



Safeguarding Policy

Charity Number SCO 35942

Company Number 268613

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction:

Safeguarding is the action that an organisation takes to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm including physical, emotional, sexual, and financial harm and neglect. This includes making sure that the appropriate policies, practices, and procedures are put in place to protect all parties.

Safeguarding includes child protection but goes further and extends to all vulnerable beneficiaries.

Community House will do all they can to keep these beneficiaries safe and protected from harm.

The Board of Directors at Community House will always act in the interests of the charity and are responsible for making sure that the appropriate safeguarding measures are put in place to prevent and protect users of our service from harm.

The risk of harm may never entirely disappear, but the better the safeguards adopted, the better able charities are to mitigate those risks.

Community House will safeguard all its vulnerable users of service by:

- Having in place policies and procedures that will help make sure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm.
- Making sure those policies and procedures are implemented and understood by everyone in the charity.
- Having clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the charity to deal with any safeguarding issues.
- Making sure that staff and volunteers are trained to identify potential harm, know what action to take and are clear about how, when and who to report to.

Policy Aims:



Community House believes that all Individuals have the right to live in safety, with dignity, and are free from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding comes from a rights-based approach to protecting individuals and this is at the heart of what Community House does.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/vulnerable user of our service is paramount.
- All children, young people, and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children, young people and vulnerable adults 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, vulnerable adults and their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children, young people, and vulnerable adults' welfare.

We will seek to keep children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children, young people, and adults, two Depute Designated Safeguarding Officers and a lead Trustee/Board Member for safeguarding.
- Adopting child protection/adult 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 staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, vulnerable adults, 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, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

Safeguarding Process - Protection of vulnerable Groups (PVG)

We intend to create in Community House an environment in which children/vulnerable adults are safe from abuse, and in which any suspicions of abuse are promptly and appropriately responded to. To achieve this, we will:

- It will be made clear to applicants for posts within the group that the position is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and is subject to a PVG check undertaken through the Central Registration Body in Scotland or Disclosure Scotland.
- All applicants for work within Community House, whether voluntary or paid, will be interviewed before an appointment is made and will be asked to provide references (2 for Staff/1 for Volunteers). All such references will be followed up. Checks will also be implemented with the applicant's previous employer. In the case of applicants with unexplained gaps in their work history or who have moved rapidly from one job to another, explanations will be sought.
- All appointments, both paid and voluntary, will be subject to a probationary period and will not be confirmed unless Community House is confident that the applicant can be safely entrusted with children/young people/ vulnerable adults. All employees who work with children, young people, or adults will have a PVG Check carried out. Data for disclosure will be provided through Disclosure Scotland.
- An Index has been established in Scotland by the Scottish Executive through the operation of the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 enacted by the Scottish Parliament in February 2003. The Act places a duty on employers to refer people to the Index if they have harmed children or put children at risk of harm. It would be an offence to employ anyone on the list to work with children, young people, or adults. Please refer to our ***Secure Handling of Disclosure Information Policy and Making a Referral Policy***.

Legal and Procedural Framework:

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the principles contained within the UK and international legislation and Government guidance.

- The Children Act 2004.
- The Children and Families Act 2024.
- The Protection of Children Act 1999.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child.
- Human Rights Act 1998.



- Data Protection Act 2018.
- GDPR.
- Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups 2006.
- PVG Scheme.

Seek and Supply Training

We will seek out training opportunities for all adults involved in Community House to ensure that they recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse. Documentary evidence of courses attended will be kept in staff personal files.

In addition, all staff will be expected to complete:

- Safeguarding Children/Adults.
- Basic First Aid Training.
- Food Hygiene.

Good Practice

- All staff and volunteers who work within service times will be subject to a PVG check.
- Children/vulnerable adults will always be supervised by a responsible adult.
- Volunteers will not be left alone with individual children/vulnerable adults or with small groups.
- Adult/Child ratios meet the Care Inspectorate Guidance on adult to child ratios in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings.
- Children, young people, and vulnerable adults will not be left alone with visitors to the group.
- Children will only be collected from the group by adults or those authorised by the parent/guardian as an approved person.
- There are NO circumstances in which children/vulnerable adults will be punished by smacking, slapping, or shaking. Neither will be humiliating nor frightening methods of punishment be used.
- There are NO circumstances where bullying, taunting, racist behaviour, harassment or otherwise will be used.
- Children, young people, and vulnerable adults will be respected, listened to, and encouraged to develop a sense of autonomy and independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings, and acceptable ways to express them. This will enable children, young people, and vulnerable adults to have self-confidence and the vocabulary to resist inappropriate approaches.



- Children, young people, and vulnerable adults will be encouraged to be confident in dealing with personal hygiene needs. Accidents will be dealt with in a sensitive manner.
- The movie room, restrictions in place for use of the game's consoles and allocated staff presence to ensure the safety of those using the consoles.

