influence. All Volunteer Cornwall online activity can be audited and monitored centrally through the IT Officer under our Data Security processes.

Whistle Blowing & Duty of Candour

Volunteer Cornwall has a Whistle Blowing policy with a process to ensure that all safeguarding concerns within the public interest are reported.

The Duty of Candour specifically applies to Healthcare and Social Care professionals and consideration should be given to any health and social care services which are funded through the NHS and partners. Although we do not anticipate this as a mandatory activity for Volunteer Cornwall staff and volunteers within our current remit, we will voluntarily work within the same standards. Candour is defined in [Robert Francis' report](#) as: "The volunteering of all relevant information to persons who have or may have been harmed by the provision of services, whether or not the information has been requested and whether or not a complaint or a report about that provision has been made."

Equality & Diversity

Volunteer Cornwall strictly adheres to the Equality Act 2010 and has a policy on its commitment to be an inclusive and fair organisation.

Anti-Bullying

Volunteer Cornwall has a zero-tolerance approach to bullying which, in its extreme, can lead to safeguarding issues. Our *Model Dignity at Work Policy* outlines the steps we take to ensure that bullying has no place in our organisation.

Lone Working

Guidelines for Personal Protection and Working Alone can be found in Appendix A of the Health and Safety policy statement 2023.

Sexual Harassment

The new Worker Protection Act (Amendment of Equality Act 2010), comes into effect in October 2024, creates a duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their employees in the workplace. Volunteer Cornwall will ensure that it supports a culture where there is open communication at all levels in the organisation, and has a reporting structure that reflects its responsibility to take "reasonable steps" to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace.

Links to other High-Risk Areas

Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that some of the client groups that we work with may come into contact with those workers being exploited through Modern Slavery. Some examples of these are mobile nail cutters, hairdressers, cleaners or care workers who serve those in rural areas. Volunteer Cornwall ensures that staff and volunteers are aware of the concerns around Modern Slavery and how to report incidents following Volunteer Cornwall procedures.

Female Genital Mutilation

There is mandatory reporting of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) by teachers, social workers and health professionals which came into force on 31 October 2015. Although we do not anticipate that due to the identification requirements of FGM that this will be mandatory for Volunteer Cornwall staff and volunteers within our current remit. However, we will ensure that they are aware of this as a safeguarding concern and the necessity to report it via the process established in this policy.

Prevent

Volunteer Cornwall promotes an environment of equal opportunity for both staff and volunteers both under the Equality Act of 2010 and through its values. Volunteer Cornwall upholds the Prevent Duty regarding British Values and Extremism and ensures that all staff and volunteers are aware of the risks,

share information as appropriate regarding vulnerable individuals and groups and understand the referral process.

British values being '*Democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs.*'

Mutual respect and tolerance include encouraging students to respect other people with regard to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act [2010]

Extremism is defined in law as: 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.'

From the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 www.legislation.gov.uk

Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence

Volunteer Cornwall understands the requirements of The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 and The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 for reporting of abuse that falls within this remit.

Contact: The Forced Marriage Unit

Contacts: 020 7008 0151 or fmu@fco.gov.uk

Exploitation of Children and Young People

Volunteer Cornwall, in line with Cornwall Councils Strategy 2020-2023, will ensure that all staff and volunteers are trained and aware of reporting concerns around exploitation as per our referral processes.

County Lines

“‘County Lines’ is a term used to describe urban gangs supplying drugs to other parts of the UK via dedicated mobile phone lines. The gangs are likely to exploit children or adults at risk to move and store drugs and will often use coercion.” Devon and Cornwall Police, 2020

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that some of the client groups that we work with may be exploited through County Lines and ensures that all staff and volunteers are aware of signs and behavioural changes.

General Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers are required to work within Volunteer Cornwall’s code of behaviour designed to safeguard children, young people and adults from harm and follow the procedures in reporting concerns.

This means being able to:

- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.
- Respond appropriately to a disclosure.
- Respond appropriately to allegations against staff or volunteers, other adults and against themselves.
- Understand and implement safe practice in carrying out their duties.

Those responsible (both employees and volunteers) for carrying out work with children, young people or adults on behalf of Volunteer Cornwall are required to carry or have access to their copy of the procedures, with details of local contacts, when involved in activity on behalf of Volunteer Cornwall.

