



Freedom to Flourish CIC

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

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Freedom to Flourish CIC

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Information
Clare Marsh	Designated Safeguarding Lead	freedomtoflourish@gmail.com
Megan Nuttall	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	
Local Support	Sefton Children's Services (MASH - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)	0151 934 4013 (Monday to Thursday: 9:00 am – 5:30 pm, Friday: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm) socialcare.customeraccessteam@sefton.gov.uk
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	Sefton LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)	0151 934 3783 LADO@sefton.gov.uk



Freedom to Flourish CIC

1. Introduction

Freedom to Flourish CIC is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children and young people who participate in our activities, including parent-baby classes, play activities, workshops, creche sessions and other community-based programs. We recognise our duty of care and legal responsibilities to safeguard individuals from harm, abuse, and neglect.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, and all those directly connected with Freedom to Flourish CIC—volunteers, session leaders, parents, families, and participants—are an essential part of the wider safeguarding system. Together, we play a crucial role in creating a safe and secure community.

We believe that the best interests of children and young people always come first. Everyone, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion, or sexual identity, has an equal right to protection. We are committed to ensuring that all voices are heard and that the wishes and feelings of those in our care are considered when making safeguarding decisions.

All staff and volunteers at Freedom to Flourish CIC will maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' when it comes to safeguarding. If there is any concern about the welfare of a child or young person, our team will always act in their best interests and respond immediately.

We recognise the importance of providing an ethos and environment where individuals feel safe, respected, and encouraged to speak openly. Their well-being is at the heart of our safeguarding approach, and we will ensure that appropriate actions and services are in place to protect and support them.

1.1. Commitment to Safeguarding

Freedom to Flourish CIC will endeavour to support the welfare and safety of all participants through:

- Ensuring that the well-being of children and young people is of paramount importance.
- Providing training for all staff and volunteers to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and ensuring they are aware of Freedom to Flourish CIC's safeguarding procedures and lines of communication.
- Ensuring that individuals' mental and physical health or development does not impair their ability to be safe.



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- Offering a balanced program of activities that empower participants to stay safe, recognise when they don't feel safe, and identify trusted individuals they can talk to.
- Working with parents and caregivers to ensure they understand Freedom to Flourish CIC's responsibility to safeguard all participants, including the need for referral to other agencies when necessary.
- Keeping confidential records that are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Ensuring that the voices of children and young people are heard and reflected in safeguarding decisions and policy developments.
- Implementing safer recruitment processes to ensure the suitability of staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors, and promoting expected behaviors in line with our legal responsibility to safeguard and protect all participants in our programs.

2. Policy Statement

We believe that all children and young people have the right to be protected from abuse, harm, and exploitation. Freedom to Flourish CIC is dedicated to creating a safe environment where individuals can engage in activities without fear.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone involved in the delivery of Freedom to Flourish CIC activities. It covers all interactions with children and young people in any capacity.

3.1. Safeguarding and Promoting Welfare

For the purposes of this policy, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people includes:

- Providing help and support to meet their needs as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting individuals from maltreatment, whether within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that individuals grow up or engage in activities within a safe and effective environment.
- Taking action to enable the best possible outcomes for all participants.

4. Definitions



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Child protection is a key part of safeguarding and refers to activities undertaken to prevent children from suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment that may involve inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Neglect is a specific form of abuse that involves the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, leading to serious impairment of health or development.

Sharing of nudes and semi-nudes (also known as sexting or youth-produced sexual imagery) is when children share nude or semi-nude images, videos, or live streams. Freedom to Flourish CIC is committed to educating and supporting young people to understand the risks and consequences of such actions.

Victim is a widely understood and recognised term, but we understand that not everyone who has been subject to abuse considers themselves a victim or would want to be described that way. When managing an incident, we will be prepared to use any term that the child involved feels most comfortable with.

Alleged perpetrator(s) and perpetrator(s) are widely used and recognised terms. However, we will think carefully about what terminology we use (especially in front of children) as, in some cases, abusive behaviour can be harmful to the perpetrator too. We will decide what is appropriate and which terms to use on a case-by-case basis.

For the purposes of this policy, children are defined as individuals under the age of 18.

5. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by and complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government)
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Equality Act 2010
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) & Data Protection Act 2018

6. Roles & Responsibilities

6.1 Safeguarding Lead



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Freedom to Flourish CIC has appointed a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** responsible for overseeing all safeguarding matters, ensuring policies are followed, and acting as the main contact for concerns. The DSL is responsible for:

- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are implemented and reviewed regularly.
- Acting as the point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Liaising with relevant authorities where necessary.
- Supporting staff and volunteers with safeguarding training and awareness.

DSL- Clare Marsh

5.2 Staff & Volunteers

All staff and volunteers must:

- Adhere to this safeguarding policy and code of conduct.
- Attend safeguarding training as required.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL.
- Foster a culture of safety and respect within activities.

6. Recognising Abuse & Responding to Concerns

6.1 Types of Abuse

Abuse can take many forms, including but not limited to:

- **Physical Abuse** – causing physical harm or injury.
- **Emotional Abuse** – causing severe emotional distress or harm.
- **Sexual Abuse** – involving a child or vulnerable adult in sexual activities.
- **Neglect** – failing to meet basic physical, emotional, or psychological needs.
- **Financial Abuse** – exploitation of a vulnerable person's financial resources.

6.2 Responding to Concerns

If a child or young person discloses abuse, or if there are concerns about their welfare:

1. **Listen carefully** and reassure them they are being heard.
2. **Do not promise confidentiality** – explain that concerns must be shared for their safety.
3. **Record the concern** accurately and factually.
4. **Report immediately** to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7. Safer Recruitment & DBS Checks



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- All staff and volunteers working directly with children and vulnerable adults will undergo **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**.
- References will be required before recruitment.
- Safer recruitment practices will be followed, including interviews and verification of qualifications.

8. Code of Conduct

All staff and volunteers must:

- Treat children, young people, and individuals within the community with respect.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Avoid being alone with a child or young person where possible.
- Report any inappropriate behaviour or safeguarding concerns immediately.

9. Safeguarding Training

- All staff and volunteers will receive **regular safeguarding training** to ensure they understand procedures and responsibilities.
- Training records will be kept up to date.

10. Confidentiality & Information Sharing

- Safeguarding concerns will be handled **confidentially** and shared only with relevant authorities.
- All data will be managed in line with GDPR and Data Protection laws.
- Information will be shared on a **need-to-know basis** to protect individuals from harm.

11. Reporting & Whistleblowing

Freedom to Flourish CIC encourages an open and transparent culture where safeguarding concerns are reported without fear of reprisal.

- If concerns arise about a colleague's conduct, these should be reported to the DSL or through the **Whistleblowing Policy**.
- Serious concerns can be escalated to local safeguarding authorities or the **NSPCC Helpline** (0808 800 5000).

12. Review & Policy Updates

This policy will be reviewed **annually** and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation and best practices.



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