



Sandcastle Trust

Supporting rare families

Safeguarding Policy

Policy last reviewed: October 2025

Date next review due: October 2026

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1. Introduction

The Sandcastle Trust is a charity that works to reduce inequalities in emotional health and wellbeing outcomes for families living with a rare genetic condition. Our services help to build positive family memories, strengthen family relationships, reduce isolation and improve resilience. We also increase public awareness of the inequalities and barriers to emotional health and wellbeing that families living with rare genetic conditions face and affect positive change through our work.

The Sandcastle Trust recognises the importance of its support services to families, children, young people and adults living with a rare genetic condition and its responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of those who are vulnerable or at risk.

2. Purpose and Scope

The Sandcastle Trust is committed to practices that protect children [1] and vulnerable adults [2] from harm and this Safeguarding Policy [3] outlines how The Sandcastle Trust deals with child and vulnerable adult protection issues and is intended to safeguard the children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with The Sandcastle Trust.

Charity Trustees are responsible [4] for ensuring that those benefiting from or working with their charity are not harmed in any way through contact with it.

This policy has been approved and endorsed by the Board of Trustees. An audit of safeguarding concerns, action taken and staff training and support will be conducted annually and safeguarding policy and procedures will be reviewed annually or in the light of significant changes to best practice or legislation.

This policy applies to all Sandcastle Trust board members, staff members, suppliers, contractors, freelancers and volunteers. We expect partner organisations to share our commitment to safeguarding and to have their own equivalent policy; where they do not then this policy will apply.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up using laws and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults in England. However, The Sandcastle Trust acknowledges Scotland and Northern Ireland's safeguarding laws are different to those of England & Wales and will abide by these when it is appropriate to do so.

Laws and guidance relating to children:

A summary of key legislation and guidance is available for all areas here; <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/childprotection-system>

Laws and guidance relating to vulnerable adults in England:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Act 2018
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014 (chapter 14)
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Capacity Act 2005

Laws and guidance relating to vulnerable adults in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland:

- Wales - Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 Wales Safeguarding Procedures 2019
- Scotland - Adult Support and Protection Act 2007 Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 Code of Practice 2014
- Northern Ireland - Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership 2015

Further information on legislation and guidance across the UK and Ireland can also be found here; <https://www.safecic.co.uk/safeguarding-resources/matching-legislation>

4. Supporting documents

This should be read alongside the following Sandcastle Trust organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents (key documents are annexed to the Policy):

- [Guidance: Recognising Abuse Annex 1](#)
- [Guidance: Acting on Safeguarding Concerns Annex 2](#)

- Recording Form Annex 3
- Statement of Commitment Form Annex 4
- Role description for designated safeguarding officer
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff, Trustees and Volunteers
- Health & Safety Policy
- Managing Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Data Protection & Privacy Policy
- Data Retention and Disposal Policy
- Use of Case Studies, Photographs and Video Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Induction, Training, Supervision and Support Policy

5. Definitions

[1] Child

This policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18. This policy applies to all children and young people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, social orientation or religion.

[2] Vulnerable adult

For the purpose of this policy a vulnerable adult is defined as:

“anyone over the age of 18 who: is or may be in need of Community Care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself or is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation” No Secrets, DOH (2000).

People who may be included in a definition of a Vulnerable Adult:

People with learning disability
 People with physical disabilities
 People with sensory impairment
 People with mental health needs including dementia
 People who misuse substances of alcohol
 People who are physically ill or mentally frail

Service users outside these definitions may also be vulnerable due to low self-esteem, social exclusion, offending history, homelessness, domestic abuse, ethnicity, immigration status etc.

[3] Safeguarding

The term 'safeguarding' refers to inward facing procedures such as awareness raising, reporting concerns, responding appropriately to issues of abuse and exploitation and preventing harm through sound recruitment and safe programming. (*Charity Commission's Strategy for dealing with safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Issues in Charities*, April 2012)

[4] Trustee responsibilities

Trustees of charities which work with children and vulnerable adults have a duty of care to their charity which will include taking the necessary steps to safeguard and take responsibility for those children and vulnerable adults. They must always act in their best interests and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and to protect the reputation and assets of the charity. [*Charity Commission's Strategy for dealing with safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Issues in Charities*, April 2012]

6. Policy Statement

The Sandcastle Trust will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Ensuring all Sandcastle Trust staff and volunteers are subject to careful safe recruitment and selection.
- Providing effective management for staff, volunteers and students through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures in line with our Induction, Training, Supervision and Support Policy so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Appointing a nominated safeguarding officer and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- Adopting child protection and vulnerable adult safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and Code of Conduct for Staff, Trustees and Volunteers.
- Effectively implementing our Social Media Policy and related procedures.
- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.

- Making sure that children and vulnerable adults and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- Ensuring any concern for the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult are reported immediately to one of the safeguarding leads.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, vulnerable adults, parents, families, and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff, trustees, and volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and dealing effectively with any bullying that does arise in line with our Anti-bullying Policy.
- 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 and our Health and Safety Policy.
- 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.

8. Document Revisions

This policy and related guidance will be monitored by the Chief Executive on a regular basis for compliance and will be reviewed at least annually.

Version	Author	Date	Changes
1.0	Danielle Singleton	October 2024	First version

ANNEX 1

GUIDANCE: RECOGNISING ABUSE

Types of Abuse

1. Children

Physical abuse: hurting or injuring a child, such as hitting, slapping, shaking, scalding, or suffocating. Physical abuse also includes giving a child harmful substances, such as drugs, alcohol or poison,

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. It does not necessarily involve violence and the child may or may not be aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse includes grooming a child with the intention of sexually abusing them : all forms of penetrative and non-penetrative sex; the making, looking at and distributing indecent images of a child. Sexual exploitation is part of sexual abuse and involves the commercial sexual exploitation of children (in transactional sex) or manipulation or enticement of children to engage in sexual activities in return for gifts, money, food, affection or favour. It is a form of abuse which is often misunderstood by victims and outsiders as consensual. A child/family may believe it is a loving/consensual relationship but no child under the age of 18 can ever consent to being abused or exploited.

