

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Owner/s:	Helen Cable, Director of Children Young People and Families
Author/s:	Rachel Gatesman, Lisa Foster
Issuing team/department:	Children young people and families
Version no:	3
Date approved:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDs • Trustee Board 	26 Feb 2018 24 March 2018
Review frequency:	Annual
Next review date:	March 2019
Circulation (primary location):	Intranet

Note:

This update to the policy combines and updates the previously separate DCW and NDCS (UK) child protection and safeguarding policies. This has been done so that we have one clear organisational statement in relation to safeguarding. There will continue to be separate procedures for implementing this policy in different countries. This will be necessary for us to be compliant with the different legislation and to work with the relevant agencies in each location.

Contents

1. Policy statement.....	3
2. Scope	3
3. Definitions	3
4. Principles	4
5. Responsibilities and escalation	5
6. Implementation.....	6
7. Further information and supporting documentation	6
8. Revisions.....	7
Appendix 1: Designated safeguarding personnel	8
Appendix 2: Relevant laws and related guidance	9

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 The National Deaf Children's Society, including its international arm Deaf Child Worldwide, believe that children and adults should never experience abuse of any kind. All children have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse regardless of, for example, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, language or social background.
- 1.2 We have a responsibility to keep safe the children and young adults that we come into contact with, and to act in their best interests.
- 1.3 We are committed to safeguarding children as an integral part of our Mission and Values. We will *promote* the welfare of children; work to *prevent* abuse occurring; seek to *protect* those who are at risk of abuse or neglect; and *respond* as effectively as we are able to those who have been abused. We will take steps to identify those people who may be a risk to children.
- 1.4 Legal frameworks and procedures for dealing with safeguarding concerns vary from country to country, but we wish to see these fundamental principles applied wherever we are working.
- 1.5 Deaf and disabled children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse, especially where they are more dependent on others due to the extent of their disability or have difficulty communicating. It is especially important to make sure all steps are taken to protect them from harm and to keep a watchful eye for signs of abuse or neglect.
- 1.6 Safeguarding and responding to child protection concerns is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and representatives whether salaried or voluntary, whatever their role or status.
- 1.7 Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers and other agencies within the countries where we operate is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of the National Deaf Children's Society or its international arm Deaf Child Worldwide. The term 'staff' is used for simplicity throughout this document to refer to all of the above.
- 2.2 For ease this policy uses the term "children" but the principles, policies and procedures aim to be inclusive and apply equally to the protection of young adults at risk.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **Safeguarding** can be defined as:

- Protecting children from harm and maltreatment
- Preventing harm which could result in the impairment of children's health or development

- Promoting the welfare of children and enabling them to achieve the best outcomes.¹

3.2 **Child protection** refers to the actions taken to protect children who are at immediate risk of harm.

3.3 **Abuse.** Child abuse, sometimes also referred to as ‘child maltreatment’, is defined as all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, radicalisation, commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity². Abuse is harm which is so severe or persistent that it is deemed “significant” and is likely to have a lasting effect on the health or development of the child. This policy applies to all forms of harm to children, including harm which may be caused intentionally or unintentionally, and which may not reach the threshold of significant harm. Further definitions of harm/abuse can be found in the Procedures and Guidance documents.

3.4 **Child:** Although we recognise that the legal definition of a child varies in different countries, for the purpose of this policy children are defined as all those less than 18 years of age in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child³. The guidance document sets out where there are legal definitions to consider within countries.

3.5 **Young Adults at Risk/vulnerable adults:** Some of our programmes and partners work with individuals aged 18-25 years. A young adult at risk, for purposes of this policy, is any young person aged 18-25 who may be at additional risk or in need of support due to, for example, mental health problems, learning disability, or physical disability. This policy aims to be inclusive of both children and young adults at risk as we have a duty of care for both.

3.6 **Deaf:** We use the term ‘deaf’ to refer to **all levels of hearing loss in children and young people**, including a partial, total or temporary loss of hearing. This includes those who may describe themselves as having a ‘hearing loss’, ‘hearing impairment’ or as ‘deaf’, and includes children who have glue ear.

4. Principles

We will seek to keep children safe by:

4.1 Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.

4.2 Through our work, supporting them to develop an awareness of unacceptable behaviour and what they can do about it.

4.3 Appointing a designated safeguarding manager and specific designated safeguarding officers for all areas of our organisation.

¹ Adapted from the definition in Department for Education (2015) Working Together to Safeguard Children

² World Report on Violence and Health, WHO 1999 and 2002.