All staff and volunteers should be clear on the boundaries of their roles. Becoming too involved with or supportive of an individual can be counter-productive for that person and can lead to accusations of improper behaviour. To avoid this, staff and volunteers should always discuss situations with their line managers wherever they are being asked or encouraged to go beyond the advertised service offered by Volunteer Cornwall.

Volunteer roles

All volunteers have online access to the Safeguarding Policy through Volunteer Cornwall's website, Moodle or in a hard copy from their line manager.

For the volunteer driver role, a summary of this policy will be included in the Transport Guidance and for all other volunteers, will be included in their induction and appropriate paperwork.

Specific Responsibilities

Whilst recognising that all staff and volunteers have safeguarding responsibilities under this policy, we have identified that certain roles have additional or enhanced responsibilities as follows:

Trustees

The Trustees have ultimate responsibility for all strategy and policy within Volunteer Cornwall. They understand that "you must take reasonable steps to protect from harm people who come into contact with your charity" (Charity Commission, 21). Volunteer Cornwall understands that "The Charity Commission will hold trustees to account if things go wrong and will check that trustees followed this guidance and the law. Trustees are expected to take responsibility for putting things right." They need to satisfy themselves sufficient time and resource is allocated to ensuring compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures, and that they make it their business to understand and learn from any case reviews or recommendations arising from safeguarding incidents within and beyond Volunteer Cornwall. Safeguarding is a standing item on the Board agenda and all Trustees should have regular training and updates relevant to their specific roles. Trustees are responsible for alerting the Charity Commission if there is a 'significant' serious incident. The Trustees are expected to undertake a yearly review of the Safeguarding Policy.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the effective implementation of the Safeguarding Policy approved by the Board. They should ensure that safeguarding is embedded throughout the organisation's activities and space and time for discussion and reflection on incidents is given at SMT meetings. They should foster a culture of openness within the organisation when it comes to safeguarding so that staff feel able to openly and honestly raise any concerns or issues they might have.

Senior Managers

Senior Managers must assess the safeguarding risks inherent in the projects and services they are responsible for and ensure staff deployed are appropriately trained and supported to deal with those risks. Safeguarding should be discussed regularly at team meetings and in individual appraisals and they should set a personal example in treating safeguarding issues with due seriousness.

HR Manager

The HR Manager is responsible for ensuring that 'safer recruitment practices' are used when Volunteer Cornwall is recruiting new staff and conduct appropriate reference and DBS checks. They will provide support to staff and/or managers dealing with difficult or sensitive safeguarding issues and will work with senior managers to ensure all job roles are appropriately risk-assessed in relation to safeguarding and keep appropriate records of checks and training undertaken by staff.

Safeguarding Champions Group

This group provides a forum where those individuals with greater responsibility and/or expertise in safeguarding matters can meet to take forward Volunteer Cornwall's ambition of becoming an exemplar organisation in safeguarding practice within the voluntary sector in Cornwall. Its members can also come together to share learning and good practice and support each other in dealing with difficult aspects of safeguarding. It should be chaired by a Trustee and have the power to make recommendations to the SMT and/or Board where it feels necessary. Group peer supervision is available.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Volunteer Cornwall have identified the need for named professionals to lead on safeguarding concerns and referrals. The DSO will:

- manage and oversee individual cases.
- provide advice and guidance.
- liaise with police and others about case progress.
- be notified of suspensions, resignations or sackings where the employee posed a risk of harm.

See attached role description (Appendix 3)

Reporting Concerns

Responsibility for Reporting

Volunteer Cornwall staff and volunteers, along with members of the public, have a responsibility to act if the welfare of a child, young person or adult causes concern.

It is important that staff and volunteers recognise that if the words, actions or behaviour of a child, young person or adult gives them reason to believe that there may be an issue, it is their responsibility to report their suspicions to the DSO.

It is also important that those same staff members or volunteers understand that they will not be expected to investigate further or make any decisions about the next steps.

The responsibility of responding to, and investigating referrals for situations where children, young people or adults are thought to have experienced harm from abuse or neglect or may be at risk of abuse lies with the Police and the relevant Local Authority.

