

Safeguarding Policy

Purpose and Scope

At Yorkshire Wildlife Trust we embrace our duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children, young people and adults at risk who come into contact with us, including our own staff and volunteers, and we are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practices reflects our statutory responsibilities, government guidance and the latest best practice within the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children, young people and adults at risk are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, sex, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background, all children, young people and adults at risk:

- can have a positive and enjoyable experience during independent visits or participation in our physical and digital learning and engagement activities and events
- are protected from harm whilst visiting independently or participating in the physical and digital learning and engagement opportunities provided by Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and its partners

This includes the indirect participation of the children of adults who use our services.

This policy also aims to:

- outline the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection to ensure that everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
- promote recognition that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, not just those who work directly with at-risk groups
- assist in the development of a person-centred safeguarding culture that:
 - respects the rights of children, young people and adults at risk as equals
 - welcomes diversity and difference
 - responds fairly, lawfully and swiftly to any allegations or reported suspicions of abuse using the appropriate channels

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and its subsidiaries, whether permanently or temporarily, including senior leaders and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, trainees, agency staff and contractors.

Please note that, where we deliver events and activities in partnership, we may sometimes opt to defer to the safeguarding policies and procedures of our partners. This decision will be a key aspect of any partnership agreement at the outset.

Definitions

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is defined as:

- protecting them from physical, emotional or sexual abuse;
- preventing impairment of their health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- and taking appropriate action to enable the best outcomes

By 'child' we mean all people aged 16 or under, by 'young people' we mean all those over the age of 16 who have not yet reached their 18th birthday, and by 'adult at risk' we mean anyone aged 18 or over who has care and support needs *and* is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect *and* is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

Legal Framework

This policy is based on the legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and adults at risk in England. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The Children Act 1989 (as amended)
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Education Act 2002
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019
- The Care Act 2014
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Serious Crime Act 2015
- The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the Prevent strategy
- The Data Protection Act 2018 (incorporating the principles of the GDPR)
- The Equality Act 2010

Supporting Documents

This policy relates to the following Yorkshire Wildlife Trust guidelines, policies and procedures, each of which are available to view on request:

- Child Safeguarding Procedures
- Adult Safeguarding Procedures
- Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy (inclusive of our Covid-19 measures)
- Data Protection Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Consented Images Policy
- Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy
- Volunteers' Handbook
- Staff Handbook (inclusive of a draft Code of Conduct, our Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy, guidance on social media and computer usage and our Training, Support and Supervision measures)
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Informal Educational Events Framework

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- All children, young people and adults at risk have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse regardless of their age, gender, sex, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic background.
- Some children, young people and adults at risk are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of their previous experiences, their level of dependency, their communication needs, or other issues.
- Working in close partnership with parents, guardians, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

We will seek to keep children and young people and adults at risk safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Having appropriate and clear policies and procedures that are fit for purpose and followed in practice.
- Being diligent in keeping up to date with the rapid movement in regulatory requirements and expectations.
- Regularly reviewing and updating each of our policies and procedures to ensure ongoing compliance and best practice.
- Proactively sharing our safeguarding policy and advertising the existence of our related procedures to ensure that members of the public know where to go for help or advice if they have a concern, and that they feel confident and comfortable in doing so.
- Having an appropriate and clear governance structure in place, which includes both a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Lead Trustee for Safeguarding.

- Preventing the employment or deployment of unsuitable staff and volunteers through robust selection and recruitment processes, including an appropriate level of government Disclosure & Barring checks, and being duly diligent about our partners.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and that they are effectively supported and supervised in following our policies, procedures, and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Providing all relevant staff and volunteers with appropriate training opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all complaints and concerns about poor practice or suspected or actual abuse.
- Keeping confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns in a professional and secure manner, in line with all relevant data protection legislation and best-practice guidance.
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and any relevant information or evidence in strict confidence with the agencies and regulatory bodies who need to know, and involving the children, young people, adults at risk and their guardians or carers as appropriate.

Our Contact Details

Our Safeguarding Leads are the primary point of contact for staff, volunteers or members of the public who have safeguarding or child protection concerns:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Lauren Perthen
Interim Director of Fundraising & Engagement
M: 07851 237437
E: lauren.perthen@ywt.org.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jane Hamilton
Head of Human Resources
M: 07741 198991
E: jane.hamilton@ywt.org.uk

Our Safeguarding Leads can also be contacted by telephone on 01904 659570 during normal business hours or by post addressed to: Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, 1 St. George's Place, York, YO24 1GN. Please mark your envelope as confidential, for the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

How to Raise a Concern or Report an Incident

If you are worried about a child, young person or adult at risk, even if you're unsure, there are three different ways to raise your concerns and obtain advice and support:

- 1) ***If you believe a child, young person or adult at risk is in immediate danger, or a crime is in progress, please call the police on 999 straight away.*** Alternatively;

- 2) You can contact your Local Safeguarding Arrangement for Children or Adults, which will be made up of representatives from your local authority, health service and police force. We've provided contact details for each of Yorkshire's local teams below. Or;
- 3) You can speak to any member of YWT staff, including directly to our Designated Safeguarding Lead. You can choose to make your report to us anonymously if you wish.

