

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

The Social Farm offers farming and agricultural practices to support individuals experiencing defined health, social or educational needs. The individuals accessing The Social Farm include people suffering mental and physical health problems, substance misuse, adult offenders, disaffected youth, socially isolated adults, and adults in long term unemployment.

This policy defines the way in which The Social Farm will plan to ensure working practices and procedures meet its statutory responsibilities.

The Social Farm abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complying with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The Social Farm will:

- Protect children and young people who receive our services, from harm. Including the children of adults who use our services.
- Provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.
- Not ignore concerns about the welfare of a child or young person.
- Share relevant information in line with information governance and safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain accurate written records and use proformas and appropriate documentation where relevant.
- Follow local and national procedures and guidelines.

Purpose

The Social Farm recognises its responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people in its care and on its premises. This policy supports the discharge of this responsibility to safeguard children's social and physical wellbeing and promote their welfare through our working practices.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of The Social Farm including board members, managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, and students. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

Definitions

'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' is:

Protecting children from maltreatment or harm

Preventing impairment of children's health or development to enable them to have the best life opportunities.

'Child Protection' is:

The part of safeguarding where actions are undertaken to protect children who are at risk of, or suffering from, significant harm. This is defined in Section 47 of the Children Act (1989). This includes children subject to a Child Protection Plan or who may be in the care of the Local Authority.

A 'Child in Need' is:

A child who needs additional services (i.e. not universal services) in order for them to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development. This is described in Section 17 of The Children Act (1989). The need may arise from a disability; however, not every child with a disability is a 'Child in Need'.

Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse which are:

- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Children may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their day-to-day lives. These threats can take a variety of different forms, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse; neglect; exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups; trafficking; online abuse; sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation.

Staff and volunteers should always remain vigilant to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and whatever the form of abuse or neglect, staff and volunteers should put the needs of children first when determining what action to take.

More information on how to spot the different signs and symptoms of abuse can be found on the [NSPCC Website](#).

Becoming Aware of a Safeguarding Concern

Staff and volunteers may become aware of safeguarding concerns for a child or young person in multiple ways.

This could be via:

- Third party information
- A direct report from a child / young person
- An anonymous report
- Concerns about a child's appearance
- A report about another staff member or volunteer's behaviour towards a child or young person

Figure 1 (Appendix 1) describes the procedure to follow if there are safeguarding concerns or allegations involving anyone other than a member of staff / volunteer.

