

Catholic Children's Society Plymouth (CCSP)

Putting All Children First



Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults

Protecting the Rights, Welfare and Safety of Children and Vulnerable Adults

Date approved by the Board of Trustees: October 2025

To be reviewed annually: January 2026

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Thessalonians 5:11 'Encourage one another and build one another up, as indeed you do'

1. Introduction

This Safeguarding Policy outlines the commitment of CCSP to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and exploitation. It provides guidance for trustees, staff and partners to create a safe environment, and fulfil our legal and moral responsibilities.

2. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with our organisation, are safeguarded from harm.

This policy applies to all trustees, employees and anyone working on behalf of the organisation.

As a children's charity, it is both essential and important to us that we do everything possible to create a safe, supportive and protective environment for both children and vulnerable adults engaged in our activities, as we strive to meet their needs.

This policy aims to ensure that appropriate safeguarding procedures and arrangements are in place and are consistently followed to protect the safety of both children and vulnerable adults at all times. CCSP is deeply committed to considering their safety and protection in all of its activities and practices.

3. Principles

Our safeguarding principles include compassion, inclusivity, empowerment, community resilience and hope for children and vulnerable adults.

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults being paramount in all our work and activities.

All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, have the right to equal protection from all forms of harm or abuse.

Partnership working with families, carers and other agencies is essential for effective safeguarding.

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately.

4. Definitions

Child: Any individual under the age of 18, as defined by law (Children Act 1989 and 2004), who may require protection due to their age and developmental stage.

Vulnerable adult: A person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs and may be experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation due to factors such as age, disability, mental health issues or other circumstances that may increase their vulnerability and ability to take care of or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Adult at Risk, Care Act 2014)

Safeguarding: The process of protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse and neglect, ensuring their health and development needs are met.

Abuse: Any action or inaction that causes harm, distress or violation of an individual's rights, whether intentional or unintentional. Any form of physical, emotional, sexual or financial mistreatment or neglect that results in actual or potential harm.

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead: A trained staff member responsible for managing and responding to safeguarding concerns within an organisation.

Confidentiality: The principle of keeping personal information private and sharing it only with authorised individuals, when necessary, for safeguarding.

Duty of care: The legal and ethical obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals under one's responsibility.

5. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Care Act 2014, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. Adult at Risk, Care Act 2014 – an individual aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and because of their needs is unable to protect themselves from that abuse or neglect.

CCSP fully recognises its legal and moral obligations and its duty of care to safeguard both children and vulnerable adults. We are committed to promoting the welfare and protection of all individuals at risk. Every child and vulnerable adult, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or parental status or gender reassignment, has the right to live free from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. While it is not the role of CCSP staff to determine whether abuse is taking place, it is our responsibility to act on any concerns and take appropriate steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those at risk.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

All trustees and staff must familiarise themselves with this policy and adhere to its procedures. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for overseeing safeguarding arrangements and acting as the main point of contact for concerns.

Trustees must ensure that staff receive appropriate safeguarding training and support.

7. Safer Recruitment

We are committed to recruiting trustees and staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made, including enhanced DBS checks where appropriate, and that references are obtained and verified. This policy is underpinned by the Children Act 1989 and 2004, which sets out duties to safeguard children, the Care Act 2014, which sets out duties to safeguard adults at risk, which outlines duties to safeguard adults at risk and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, which governs the safe recruitment and vetting of staff and volunteers.

8. Recognising and Responding to Abuse

All trustees and staff must be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect.

The term 'abuse' refers to various actions that can cause harm or mistreatment to a child or vulnerable adult. They include physical, neglect, sexual, emotional, financial, discriminatory, domestic, modern slavery, bullying and cyber bullying. Abuse can happen anywhere and at any time; however, research suggests that it is often carried out by someone the child or vulnerable adult knows and trusts.

We work to keep people safe and minimise risk of harm through our involvement, while staying alert to help spot any signs of abuse that might be happening outside of our activities.

There are many forms of abuse, each presenting in diverse ways. At CCSP, we are committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults by taking all necessary steps to prevent harm throughout our activities and practices. We recognise the importance of understanding and identifying the diverse types of abuse, which enables us to recognise signs, respond appropriately, and provide the right support. By doing so, we help to minimise risk, act effectively on concerns and play our part in protecting those most vulnerable and at risk.

Recording, if you suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm, you must:

Listen carefully and reassure the individual.

Record what was said and observed without delay.

Report your concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Confidentiality: explain that you must pass on concerns to keep them safe, then share to whom you will pass on the information.

9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality must always be maintained. Information should only be shared with those who need to know to protect the child or vulnerable adult. All records will be kept securely in accordance with data protection laws.

10. Reporting Procedures

Any person with safeguarding concerns must report them to the CCSP Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay. If the DSL is unavailable, concerns should be reported to the chair or directly to the appropriate local authority safeguarding team.

11. Training and Awareness

All trustees and staff will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role. Regular updates and refresher training will be provided to ensure ongoing awareness.

12. Allegations Against Staff, Trustees or Volunteers

All allegations or concerns raised against trustees, staff or volunteers will be taken seriously and managed in accordance with statutory procedures. The organisation will support both the individual and the person raising the concern during any investigation.

13. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or in response to significant changes in legislation or guidance. Feedback from trustees, staff, volunteers, children and vulnerable adults will be considered in the review process.

14. Digital Safeguarding and AI

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies within CCSP will be carefully managed to ensure that safeguarding principles are maintained, and that all data is managed responsibly and ethically.

15. Contacts and Further Information

For further advice or to report a concern, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer (LADO) in the appropriate Local Authority in Devon, Cornwall and parts of Dorset in the Diocese and or the Diocesan safeguarding team.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to the highest standards of safeguarding and our determination to provide a safe and supportive environment for all children and vulnerable adults.

Signed by CCSP/DSL

Signed by CCSP/CHAIR