³ UNCRC (1989) Guiding Principles. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Guiding_Principles.pdf

- 4.4 Appointing a lead board member and trustee to have oversight of our safeguarding work.
- 4.5 Adopting safeguarding and child protection practices through robust policies and procedures.
- 4.6 Making sure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities and providing effective management for staff through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.
- 4.7 Recruiting staff safely, making sure all necessary checks are made.
- 4.8 Making sure that we provide a safe physical environment for our children and staff by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the country specific laws and regulatory guidance, and to any higher standards that may be set by us.
- 4.9 Recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, and staff via the most appropriate method to the country we are operating in.
- 4.10 Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and who will manage it and respond appropriately.
- 4.11 Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff or other service users appropriately, transparently and effectively, and to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals.
- 4.12 Making sure that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.

5. Responsibilities and escalation

- 5.1 Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. This should be made explicit in every job or role description for staff, sessional workers and volunteers and referenced in agreements with partners and contractors.
- 5.2 The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in the National Deaf Children's Society and Deaf Child Worldwide.
- 5.3 Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.
- 5.4 We will make sure each department within the charity has a designated safeguarding officer who can provide advice on any safeguarding concerns and escalate them where appropriate.
- 5.5 We will make sure there is a clear internal escalation procedure to the designated safeguarding manager, executive directors and trustees, as well as external escalation to

the relevant authorities responsible for safeguarding/child abuse allegations within each country we operate⁴.

- 5.6 Our trustees will maintain an oversight of safeguarding within the organisation to make sure that those benefiting from, or working with, the charity are not harmed in any way through contact with it. This includes having a nominated lead trustee for safeguarding. The safeguarding responsibilities for trustees and for the nominated lead are set out in the trustees' role description.

6. Implementation

- 6.1 This policy is implemented through accompanying detailed procedures, specific to the UK or international context. The procedures contain all necessary forms, flowcharts and contact information. Guidance and training are also provided to help staff carry out their safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.

In the UK

- Safeguarding Procedures and Guidance

Internationally

- DCW: Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures

7. Further information and supporting documentation

- 7.1 A list of safeguarding personnel can be found in Appendix 1.
- 7.2 For further information or queries, including advice on implementing this policy and procedures, please contact your designated safeguarding officer. Named contacts and details can be found as an appendix to the relevant procedures and guidance.
- 7.3 This policy is supported by the additional following policies, rules, standards, forms and procedures:
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice
 - Safer Recruitment and Vetting policy
 - E-Safety policy

⁴ Regulations in England state that it is a requirement for employees (staff and volunteers) of residential holiday schemes for disabled children to report a concern about the safety or welfare of a child to **one** of the following:

- i. The National Deaf Children's Society's registered person/manager;
 - ii. a police officer;
 - iii. Ofsted;
 - iv. the local authority in whose area accommodation is being provided by the scheme (children's social care team)
 - v. the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.
- (Regulation 13 (2) (e))

There are similar reporting requirements for our events in Scotland with the Care Inspectorate.

- Confidentiality and Information Sharing policy
- Lone Working policy and procedure

7.4 Other related policies are:

- Complaints
- Health and Safety
- Equality and Diversity
- Whistle Blowing
- Data Protection
- Relationship and Sexual Health

7.5 A list of relevant UK and international laws and guidance can be found in Appendix 2.

8. Revisions

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually and additionally if a significant change is made to the laws, regulations, systems, people or processes related to this policy.

Appendix 1: Designated safeguarding personnel

The National Deaf Children's Society will have the following specific safeguarding roles:

- Trustee safeguarding lead
- Designated safeguarding manager
- Designated safeguarding officers for each team within the Children, Young People and Families department
- Registered person/manager for residential holiday schemes
- Deaf Child Worldwide designated safeguarding officer
- Designated safeguarding officers for each of the other departments (and Wales)
- Designated safeguarding officer for volunteers
- Designated safeguarding officers for Scotland, Northern Ireland, East Africa, South Asia
- Out of hours safety coordinators (UK)

Questions and concerns may also be addressed to the safeguarding email address:

Safeguarding@ndcs.org.uk

Named contacts and details can be found as an appendix to the relevant procedures and guidance.

For whistleblowing contacts please see the whistleblowing policy and procedures.

Appendix 2: Relevant laws and related guidance

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of UK and relevant international laws and guidance that seeks to protect children (this list is not exhaustive):

International Legislation

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991 (Article 19)
UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008
European Convention on Human Rights

In the UK

Legislation

Children's Act 1989 and 2004
Data Protection Act 1998
Human Rights Act 1998
Education Act 2002 and 2011
Sexual Offences Act 2003
Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
Mental Capacity Act 2005
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006
Children and Young Persons Act 2008
Equality Act 2010
Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
Children and Families Act 2014
Community Care Act 2014
Serious Crime Act 2015
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

Government Guidance (UK)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014)
Cooperating to safeguard children and young people (2016)
Keeping children safe in Education (2015)
Prevent strategy (2011)

National Professional Standards and Regulatory Bodies (UK)

Ofsted
Care Inspectorate
Police and Crime Commissioners

Local Agencies (UK)

Local Safeguarding Children Board
Area Child Protection Committees
Safeguarding Board for NI

In other countries where we work

Each country where we work has specific laws with which we will comply.