



Safeguarding Policy

Revised October 2022

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. The Education Futures Collaboration (EFC) produces research base guidelines for teachers with the research gathered in schools and other settings where there are children and vulnerable people.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults who receive EFC's services and/or who contribute to the research from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services and/or who contribute to the research
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children, young people, vulnerable adults, and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of EFC including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone. We also have a duty to safeguard and support our trustees, volunteers, and staff.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults in England/Northern Ireland/Scotland/Wales. Children in other countries are also involved in research for the Education Futures Collaboration and they are included in this safeguarding policy. A summary of the key UK legislation and guidance is available from nspcc.org.uk/childprotection

Mandatory reporting requirements govern this policy - any staff member who has concerns is obliged to report these as follows. If a researcher comes across children accessing online or other materials which raise concerns for the researcher then this must be reported formally, in writing, to the research project leader who has the responsibility to report this to the head of the institution with responsibility for the children and the project funder and to inform the researcher what actions have been taken.

Definitions

- **Children and young people** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children's health and development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome
- **Adult at risk of abuse or neglect.** For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:
 - has care and support needs
 - is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
 - as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

For the purposes of this policy we will use the term **vulnerable person/people** as an umbrella term which covers children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

As laid out in the UK central government document '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*'. The categories and definitions of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse** including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions
- **Sexual abuse** including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressurised into consenting
- **Psychological abuse** including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **Financial or material abuse** including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits
- **Neglect or acts of omission** including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Discriminatory abuse** including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment
- **Domestic abuse** that is usually a systematic, repeated, and escalating pattern of behaviour, by which the abuser seeks to control, limit and humiliate, often behind closed doors
- **Organisational abuse** including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home. This may range from one-off incidents to ongoing ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice because of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation
- **Modern slavery** including human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude; and traffickers and slave masters using whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Complaints & Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Finance Policy
- the British Education Research Association ethical guidelines which includes a code of conduct for staff and volunteers with respect to gaining permission to use data and images from individuals and the storage and security of data and images

Policy Statement

The EFC takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people in any form.

The EFC also recognises that safeguarding is the responsibility everyone's and that it has an obligation to make sure that we ensure, as far as possible, the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people with whom we are involved with.

The EFC is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

The EFC adopts the following key principles to protect vulnerable people.

We believe that:

- Vulnerable people should never experience abuse of any kind
- we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all vulnerable people, to keep them safe, and to practise in a way that protects them

We recognise that:

- the welfare of vulnerable people is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- all vulnerable people, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep people who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse

We will seek to keep all vulnerable people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk/for-organisations]
- making sure that vulnerable people, and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff, and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people, and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Implementation of Safeguarding Policy

Named Safeguarding Officers

The EFC will name two individuals who will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. These persons will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency. These individuals will be reviewed annually.

The two named individuals are

Sarah Younie

EFC Chair

(Reviewed October 2022)

Marilyn Leask

EFC Chair and Trustee

(Reviewed October 2022)

Risk Management

To minimise the risk of safeguarding concerns, the EFC requires those undertaking projects involving vulnerable people to complete a full risk assessment prior to the start of the project. The risk assessment must include any safeguarding arrangements. The full risk assessment must be approved by the safeguarding officers. If a project is being undertaken with an external lead partner, it is acceptable to adopt their risk assessment if it is deemed complete. For guidance on risk assessments please contact the safeguarding officers.

Safer Recruitment

The EFC is committed to recruiting employees, volunteers, and other representatives safely in line with its accepted policies and procedures. All potential new employees, volunteers, and other representatives will go through a recruitment process involving the safeguarding officers (and Chair, if they are not the safeguarding officer). All roles will be specifically evaluated for safeguarding risk to determine the level of background checking required. This will include, but is not limited to:

- character references from the place of work or any other relevant source
- an informal safer recruitment interview
- online background checks

The majority of EFC volunteers and representatives are employed by universities. These universities have in place their own safer recruitment processes and the EFC use these university processes as a proxy for our recruitment policy.

Important: All individuals working on research projects which include engagement with children must be able to show they have a current valid DBS check for the UK. Staff from other countries must demonstrate that they have the equivalent checks to meet the regulations of the country in which they are working.

Reporting of Safeguarding concerns

All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The named individuals will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adults at risk who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or adult at risk or may have harmed a child or adult at risk
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk
- Behaved towards a child (or children) or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk

The EFC places an obligation on all those involved with the charity to report any concerns, suspicions, allegations, and incidents which indicate actual or potential abuse or exploitation of vulnerable people. All concerns should be reported to the named individuals and it is not the responsibility of any charity member to decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

In the event of a safeguarding issue, follow this process:

1. Seek consent from the person concerned. If you feel that they do not have capacity to consent, you can act without consent but you must log your decision
2. Collect all available relevant facts and appropriate information
3. Make a written record of the concern
4. Tell the person involved what you are going to do about the concern and note any views that they may have regarding how they wish the matter to be dealt with.
5. Tell only the people who need to know – such as the named safeguarding officers.
6. Consider the balance between listening to someone's wishes and needing to refer information where others may be at risk.
7. Inform the person involved about the outcome of any process.

If someone is injured or at immediate risk, take immediate action. Seek help by dialling 999 for police or ambulance

It is the role of the safeguarding officers to maintain a log of all safeguarding concerns raised. This log will be accessed only by the safeguarding officers and the secretary. This register will detail any concern raised and the manner in which they are dealt with. When necessary the safeguarding officers will report any serious concerns to the relevant authorities.

Adapted from:

NSPCC: [nspcc.org.uk/learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning)

Gov.uk Working together to safeguard children:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>