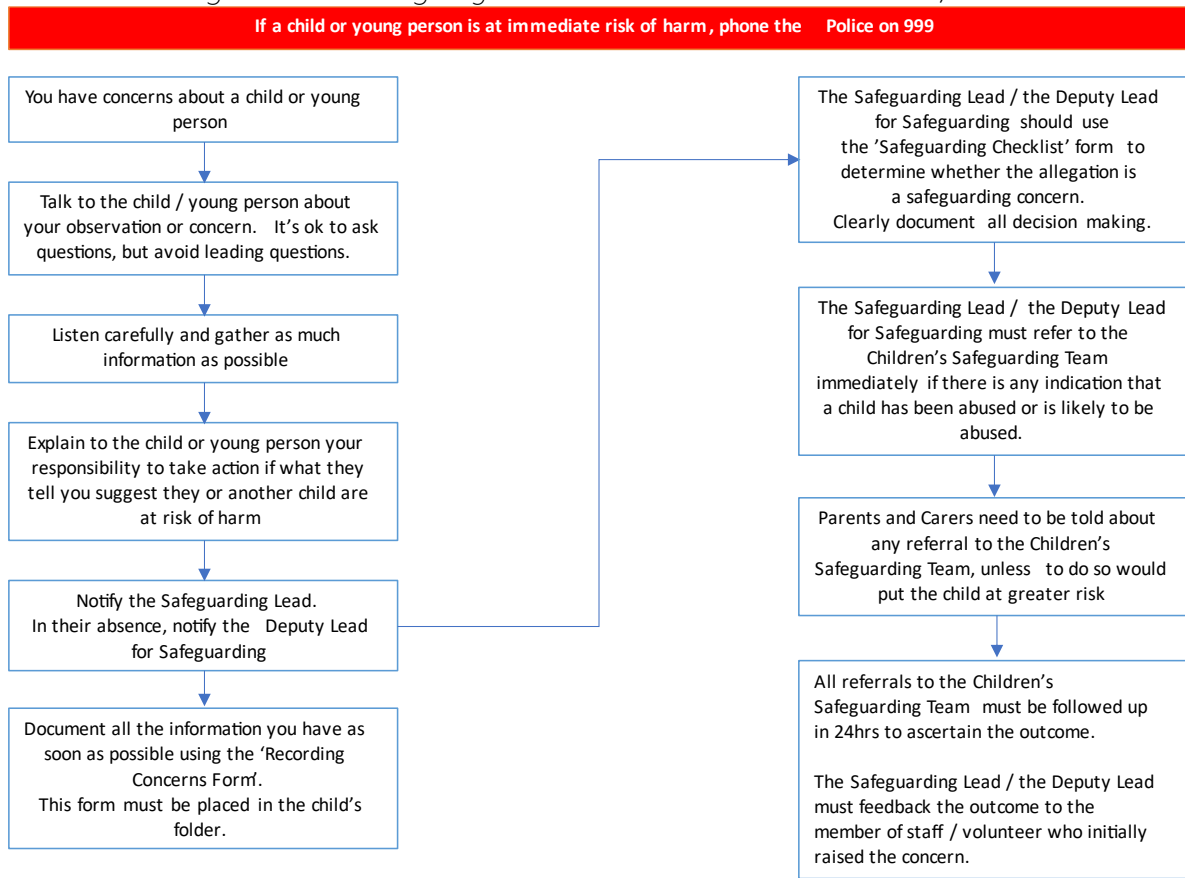
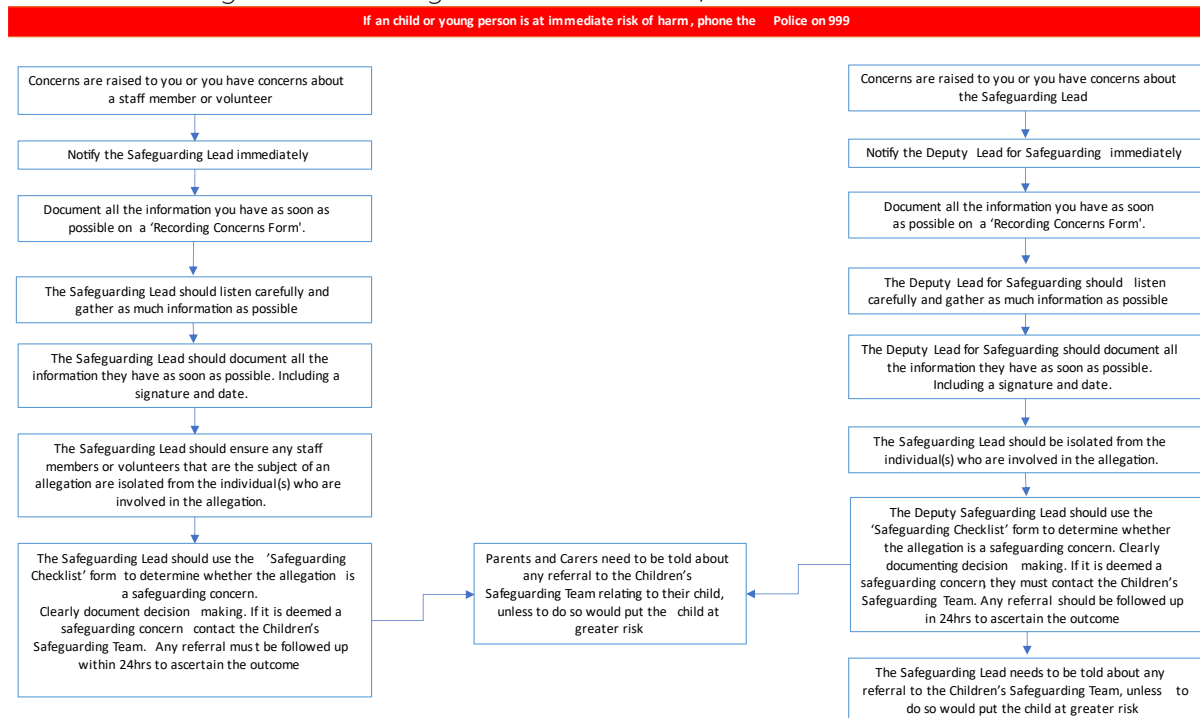


Figure 2 (Appendix 2) describes the procedure to follow if there are safeguarding concerns or allegations involving a member of staff / volunteer.



Advice and Escalation

In situations where staff / volunteers are unsure or have questions about any matter relating to safeguarding, they should always discuss this with the Safeguarding Lead.

All safeguarding concerns should be escalated at the earliest opportunity to the Safeguarding Lead for their advice and support. The only exceptions to this are:

- If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable, or
- If the concern is about the Safeguarding Lead.

In either of these two circumstances the concerns should instead be escalated to the Deputy Lead for Safeguarding.

When staff have concerns that they feel are not being addressed appropriately by the Management Committee (Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Lead for Safeguarding), they should escalate their concerns directly to the Cheshire East Consultation Service and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (contact information is detailed at the end of this policy).

Roles and Responsibilities

Management Committee:

- The Safeguarding Lead and the Deputy Lead for Safeguarding form the Safeguarding Management Committee.
- The Management Committee must meet at least once annually to review and ensure all policies and procedures are fit for purpose.