“Professionals who fail to report cases of abuse or neglect may not currently face criminal penalties for non-reporting; however, they may be subject to professional disciplinary proceedings or held to account through Serious Case Review reports or professional negligence cases.” NSPCC

Areas of Concern

For children & young people, there may be concerns around neglect, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, emotional or physical harm. Additionally, Volunteer Cornwall supports the guidance from the Cornwall Exploitation Strategy 2020-2023. Staff and volunteers should also be aware of, and look out for, warning signs around female genital mutilation or radicalisation which may occur within any groups or individuals regardless of religious, national or cultural identity. In addition, there are growing concerns around ‘County Lines’, Mate Crime and peer to peer abuse predominantly through social media.

For adults the Care Act 2014 introduced an extended range of third-party abuse concerns around neglect & acts of omission, sexual abuse, psychological harm, physical harm, domestic abuse, modern slavery, organisational abuse, financial or material abuse and discrimination. It also includes self-neglect as a safeguarding concern.

Generally, indicators of suspected abuse may include visual signs such as unusual bruising, burn marks, torn clothing, unexplained injuries, behaviour signals such as a change in attitude or language, or symptoms such as complaining of being unwell or in pain without any obvious medical reasons. All staff and volunteers are provided with detailed fact sheets with information about signs and symptoms for both adults and children during their training sessions. Volunteer Cornwall staff and volunteers are not responsible for assessing mental capacity but may be able to contribute information on someone’s ability to understand when abuse or harm may be happening to them.

Procedure when there is a concern

Staff and volunteers must refer child, young person or adult safeguarding concerns to Volunteer Cornwall's Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)

Currently (as at 16/07/2025) they are:

Andy Brelsford 01872 265308 (mobile telephone number 07779 724402)

Marianne Wright 01872 266987 (mobile telephone number 07968 706102)

Lisa Crook 01872 265306 (mobile telephone number 07889 410039)

The DSO will pass on details to the relevant local authority contacts:

- MARU (Multi Agency Referral Unit) for concerns around children and young people
- Adult Safeguarding Triage Team or the Independence and Wellbeing Team for concerns around adults (18 and over)
- Independence and Wellbeing Team for self-neglect cases
- Volunteer Cornwall Chief Executive

The action may vary according to the situation. For example, if a person is injured, medical attention may be required immediately or if a crime is suspected the police must be informed. Contact the emergency services – 999.

In all cases contact the DSO (or follow the procedure on page 13 of this document). Action must always be taken as soon as possible as delay can put a child, young person or adult in danger.

Procedure when abuse is disclosed

Wherever there is a need for medical attention this should be the priority and 999 contacted. If advised the child, young person or adult should be taken to the nearest casualty department, or an ambulance called, and the situation explained to the medical staff. The medical staff will then contact the relevant Safeguarding Authorities. Check that they agree to do so and give your name and contact telephone number to pass on. Report the incident to one of Volunteer Cornwall's Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Guidance for when a child, young person or adult wants to confide in you

DO

- Listen carefully and let them tell their own story, clarifying details where you need to (using T.E.D. questions only – tell me, explain to me or describe).
- Take very seriously what they are trying to tell you; they are saying it for a reason.
- Reassure them that they are doing the right thing by talking about what has happened.
- Try and remain calm and do not show too much emotion.
- Be aware that this will be a very traumatic experience in disclosing and may only be part of their story.
- Explain, where appropriate, what you need to do next.

DO NOT

- Promise you can keep it a secret, this must be reported.
- Make a judgement on your own about whether the child or adult is telling the truth.
- Interrupt or jump to conclusions.
- Ask leading or suggestive questions.
- Ask them to repeat the information to someone else.
- Ask to see marks/bruises that will involve them removing any clothing.
- Say it will be ok - it might not be for that child, young person or adult.

Five suggested things to tell a child, young person or adult who decides to confide in you.

- ◆ “What you are saying is important and I will treat it as such”.
- ◆ “It’s not your fault”.
- ◆ “I’m glad you were able to talk to someone.”
- ◆ “I will help you as best I can”.
- ◆ “This is so important I need to talk to someone about it”.

Make careful records of what was said as soon as possible, *but not in front of them*, as this could deter them from making a full and frank disclosure.

Record **verbatim** what was said by both of you, where it took place, who else was present and the demeanour of the person.

The reporting areas to cover are as follows.

