

Next Chapter Scotland Safeguarding Policy

Implementation Date: 13/09/2023

Last reviewed: 09/06/2026

Our Safeguarding policy is designed so that you can follow it and keep people safe.

How to contact the Safeguarding Lead

If you have a safeguarding concern, report it.

The Safeguarding Lead from the Board is: Kalpana Ratnam-Roarty

Get in touch with the Safeguarding Lead on: kalpana@nextchapterscotland.org.uk, marked "Private and Confidential. For the attention of the Safeguarding Lead"

Policy aims and purpose

Safeguarding is what we do to promote the welfare of all people who use our service, and to protect them from harm. Safeguarding is our first priority and is at the heart of everything we do.

This policy explains what we expect of our volunteers and staff. It also outlines how we protect children and adults at risk.

It's important that you follow this policy and our Safeguarding Procedure that goes with it.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to all volunteers, members and staff. This includes employees, officers, consultants, contractors, interns, casual workers and agency workers.

The Safeguarding Lead is hand to help. If you need support with anything to do with safeguarding, or you have a concern, get in touch.

Policy statement

We're committed to safeguarding adults and children of all backgrounds and identities.

Everyone has a right to live free from abuse, exploitation, harm and fear, and to be safe and well.

We recognise that some people are particularly vulnerable. This may be because of some aspect of their identity or circumstance.



Next Chapter Scotland work with adults with a criminal record, to help them to navigate the discrimination they may face as a result of their criminal record.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, defines an 'adult at risk' as someone who meets all of the following three-point criteria:

- they are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests;
- they are at risk of harm; and
- because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity they are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

We do not exist to provide support specially to either children or adults at risk. Our support services are open to all adults with a criminal record and their family members. However, within this group of people it is likely that there will be some 'adults at risk' and other adults facing situations that make them more vulnerable. As we will not always have identifiable information available, to determine if an individual would be considered an 'adult at risk' as per the legislation, we are therefore committed to ensuring that ALL service users are protected from harm.

The legislation defines an adult as being at risk of harm if:

- another person's conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult harm; or
- the adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.

We recognise and respond to all types of harm, including:

- **Abuse** - Physical, emotional, sexual and domestic, including non-recent, online abuse and child-on-child abuse.
- **Bullying** - Deliberate behaviour that causes physical or emotional harm to another person or people.
- **Child criminal exploitation** - Manipulating and coercing children and young people into committing crimes. This is a type of child abuse.
- **Child sexual exploitation** - When a child or young person is given things, like gifts, drugs, money, status or affection, in exchange for performing sexual activities.
- **Female genital mutilation** - When a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting'.
- **Grooming and harmful sexual behaviour** - When someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.
- **Harassment** - Unwanted behaviour which someone finds offensive, makes them feel intimidated or humiliated, or creates a hostile or degrading environment.
- **Neglect** - The ongoing failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic needs.

- **Radicalisation** - Radicalisation aims to inspire new recruits, embed extreme views and persuade vulnerable people to support a cause. This may be through a direct relationship, or through social media.
- **Trafficking** - Where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes. They're then transported and exploited, forced to work or sold.

You can find out more about different types of harms and abuse from the Ann Craft Trust and the NSPCC.

By following this policy you'll help to create a safe space where all our service users can have a great experience. It allows anyone to report a concern or make a disclosure.

Expectations

Next Chapter Scotland expects all volunteers and staff to:

- Follow our Safeguarding procedure.
- Report all concerns, allegations and disclosures within 24 hours (or sooner if it's an emergency) to the Safeguarding Lead.
- Be vigilant, so you recognise when something is worrying.
- Inform the Safeguarding Lead about any ongoing or past investigation into you or someone you have a significant relationship with which relates to any child or adult safeguarding allegation, concern or disclosure. The investigation may have been carried out by the police, social services, an employer, or another organisation you volunteer for. A significant relationship includes, but isn't limited to, family members, partners, and members of the same household.
- Work with the Safeguarding Lead to act when there's a concern.
- Consider inclusion and accessibility when you're dealing with safeguarding issues. For example, making adjustments to support disabled members or those with other needs.
- Be accountable - never assume someone else has responded to a concern.

Our Approach to Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Our policies and procedures are based on six principles of safeguarding that underpin all adult safeguarding work.

Empowerment - Adults are encouraged to make their own decisions and are provided with support and information.

Prevention - Strategies are developed to prevent abuse and neglect that promotes resilience and self-determination.

Proportionate - A proportionate and least intrusive response is made balanced with the level of risk.

Protection - Adults are offered ways to protect themselves, and there is a co-ordinated response to adult safeguarding and well-being.

Partnerships - Local solutions are sought through services working together within their communities.

Accountable - Accountability and transparency in delivering a safeguarding response.

Trauma Informed

We work hard to make sure our work is trauma informed. Our work is underpinned by the following principles:

1. Realising how common the experience of trauma and adversity is
2. Recognising the different ways that trauma can affect people
3. Responding by taking account of the ways that people can be affected by trauma to support recovery
4. Opportunities to Resist re-traumatisation and offer a greater sense of choice and control, empowerment, collaboration and safety with everyone that you have contact with
5. Recognising the central importance of Relationships.

Lived Experience

We prioritise the involvement of people with lived experience of the criminal justice system. We therefore recognise that individuals, at any level of the organisation, may require support in times of particular stress, both as a result of current trauma but also as a result of re-traumatisation. Please see our Lived Experience Policy for more information.

Learning Development & Training

Staff, volunteers and Trustees are required to both attend safeguarding training courses in line with their specific responsibilities and confirm their understanding of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Staff, volunteers and Trustees are expected to complete 'Developing your trauma skilled practice: Understanding the impact of trauma and responding in a trauma-informed way' from the National Trauma Transformation Programme as part of their induction.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustees have a duty of care, which includes taking necessary steps to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. They will act in their best interests and ensure that they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and to protect Next Chapter Scotland's assets and reputation.

Next Chapter Scotland's Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those benefitting from, or working with, the organisation are not harmed in any way through contact with it.

The Trustees must ensure that there are appropriate Safeguarding Policies and that they are implemented effectively. They also have a personal duty of care in relation to Safeguarding.

Reporting Procedure

The reporting procedure is detailed more fully in our Safeguarding Procedure. As a member, volunteer, or member of staff, it's important you know the signs and indicators of abuse or harm. You must also know how to respond to and report any concerns, allegations or disclosures.

If you have a safeguarding concern you must make a report within 24 hours, or as soon as possible if it's an emergency.

Our Safeguarding Lead aims to respond to all concerns and emails within 1-2 working days. They will always get back to you within 5 working days.

Raising A Concern

If you feel that the Safeguarding Lead has not dealt appropriately with your concern, please contact the Safeguarding Lead again, explain your concern and discuss the points you would like us to consider.

If you still feel we aren't dealing with it in the way you'd expect, you can escalate your concerns by contacting the Chair of the Board directly on: chair@nextchapterscotland.org.uk, marked "For the Attention of the Chair of the Board".

Whistle-blowers or others who raise a concern about the organisation will be dealt with confidentially and under guidance from an external HR advisor.

Legislation and Guidance

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007: Code of Practice
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/adult-support-protection-scotland-act-2007-code-practice-3/documents/>

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act:
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2007/10/contents>

Connected Policies and Procedures

Safeguarding Procedure

Child Protection Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.