Safeguarding Lead:

- Be responsible and accountable within the governance framework of The Social Farm
- To oversee and approve any policies and procedures to ensure unborn babies, children and young people are safeguarded
- To oversee safeguarding governance framework for safeguarding risks assessments and training
- Will carry out risk assessments to mitigate/manage risks relating to safeguarding children
- Ensure implementation of both statutory and non-statutory safeguarding legislation and guidance
- Oversee the recommendations from relevant statutory bodies including the Local Safeguarding Children Boards
- Work in partnership with other relevant agencies in the local community in order to safeguard children
- Implement and monitor processes and procedures relevant to safeguarding, ensuring the development of a culture which recognises the needs of children
- Ensure safe recruitment, by monitoring and overseeing issues related to the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Produce reports for the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and commissioning when required
- Offer support, advice, supervision, and training to staff and volunteers
- Have a responsibility to ensure this policy is communicated and implemented across The Social Farm
- Oversee safe recruitment processes and employment within The Social Farm

- Escalate any safeguarding concerns to the local authority as required.

Deputy Lead for Safeguarding:

- Will assist with the roles and responsibilities of the Safeguarding Lead
- Escalate concerns to the Safeguarding Lead; in their absence escalate to the local authority as required
- Escalate any safeguarding concerns relating directly to the Safeguarding Lead, to the local authority as required.

Individual Staff and Volunteers:

- Must act to safeguard the health and welfare of unborn babies, children, and young people
- Will receive training relevant to their role to enable them to discharge this responsibility
- Must be familiar with the principles described in this policy and know where to seek support and advice should they have or receive concerns
- Should be alert to potential indicators of abuse
- Should be alert to risks posed by others including parents/carers, other children, and adults with particular regard to domestic abuse, mental health concerns and drug and alcohol misuse
- Must share information and analyse risk
- Must escalate and discuss any concerns with the Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence the Deputy Lead for Safeguarding
- Should avoid lone working or working one-to-one with a child or young person wherever possible.

Training and Awareness

This policy will be made available publicly on The Social Farm's website. All new staff, volunteers and clients will be provided with a welcome pack upon registration which will include instructions and directions to access all policy documents.

The Social Farm will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to all board members, managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students plus any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it.

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Describe what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding children
- Recognise a child potentially in need of safeguarding and take appropriate action
- Explain how to report a safeguarding concern
- Appreciate the importance of dignity and respect when working with children and young people
- Have knowledge of this Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, and how to access it if required.

Employees and volunteers may encounter concerns about the safety and wellbeing of an adult at risk of abuse. For more information about adults safeguarding, refer to The Social Farm's Adult Safeguarding Policy.

Confidentiality, Record Keeping and Data Sharing

The Social Farm expects all staff and volunteers to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.

All children and young people have the right to privacy and confidentiality relating to their personal information. Information will always be treated as confidential unless it raises safeguarding concerns.

Information should be shared with the Local Authority or other third parties if a child is deemed to be at risk of harm. Always contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.

A written record must be kept about any concern regarding any child or young person with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person(s) involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made. A copy of the "Recording Concerns" form is attached to the policy.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

All electronic (soft copy) information is stored on encrypted computer devices; these are securely backed up to the cloud and are accessible only via staff members or volunteers with defined user permissions.

All paper (hard copy) information is held within a key locked filing cabinet. Access to the cabinet is strictly controlled and available only to named individuals. No documents which contain personal or sensitive information will be left unattended at any time.

Safe Recruitment & Selection

The Social Farm is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

The Social Farm has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all employees and volunteers these are documented within Safe Recruitment Policy.

Social Media

All board members, managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students should be aware of The Social Farm's Social Media Policy and the Conduct and Behaviour Policy.

Use of Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology

All employees, trustees and volunteers should be aware of The Social Farm's Mobile Phone and Digital Technology Policy regarding the use of mobile phones and any other digital technology.

Staff and volunteers must understand that it is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities.

Whistleblowing

It is important that people within The Social Farm have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything.

Whistleblowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their organisation. This includes concerns about another employee or volunteer. The Social Farm will also ensure the protection of Whistleblowers. Further details can be found in the Whistleblowing Policy.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from [nspcc.org.uk/learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning).

The Social Farm has in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as well as vulnerable adults.

The Prevent duty

Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. These organisations include:

- Schools
- Registered childcare providers
- Local authorities
- Police
- Prisons and probation services
- NHS trusts and foundations.

Other organisations may also have Prevent duties if they perform delegated local authority functions.

Children can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme.

Radicalisation is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself, a form of harm.

Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

1st October 2022



Important Contacts

Safeguarding Lead
Name: Melissa Lewis
Email: mel@thesocialfarm.uk

Deputy Lead for Safeguarding
Name: Michael Sneath
Email: mike@thesocialfarm.uk

NSPCC Helpline
0808 800 5000

Police
Emergency – 999
Non-emergency – 101

Cheshire East Children Safeguarding Team
The Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) 0300 1235012 (Option 3)
The Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS) Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team
0300 1235022

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
01606288931

Signed by Safeguarding Lead	<i>M Lewis</i>
Printed name of Safeguarding Lead	Melissa Lewis
Date of Publish	1 st October 2022
Review Date	1 st October 2023