- Name of child, young person or adult
- Parent/guardian/carer details and other people at home if known.
- Child, young person or adult’s address
- Relevant telephone numbers you may know.
- What is said to have happened or what was seen?
- When it occurred and where? Who else was on the scene?
- What was said by those involved?
- Whether there is any actual evidence e.g., bruising, bleeding, changed behaviour.
- Who has been told about it?
- Was the person able to say what had happened?
- Where you able to ask for consent to share (if appropriate)?
- For adults only– it is very important to ask what would they like to happen?

With adults there is an assumption that you have informed consent from the person or guardian/carer. VOLUNTEER CORNWALL may need to explain why it is felt that the person does not have the ability to have understood the concern, however, VOLUNTEER CORNWALL do not assess or judge mental capacity. Safeguarding procedures are person centred and in the case of an adult it is essential to ask what they would like to happen with the referral.

In the first instance the DSO will complete the Volunteer Cornwall Cause for Concern form, as soon as possible. The form will be available in all offices or by email from the DSO. (Appendix 4)

Next, contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Discuss concern with a DSO:

Andy Brelsford	Tel: 01872 265308 Mobile: 07779 724402 or
Marianne Wright	Tel: 01872 266987 Mobile: 07968 706102 or
Lisa Crook	Tel: 01872 265306 Mobile: 07889 410039

If another member of staff initiates the start of the Cause for Concern Form (Log) email to a DSO or post (if appropriate) in an envelope marked “Private and Confidential” to Designated Safeguarding Officer, Volunteer Cornwall, Acorn House, Heron Way, Newham, Truro, TR1 2XN.

Once you have reported your concerns the DSO will take any necessary action. *In some cases, The Safeguarding Authorities may wish to contact you to clarify information that you have given.*

Procedure for an allegation of abuse against a staff member

The flow charts (Appendix 1) outline what to do if the person suspected of abuse is a member of staff or volunteer, a trustee, a Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Chief Executive within Volunteer Cornwall. Volunteer Cornwall have a separate Whistleblowing Policy to be read in conjunction with this section and the Charity Commission have a helpline for serious concerns.

Wherever allegations are made against a staff member or volunteer, these MUST remain confidential (not withstanding the possible need to question staff or volunteers as part of the investigation process) to ensure the person is not adversely affected should the allegations not be upheld.

Children and Young People – Persons in Positions of Trust (PIPOT). We have clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (Working Together, 2023)

An allegation may relate to a person who works with adults who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, an adult or child committed a criminal offence against, or related to, any adult or child
- behaved towards an adult or child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to adults with care and support needs
- behaved in a way that casts doubt on their suitability to work with adults at risk, for example been arrested or convicted of drug or alcohol or violence related offences

Support for Staff and Volunteers

Staff can immediately access safeguarding information and publications from our website and internal system. Concern logs are also available from the internal network and to download from the website.

Any member of staff or volunteer who reports a safeguarding concern will be supported by the organisation. Depending on the nature of the incident or report, this could range from feedback (so that they know their report has been acted on) to an informal debrief by Line Manager, DSO or HR Manager through to the offer of external counselling in the most serious of cases. The aim is to enable the staff member or volunteer to have closure and to be able to move on from the episode without negative emotions such as guilt or anxiety.

Where the case involves a member of staff or volunteer from Volunteer Cornwall, the impact could be wider than just the person reporting it and support may be needed by a wider group of colleagues. Managers should always respond sympathetically to any request for support from staff or volunteers but should also be proactive in offering it and not necessarily wait for it to be requested.

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

Volunteer Cornwall are committed to creating and maintaining a safe working environment for staff, volunteers and clients. Relevant staff have completed Safer Recruitment training, and the principles are applied to all recruitment practices.

Role descriptions will be reviewed by Senior Managers to ensure that they meet the requirements of their project activity.

This practice includes pre-employment and volunteer recruitment checks. All staff and volunteers who work with children, young people or adults are required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check appropriate to the role. The DBS certificate will either be renewed every three years or reviewed via 'The Update Service'. Two references relevant to the position will also be taken up prior to appointment.

For this safer work environment Volunteer Cornwall is committed to the promotion of fairness and equity. The Model Dignity at Work policy applies to all staff and volunteers and practice is underpinned by its values and principles.

Training Programme

Training, for both staff and volunteers, is a key part of our "prevention" strategy and starts from the moment someone joins our organisation.

This policy will be discussed at the induction of staff or volunteers at Volunteer Cornwall, prior to the commencement of their role.