Child abuse can be categorised into four different types: neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. A child may be subjected to one or more forms of abuse at any given time. Abuse and neglect can occur within the family, in the community or in an institutional setting.

Adult abuse is when a person is treated in a bad way or in a way that harms, hurts, exploits them or makes them feel frightened or unhappy.

Respond Appropriately to Suspicions of Abuse.

Changes in children's behaviour or appearance will be monitored and acted upon. Parents will normally be the first port of reference, unless there are suspicions that the parents are implicated.

Suspicions, where appropriate, will also be referred to the Social Work Department. All such suspicions will be kept professionally confidential, shared only with those who need to know.

Staff will not have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children, young people, or adults.

Staff will not have any contact or accept friend requests on social media from children, young people or adults associated with the organisation.

Staff will remain professional, not place themselves, colleagues, or users of the service in a situation which compromises them.

Contacts

Social Work Department
Lead Officer Child Protection, Childcare
Kilncraigs, Greenside Street, Alloa, FK10 1EB
Tel: 01259 225000 / 450000
Weekends/Evenings 01785 470500
Email: childcare@clacks.gov.uk

Health and Social Care Partnership
Adult Social Work Intake Team Clackmannanshire and Stirling.
Tel: 01259 727010
Weekends/Evening – Emergency Duty Team (EDT) 01786 470500



Email: cart@clacks.gcsx.gov.uk

Community House Manager
Islean Stuart
Tel: 01259 725424 (Office)
Mob: 07867722004

Keeping Records:

Whenever changes which cause concern are observed in a child, young person or vulnerable adults' behaviour, physical condition or appearance, concerns are recorded in their confidential case notes and reported following Child and Adult Protection legislation and guidance. The record will include, in addition to the name, address and age of the child, young person or adult; times and dated observations describing objectively the child, young person or adults' behaviour and appearance, without comment or interpretation; where possible, the exact words spoken by the child, young person or adult, dated, name and signature of the recorder. Such records will be accessible only to specified personnel as appropriate.

Liaise with Other Bodies:

Community House operates in accordance with local authority guidelines. Confidential records kept on children about whom the group is anxious, will be shared with the Social Work Department if Community House feels that adequate explanations for changes in the child's, young persons, vulnerable adults' condition have not been provided.

If a report on a child, young person or adult is to be made to the authorities, the child's parents/guardian will be informed at the same time as the report is made, unless there are suspicions that the parents/guardians are implicated.

Community House will maintain ongoing contact with the local authority, including names, addresses and telephone numbers of individual social workers, to ensure that it would be easy, in any emergency, for Community House and the Social Work Department to work well together. Community House will ensure that they are up to date with reporting procedures.

Support Families:

- Community House will take every step in its power to build up trusting and supportive relationships between families, staff, and volunteers in Community House.



- Where abuse at home is suspected, Community House will continue to welcome the child, young person, vulnerable adult, and family while investigations proceed if appropriate.
- Confidential records kept on a child, young person, vulnerable adult will be shared with the child's, young persons, vulnerable adult's parents/guardian unless they are implicated in the ongoing investigation.
- With the provision that the care and safety of the child, young person, adult must always be paramount, Community House will do all in its power to support and work with the child's, young person, vulnerable adults' family.
- In collecting, holding, and processing personal data, Community House complies with current GDPR.

Definitions of Abuse:

'Abuse' may take many forms including:

- **Neglect:** Actual or likely, persistent, or severe neglect of a child, young person or adult, or the failure to protect a child, young person or adult, from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child, young person or adults, health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Indicators:

Constant hunger or tiredness.
Poor personal hygiene.
Poor state or in appropriate clothing.
Low self-esteem.
Poor peer relationships.

- **Physical Abuse:** Actual or likely, perpetrated physical injury to a child, young person or adult, or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child, young person, or adult.

Indicators:

Current unexplained injuries.
Inappropriate excuses to explain injuries.
Untreated injuries.
Fear of returning home.
Aggression towards others.



- **Sexual Abuse:** Actual or likely, sexual exploitation of a child, young person, or adult.

Indicators:

Unexplained changes in behaviour.

Inappropriate sexual awareness.

Engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Distrust of others.

Inappropriate language.

Emotional Abuse: Actual or likely, persistent, or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional and behavioural development of a child, young person, or adult. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main, or sole, form of abuse.

'Likely', in the context of these definitions, means either potential or suspected.

These categories of abuse are not necessarily exhaustive nor are they mutually exclusive. Any of them may result in the failure of the child, young person, or adult to thrive.

Indicators:

Low self-esteem.

Decline in concentration levels.

Continual self-depreciation.

Emotional immaturity.

Extremes of behaviour.

Safeguarding Positions:

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Isean Stuart, Project Manager

Depute Designated Safeguarding Officer: Sharlene Haggart, Senior Family Support Practitioner.

Lead Safeguarding Board Member: Christopher White, Community House Board Member



COMMUNITY HOUSE,
ALLOA
At the Heart of The Community