

Safeguarding Statement of intent

Because of the work we do, Friends and Families of Special Children (FAFOSC) are required to have robust policies and procedures to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk that we come into contact with. We are cognisant of the vulnerability of those we work with and the need to take all appropriate steps to ensure our clients, and their families, are safe while they are engaged in the activities, and receiving the services, we provide.

All Children and Adults at Risk have a right to protection and freedom from abuse or exploitation, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage or racial culture, religious belief, sexual orientation, economic status or otherwise.

For the purposes of safeguarding procedures, we consider our team to be professionals, and therefore will refer safeguarding concerns in relation to our trustees, employees or volunteers through the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) processes.

The vulnerability of those we work with makes it extremely important that our employees and volunteers understand the signs of abuse and factors that may raise cause for concern. We will also ensure they understand the importance of taking immediate action and making appropriate referrals, so we play our part in the multi-agency safeguarding framework.

To reassure our service users and their families of our commitment to safeguarding, this policy will be published on the FAFOSC website and available in hard copy on request.

Meaning of terms used within this policy

Abuse: can include physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment, radicalisation or exploitation. Abuse can take place in person or online, by any person (which could include by other Children and Adults at Risk or by people in positions of trust).

Children and Adults at Risk: Children and young people (meaning people under the age of 18 years) and adults who may be vulnerable due to, for example, their age, mental health, disability, illness, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, economic status or who may be unable to take care of themselves against abuse.

Safeguarding: proactive steps taken to prevent abuse against Children and Adults at Risk, including the action the organisation takes to promote the welfare of people including Children and Adults at Risk to protect them from harm.

Protecting: responding to concerns and/or disclosures that a Child or Adult at Risk may be experiencing or be at risk of abuse

Safeguarding responsibilities

The Board of Trustees/Directors

The Board of Trustees will nominate one of their number to undertake the role of Lead Safeguarding Trustee and receive periodic reports to assure themselves that the role is being discharged appropriately. The Board will also identify two of FAFOSC's employees to undertake the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Lead Safeguarding Trustee will have responsibility for;

- a) ensuring appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures are developed and reviewed annually
- b) conducting appropriate checks to monitor compliance with the agreed safeguarding policies and procedures
- c) considering any safeguarding concerns that are raised in relation to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and making the appropriate referrals through the LADO proc
- d) reviewing compliance with the agreed training elements of the safeguarding policy are being complied with and recording arrangements are in place

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is currently undertaken by the CEO. The DSL is responsible for;

- a) leading on referrals into multi-agency safeguarding processes including those made under the LADO process
- b) maintaining records of safeguarding concerns that have been raised and the resulting action, including cases where it was felt no further action was required, and the rationale behind the associated decision making
- c) attending safeguarding meetings when required, or ensure any member of staff who is delegated to attend has a full understanding of their role within safeguarding process
- d) representing FAFOSC with safeguarding partnerships and develop links with other agencies
- e) supporting the annual review of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, as well as any associated guidance documents
- f) maintaining records of trustees, volunteers and employees at safeguarding training
- g) monitor compliance with the Safeguarding Policy and any associated procedures and guidance are implemented and followed by all staff
- h) ensuring that all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and that such concerns are handled sensitively and in accordance with whistle blowing procedures
- i) meeting up to 4 times a year with the Deputy Safeguarding Designated Lead (see below) for professional discussion, practice review and supervision as required

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is currently undertaken by the Project and Activity Team Leader and has the following responsibilities:

- a) deputising for the DSL when they are absent and undertaking their full responsibilities during periods of extended absence
- b) providing support and advice to volunteers and employees of FAFOSC on safeguarding matters
- c) supporting the DSL in the development of policies, procedures and guidance in relation to safeguarding

Employees and volunteers of FAFOSC

All employees and volunteers have the following responsibility.

- a) taking immediate steps to protect and safeguard children, young people, and adults at risk who they consider to be at immediate risk
- b) discussing any concerns, they have in relation to safeguarding matters with the DSL or DDSL so that appropriate referrals can be made
- c) engaging in safeguarding training and development activities that have been identified as mandatory for the role undertaken
- d) abiding by the provisions of FAFOSC's Safeguarding Policies, Working Practices and Codes of Conduct.

Safer employment and vetting of staff

FAFOSC will develop safer recruitment policies and procedures, and these will be adhered to for all posts within the charity, as the whole team are liable to come into contact with vulnerable people at one time or another.

All trustees, staff and volunteers of FAFOSC will be subject to enhanced DBS checks. If there are areas of concern identified within these checks the matter will be considered by the Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Safeguarding Trustee and DSL. A record of the resultant action will be retained along with the associated rationale.

Safeguarding training policy

A record will be maintained of all training that is undertaken by FAFOSC Trustees, Employees and Volunteers. The following will be regarded as the minimum training provision for the FAFOSC team

- a) Trustees – will receive safeguarding awareness training at least once in every three-year period
- b) DSL and DDSL – will attend multi-agency safeguarding children training every three years, specialist safeguarding training along with other continuous professional development to support them in discharging their responsibilities effectively
- c) Contracted employees – will attend multi-agency safeguarding children training every three years as well as relevant specialist safeguarding training and continuous professional development activities
- d) Sessional staff and volunteers – will be provided with safeguarding awareness training and appropriate continuous professional development activities

Policy, procedures, resources and guidance

FAFOSC will develop associated policies and procedures as required to support this Safeguarding Policy.

Guidance will be provided to assist staff with specific advice to safeguard participants in the types of activity that FAOSC provide. New guidance documents will be developed when new types of activity are agreed to ensure that safeguarding issues are given appropriate consideration.

FAFOSC delivers services to families that can reside across three local authority areas, each of which have different referral pathways. This picture becomes even more complicated when considering the different approaches in each area to children and adults at risk. To assist staff to understand processes, the different types of abuse or exploitation and their role in safeguarding FAFOSC will provide staff with resources to enable them to discharge