All staff and volunteers will receive an element of Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role, and this will be delivered within the first 6-12 weeks of joining.

For those working or volunteering in regular and close contact with children, young people and/or adults there will be a further, more detailed one day safeguarding training session which will be refreshed either with a half day (online) every 2 years (or sooner if appropriate) or a full day every three years. All staff and volunteers have access to our Moodle site where they can download resources, policies, and processes at any time.

Volunteers are required to undertake the appropriate level (1 or 2) of Safeguarding for their role and this is refreshed with a half day every two years or a full day every three years. Some specific projects where volunteers are working alone mandate volunteers to undertake the Level 3 Award in Principles of Safeguarding for Children and Vulnerable Adults, with regular updates via a newsletter.

All staff undertake a one-day Adults and Children Safeguarding (Foundation for Adults and Level 2 for Children) training every three years. Volunteer Cornwall comply with the guidelines in the Competency Framework for Adults.

Staff or volunteers who hold specific roles may be required to attend additional training appropriate to their responsibilities. Specific project roles such as HIU may need to undertake additional training as required per contractual agreements.

Designated Safeguarding Officers are required to undertake the Level 3 for both Adults and Children every three years through Cornwall Council's Safeguarding training team.

Learning Lessons from Volunteer Cornwall or from external organisations will be discussed at Safeguarding Champions meetings and disseminated to all staff and volunteers. Training material will be reviewed regularly to ensure that Learning Lessons are included.

Supervision

Volunteer Cornwall have a Safeguarding Champions group (attended by DSOs, CEO, HR Manager and Chair of Trustees) who meet quarterly to discuss any concerns and referrals and for peer group supervision and support. The group are updated on any legislative changes and review and monitor all Safeguarding processes and procedures. The in-house training is formally reviewed annually (informally before each delivery) to ensure all learning lessons are shared. Volunteer Cornwall's Training Needs Analysis is also reviewed to monitor the training needs of all staff.

Each DSO is available to support individuals requiring supervision to ensure that all the team feel supported and valued for their safeguarding contributions and are also not taking concerns and worries into their non-working lives.

The formal 6 monthly appraisal process allows managers to gather information from staff on any training and development needs, and any concerns over their individual role in the Safeguarding process.

Guidelines for Working With all Children, Young People and Adults

Volunteer Cornwall ask all staff and volunteers to respect and maintain professional boundaries with all clients/service users during their work. See Appendix 2

Safeguarding Audit

As part of our commitment to being an exemplary safeguarding organisation Volunteer Cornwall will undertake an audit of safeguarding practices & procedures. The Safeguarding Champions group have developed an Audit Tool based on the one used by Cornwall Council.

Signed:

Date: 16th July 2025

Rachel Hall
Chief Executive

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Referral Flow Diagrams

Appendix 2 - Guidelines for Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Appendix 3 - Designated Safeguarding Officer Role Description

Appendix 4 - Cause for Concern Log

Appendix 5 – Four Page Summary Information for Volunteers

Appendix 1 – Referral Flow Diagrams

What to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed to you

Abuse suspected.



Ring a Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice.
Marianne Wright 01872 266987 / 07968 706102
Lisa Crook 01872 265306 / 07889 410039

Abuse is disclosed to you.



Listen to the details, following Volunteer Cornwall Policy
Call emergency services if necessary



Initiate Cause for Concern Form with DSO (Log - appendix 4)

Ring a Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice/to complete Concern form.
Marianne Wright 01872 266987 / 07968 706102
Lisa Crook 01872 265306 / 07889 410039



**Post the Cause for Concern Form (Log) to
(Marked Private & Confidential)**

Designated Safeguarding Officer
Volunteer Cornwall
Acorn House
Heron Way
Newham
Truro
TR1 2XN

What the DSO will do if abuse is suspected or disclosed.

Phone call from staff/volunteer



All Concerns will be logged internally as per procedures.
Phone 999 for immediate concerns or 101 as required.

*

The DSO will ring for advice or referral.
MARU (for Children & young people concerns)
0300 123 1116

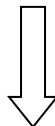
Adult Safeguarding Triage Team (for Adult concerns) for advice or referral
01872 326433

Independence and Wellbeing Team for advice & all self-neglect concerns
0300 1234 131

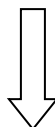
During out of hours the DSO will ring the Social Services
Out of Hours number (01208 251300)



Concern established and a Cause for Concern (Log) form completed.
DSO will report to MARU or Adult Safeguarding Triage Team with the relevant interagency form.
Serious Incidents: Charity Commission online referral <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>



The original is retained by the DSO in a locked filing cabinet or
online in a secure area.