In the case of an allegation regarding a member of our staff or volunteering team, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed as soon as possible, ideally over the phone. If your concern relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, then the Chief Executive Officer should be informed.

What will happen next?

We are here to listen, offer advice and support, and we can take the next steps if someone is in danger or has potentially been harmed.

If you choose to speak to a member of our staff team about your safeguarding concerns, they will make a confidential and comprehensive incident report, noting down everything you tell them. This will then be passed securely to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will review the report and act on it appropriately. This may mean referring the information provided in strict confidence to the police and/or the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for further investigation, making a report to the Charity Commission and/or conducting an (urgent) internal review in which we may invoke our disciplinary and grievance procedures.

We will always act on any safeguarding incident reports we receive urgently. Where necessary, we will make a referral to a LADO within one working day of the date of your disclosure and we will conclude any urgent internal reviews within three working days. Any information we receive will always be treated with the strictest confidence and only shared as and when absolutely necessary. Your report will be kept and securely filed in strict accordance with our Data Protection and Privacy Policies to assist any subsequent investigations by the police or social care services, and to enable us to monitor and evaluate our performance, establish any patterns or long-term issues, and identify any staff training or development needs.

Due to the sensitive nature of the reports we receive, we will most likely be unable to share the outcomes of any referral and/or internal investigation made following your disclosure, and we will always be unable to provide updates in the events of reports being made anonymously. However, you may be contacted independently by the police, a LADO or another Local Safeguarding Arrangement for Children or Adults representative if they deem this to be necessary and appropriate, and we will endeavour to provide you with reassurance that your concerns are being appropriately acted upon in line with our Compliments, Comments and Complaints Policy commitments.

Letting us know you're worried could be the first step to helping protect a child, young person or adult at risk from a lifetime of abuse and neglect. It's normal to feel anxious, nervous or unsure about getting in touch with someone, but we're here to help and take that worry from you.

Additional Sources of Support and Information

National support organisations:	NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000
	Childline	0800 1111
	Mind	0300 123 3393
	Action on Elder Abuse	0800 0699 784

Yorkshire's Local Safeguarding Arrangements for Children:

Barnsley	Safeguarding children in Barnsley http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/safeguarding-families-in-barnsley/safeguarding-children-in-barnsley/
Bradford	Safeguarding Children Bradford Council http://www.bradford.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/safeguarding-children/safeguarding-children/
Calderdale	Children and young people – Safeguarding Calderdale http://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/
Doncaster	About Us Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership (dscp.org.uk) http://dscp.org.uk
East Riding	home (erscb.org.uk) http://erscb.org.uk
Hull	Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership Hull City Council http://www.hull.gov.uk/children-and-families/safeguarding-and-welfare/hull-safeguarding-children-board
Kirklees	Home - KSCP (kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk) http://www.kirkleessafeguardingchildren.co.uk
Leeds	LSCP - Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (leedsscp.org.uk) http://www.leedsscp.org.uk/Home
North Yorkshire	NYSCP (safeguardingchildren.co.uk) www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk
Rotherham	Homepage – Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (rscp.org.uk) http://www.rscp.org.uk
Wakefield	Wakefield Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSCP) (wakefieldscp.org.uk) http://www.wakefieldscp.org.uk
York	Safer Children York http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk

Yorkshire's Local Safeguarding Arrangements for Adults:

Barnsley	Barnsley Safeguarding Adults Board http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/children-families-and-education/safeguarding-families-in-barnsley/safeguarding-adults-in-barnsley/barnsley-safeguarding-adults-board/
Bradford	Safer Bradford - Adults http://www.saferbradford.co.uk/adults/
Calderdale	Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board – Safeguarding Calderdale http://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/the-organisations/safeguarding-adults-board/
Doncaster	Doncaster Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB) - Doncaster Council

	http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/adult-social-care/doncaster-safeguarding-adults-board-dsab
East Riding	Welcome (ersab.org.uk)
	http://www.ersab.org.uk
Hull	Safeguarding Adults Hull
	http://safeguardingadultshull.com
Kirklees	Kirklees Safeguarding Adults Board Kirklees Council
	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/adult-social-care-providers/kirklees-safeguarding-adults-board.aspx
Leeds	Home (leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk)
	http://leedssafeguardingadults.org.uk
North Yorkshire	NYSAB (safeguardingadults.co.uk)
	http://safeguardingadults.co.uk
Rotherham	Homepage – Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (rsab.org.uk)
	http://www.rsab.org.uk
Wakefield	Safeguarding adults from abuse - Wakefield Council
	http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/health-care-and-advice/adults-and-older-people-services/safeguarding/safeguarding
York	Safeguarding Adults in York Safeguarding Adults (safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk)
	http://www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk

If you are unsure as to which Local Safeguarding Arrangement operates in your area, you can check using the NHS England Safeguarding App at: www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/nhs-england-safeguarding-app

Monitoring & Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually or sooner in the event of any major change in the organisation, updates to the relevant legislation or best-practice guidance.

Date of last review: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026

*Rachael Bice, Chief Executive Officer
September 2025*