Case reviewed and closed following referral.
DSO to present an anonymised case summary at the next
Safeguarding Champions meeting.
Learning lessons added to training/inductions.

A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

Member of staff/volunteer suspected of abuse.



Concern reported to the DSO/HR/CEO
Immediately when notified.



DSO reports to
LADO
01872 326536
Adult Safeguarding Lead Officer for advice
01872 326433



Appropriate Local Authority Officers will then advise on any appropriate action
as well as when and if the staff member or volunteer concerned is to be informed
Charity Commission online referral <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

If abuse is established this may also lead to a referral to the
Disclosure and Barring Service

DSO suspected of abuse



Concern reported to Chief Executive (or senior manager in charge)
Immediately when notified (a delay may be due to working rotas)



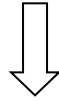
CE reports to LADO or Adult Safeguarding Lead Officer
Immediately when notified



Appropriate Local Authority Officers will then advise on any appropriate action
as well as when and if the DSO concerned is to be informed
If abuse is established this may also lead to a referral to the
Disclosure and Barring Service

Chief Executive suspected of abuse

Concern reported to the DSO



DSO reports to Chair of the Board and HR
and LADO or Adult Safeguarding Lead Officer
Immediately when notified



Appropriate Local Authority Officers will then advise on any appropriate action as well as when and if the CE is to be informed

Charity Commission online referral <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

If abuse is established this may also lead to a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

A Trustee is suspected of abuse

Concern reported to the DSO



DSO reports to LADO
01872 326536

Or Adult Safeguarding Lead Officer
01872 326433

Immediately when notified



Appropriate Local Authority Officers will then advise on any appropriate action as well as when and if the trustee concerned is to be informed

Charity Commission online referral <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

If abuse is established this may also lead to a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service

Appendix 2

Guidelines for Maintaining Professional Boundaries when Working with Children, Young People and Adults

- Follow Volunteer Cornwall's policies and reporting procedures
- Treat everyone with respect
- Provide an example you wish others to follow
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy
- Encourage children, young people and adults to feel that you are approachable
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned

We ask that staff and volunteers work within Volunteer Cornwall's policies, and these are some examples of maintaining your personal and professional boundaries:

Do not:

- use personal information provided for an activity or service for any other reason than the one it was intended for
- have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes
- exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues
- discuss abuse issues outside of Volunteer Cornwall's reporting procedures
- show favouritism to any individual
- make suggestive remarks or gestures to, about or in the presence of others
- smoke or swear in the presence of others
- give children, young people or adults sweets, cigarettes or presents
- give children, young people or adults your personal phone number or email address
- phone, email or text them outside of work/volunteering
- invite anyone to your home alone
- rely on just your good name to protect you
- conduct or plan activities outside the scope of VOLUNTEER CORNWALL's agreed terms of reference
- engage in social media or online friendships with people who are users of Volunteer Cornwall's services
- use confidential information given to you for any purpose other than for the activity it was given for (including seeking personal relationships)
- take photographs without authority or on personal equipment

If you have any cause for concern about any of the above, please feel able to discuss them with the Designated Safeguarding Officers.

Appendix 3

Designated Safeguarding Officer Children, Young People & Adults

Volunteer Cornwall recognises the right of children, young people and adults to live a life free from abuse and harm. Following Guidance Volunteer Cornwall formalises the position of Designated Safeguarding Officers in line with its Safeguarding policy.

The main duties of Designated Safeguarding Offer are as follows:

- To be a member of the Safeguarding Champions group.
- To be the point of contact for any report of concerns, disclosures or allegations in the case of children, young people to the Local Authority via MARU, and for Adults the Safeguarding Triage Team or Access Team. Also to report as quickly as possible the full facts to the Chief Executive, as per the Child, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- To be the point of contact for any report of concerns or allegations in the case of staff and volunteers (or potential volunteers) to the Local Authority Designated Officer for children (LADO) or the Adult Triage Team, and report as quickly as possible the full facts to the Chief Executive, as per the Child, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- To be the point of contact for any report of concerns or allegations in the case of partner agencies and clients to the Local Authority Designated Officer for children (LADO) or the Adult Triage Team, and report as quickly as possible the full facts to the Chief Executive, as per the Child, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- To attend Safeguarding Champions meetings and regularly review the Child, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and consult with the Local Authority Safeguarding leads for Children and Adults as appropriate, forwarding recommendations to the Chief Executive for approval by the Board.
- To receive completed Cause for Concern Forms (Logs) from members of staff or volunteer/clients who have reported concerns and pass those concerns on to the appropriate authority in accordance with the Child, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- During out of office hours to act as the emergency contact point to receive reports of concern and pass them on to the relevant officers in accordance with the Child, Young People and Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Be available to receive and give advice and support to all staff, volunteers and clients within the organisation on all matters appertaining to children, young people and adults' issues.
- Keep accurate records of any actions taken including the timeline involving children, young people and adults' safety issues. Responsible to keep these logs secure.
- In the eventuality that the Designated Safeguarding Officers are not contactable at the same time an appropriate substitute contact will be arranged.
- The Training & Development team and/or a Designated Safeguarding Officer will conduct internal awareness and update sessions for Volunteer Cornwall staff and volunteers.

Appendix 4**Cause for Concern Log**

At Volunteer Cornwall we take Safeguarding extremely seriously. As a member of staff or a volunteer you should adhere to our safeguarding policy. If you have a cause for concern you should ring the designated safeguarding officer (DSO) at Volunteer Cornwall who will complete this form with you (see below for details).

Date of discussion with DSO			Ref: 00 <i>To be completed by Volunteer Cornwall</i>
Date of incident/s			
Name of Referrer			
Phone Number			
Role: <i>staff, volunteer etc</i>			
Name of Individual concerned (child, young person, adult)			
Contact Details			
Age		Gender	M/F/Other
Incident <i>provide as much detail as possible; dates & times, locations and use the person's own words where possible. What was said, seen or heard.</i>			
Record of involvement <i>who was involved and in what way?</i>			
Identity of alleged abuser <i>(if known)</i>			
Were Parents/Carers/family informed? <i>If yes, when & give details.</i>			
Consent	Y/N		
For adult referrals only: Do you know what the adult would like to happen now? If yes please describe			

Decision: Provide rationale (e.g. no further action needed; immediate referral to MARU or Adult Safeguarding Triage etc		
Referral Y/N, to whom & by whom		
Action what & by whom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • 	Date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • •
Follow up required	Y/N If Y, by whom & when	
Lessons learned from this incident/process		
To be reported to Safeguarding Champions Group		

All Volunteer Cornwall workers and volunteers understand the need for confidentiality. Matters on this form should be kept confidential. These issues should only be discussed with the Relevant Safeguarding Authorities and the Volunteer Cornwalls DSOs.

Volunteer Cornwall's Designated Safeguarding Officers are:

Marianne Wright 01872 266987 / 07968 706102

Lisa Crook 01872 265306 / 07889 410039

Please ring them to talk through your concern and the DSO will complete this form with you. If you are unable to get hold of a DSO, please complete the form ASAP and we will return your call to discuss your concern. It is important that you write down what happened as soon as possible after the event. If applicable please post the form in an envelope marked 'Private and Confidential' to Designated Safeguarding Officer, Volunteer Cornwall, Acorn House, Heron Way, Newham, Truro, TR1 2XN.

Appendix 5 – Four Page Summary Information for Volunteers

Vision & Purpose

Volunteer Cornwall believes that everyone has a right to contribute to and receive support from society free from the fear of abuse or harm and to be able to work or volunteer with children, young people or adults without risks of good intentions misconstrued.

Definitions

Definition of abuse: “A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.” Source: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Adults: Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs, and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect. (Care Act guidance 14:2)

‘Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by another person or persons. This could be a single act or repeated over time and may be deliberate or happen by mistake. The individual may not fully understand the consequences of what is happening to them.’ No Secrets, 2000.

General Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers are required to work within Volunteer Cornwall’s code of behaviour designed to safeguard children, young people and adults from harm and follow the procedures in reporting concerns. This means being able to:

- Recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.
- Respond appropriately to a disclosure.
- Respond appropriately to allegations against staff or volunteers, other adults and against themselves.
- Understand and implement safe practice in carrying out their duties.

Those responsible (both employees and volunteers) for carrying out work with children, young people or adults on behalf of Volunteer Cornwall are required to carry or have access to their copy of the procedures, with details of local contacts, always when involved in activity on behalf of Volunteer Cornwall.

Training Programme

Training, for both staff and volunteers, is a key part of our “prevention” strategy and starts from the moment someone joins our organisation. All staff and volunteers will receive an element of Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role in their induction, with a furthermore detailed safeguarding training session to follow within 6-12 weeks, This will be refreshed every 3 years (or sooner if appropriate).

Reporting Concerns

Responsibility for Reporting

Volunteer Cornwall staff and volunteers, along with members of the public, have a responsibility to take action if the welfare of a child, young person or adult causes concern.

Procedure when there is a concern or a disclosure of abuse (or risk of abuse)

Staff and volunteers must refer children, young people or adult safeguarding concerns to Volunteer Cornwall’s Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO)

Currently they are:

Marianne Wright **01872 266987** (mobile telephone number **07968 706102**)

Lisa Crook **01872 265306** (mobile telephone number **07889 410039**)

The action may vary according to the situation. For example, if a person is injured, medical attention may be required immediately or if a crime is suspected the police must be informed. Contact the emergency services – 999.

In all cases contact the DSO. Action must always be taken as soon as possible as delay can put a child, young person or adult in danger.

The reporting areas to cover are as follows.

- Name of child, young person or adult
- Parent/guardian/carer details and other people at home if known.
- Child, young person or adult's address
- Relevant telephone numbers you may know.
- What is said to have happened or what was seen?
- When it occurred and where? ☑ Who else was on the scene?
- What was said by those involved?
- Whether there is any actual evidence e.g., bruising, bleeding, changed behaviour
- Who has been told about it?
- Was the person able to say what had happened?
- Where you able to ask for consent to share (if appropriate)?
- For adults only– it is very important to ask what would they like to happen?

Allegations against members of staff or volunteers

Wherever allegations are made against a staff member or volunteer, these MUST remain confidential to ensure the person is not adversely affected should the allegations not be upheld. All allegations should be reported to the DSO.

Appropriate Local Authority Officers will advise on any appropriate actions. If abuse is established, in addition to any criminal charges, this may lead to a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Volunteer Cornwall have a Whistleblowing Policy to support reporting of incidents by staff & volunteers.

Professional Boundaries

Guidelines for Maintaining Professional Boundaries when Working with Children, Young People and Adults Volunteer Cornwall ask all staff and volunteers to respect and maintain professional boundaries with all clients/service users during their work/volunteering.

- Follow Volunteer Cornwall's policies and reporting procedures
- Treat everyone with respect
- Provide an example you wish others to follow
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy
- Encourage children, young people and adults to feel that you are approachable
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned

We ask that staff and volunteers work within Volunteer Cornwall's policies and these are some examples of maintaining your personal and professional boundaries:

Do not:

- have any inappropriate physical or verbal contact with others
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour such as tantrums or crushes
- exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues
- discuss abuse issues outside of Volunteer Cornwall's reporting procedures
- show favouritism to any individual
- make suggestive remarks or gestures to, about or in the presence of others
- smoke or swear in the presence of others
- give children, young people or adults sweets, cigarettes or presents
- give children, young people or adults your personal phone number or email address
- phone, email or text them outside of work
- invite anyone to your home alone
- rely on just your good name to protect you
- conduct or plan activities outside the scope of Volunteer Cornwall's agreed terms of reference
- engage in social media or online friendships with people who are users of Volunteer Cornwall's services
- use confidential information given to you for any purpose other than for the activity it was given for (including seeking personal relationships)
- take photographs without authority or on personal equipment

If you have any cause for concern about any of the above, either about your own activities or those of a colleague, please feel able to discuss them with the Designated Safeguarding Officers.

**What to do if abuse is suspected or
disclosed to you**

Abuse suspected



Ring a Designated Safeguarding Officer for advice

Marianne Wright 01872 266987 / 07968 706102

Lisa Crook 01872 265306 / 07889 410039



Abuse is disclosed to you

Listen to the details, following Volunteer Cornwall Policy

Call emergency services if necessary (999)

Initiate Cause for Concern

Ring a Designated Safeguarding Officer

Marianne Wright 01872 266987 / 07968 706102

Lisa Crook 01872 265306 / 07889 410039