Emotional abuse: is persistent over time and can include verbally abusing a child, rejecting a child, humiliating them, making them feel worthless, inadequate or frightened. It also includes seeing or hearing abuse of others e. g. witnessing domestic violence is regarded as a form of emotional abuse. Some form of emotional abuse is part of any maltreatment but it may occur alone.

Neglect: the persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including love, stimulation, safety, nourishment, warmth, education, and/or medical attention. It is failing to ensure a child is protected from physical or emotional harm and danger.

2. Adults

Physical abuse: unexplained falls or major injuries, injury/bruises at different stages of healing, bruising in unusual sites, e.g. inner arms, abrasions, teeth indentations, injuries to head or face, very passive.

Psychological abuse: withdrawal, depression, cowering and fearfulness, agitation, confusion, changes in behaviour, obsequious willingness to please, no self-esteem, fear, anger.

Domestic abuse: bruises, black eyes, painful limbs, make up covering bruises, damaged clothes or accessories, patient “walking on eggshells” if partner around, partner belittling or putting down, partner acting excessively jealously or possessively, limited access to money, phone, car etc.

Awareness and Indicators of Abuse

There are various ways in which you may become aware of, or have concerns about actual or potential abuse of a child or vulnerable adult.

- a) A child or vulnerable adult may tell you.
- b) Someone else may tell you.
- c) A child or vulnerable shows signs of physical injury for which there appears to be no satisfactory explanation or injuries happen repeatedly. Regular unkempt appearance, loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- d) A child or vulnerable adult's behaviour may indicate to you that he or she is being harmed or abused. For example, nervous, mistrustful or fearful of others perhaps reluctant to be with certain people or places; sudden behaviour changes; noticeable aggressive withdrawn from social group or inability to make friends; lack of confidence hinting at secrets.
- e) Use of sexual explicit language or sexualised behaviour/games towards others.
- f) Something in the way that another person relates to a children or vulnerable adults concerns you. This could include:
 - Inappropriate petting or fondling.
 - Inappropriate physical contact
 - Sexually explicit behaviour
 - Suspicious behaviour in changing areas, cubicles or toilet areas or otherwise seem to seek out time alone with children or vulnerable adults.
 - Causing distress to children or vulnerable adults.
 - Use of inappropriate language in the presence of children or vulnerable adults.

ANNEX 2

GUIDANCE: ACTING ON SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

If you have a concern about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult you should: use the Reporting Form with the information you have available and send to one of The Sandcastle Trust's Safeguarding Leads. They will ask you for more information should they need it.

Safeguarding Officer

The following person is the The Sandcastle Trust's designated Safeguarding Officer. Any concerns about child or vulnerable adult protection issues or welfare should be directed to them in the first instance using the details below:

Danielle Singleton, Head of Service Delivery & Operations

Address: The Sandcastle Trust, PO Box 873, Haywards Heath, RH16 9QL

Tel: 07540 382 724

Email: Danielle@sandcastletrust.org

The following person is The Sandcastle Trust's Safeguarding Trustee:

Lesley Dodd, Trustee

Address: The Sandcastle Trust, PO Box 873, Haywards Heath, RH16 9QL

Tel: 07930 399 062

Email: info@sandcastletrust.org

ANNEX 3

CHILD PROTECTION REPORTING FORM

What is this form for?

To report a concern or disclosure of abuse against a child or vulnerable adult. The concern can be from something you have seen or have been told, either directly by the child or vulnerable adult or by another person.

Who should complete this form?

Anyone with a concern. All Sandcastle Trust employees, trustees or volunteers have an obligation under The Safeguarding Policy to report any concern or disclosure of a child or vulnerable adult suffering physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect or sexual exploitation through to The Sandcastle Trust's Safeguarding Officer. You do not need permission before completing this form but you can speak to the Safeguarding Officer if you are not sure.

When should it be used?

As soon as possible but within 24 hours of the incident/conversation that has given you cause for concern. Reporting is not investigation and you are not required to verify allegations or seek more information before using this form. This form will help others make decisions about what should be done. Just complete what information you can.

Who should this form be sent to?

The Sandcastle Trust's Safeguarding Officer. Please put in a sealed envelope marked confidential or write confidential in the message subject line if e- mail.

1. Child's Details

Full Name or "nicknames":

Age :

Gender :

Any Disability:

Address or location:

Family/household members:

School:

Religion:

Does the child appear to be in situation of immediate danger or harm?:

Does the child appear to have immediate medical needs?:

2. Informant's Details

If this concern has arisen from information told to you by another person (i. e. Not the child) then please give details of that person here:

Name:

Contact details:

In what context do they know the child? e. g. Family member, worker, community member etc:

3. Nature of Concern/Abuse

Please write clearly what you have seen or been told that has given you cause for concern. If this information came from the child please use their words where possible.

Dates and places where incidents took place.

What people were present and what were they doing?

Are there any physical signs of abuse seen or reported to you?

What did you observe about the child's behaviour, or changes in the child's behaviour if you have met them more than once.

4. Alleged perpetrator's details

Name:

Relationship to child:

Organisation & Job Title/Role:

Any other identifying information:

5. Advice or Actions Taken

What did you say would happen next to the child or person reporting this to you?

Who else knows about this situation?

Who else have you discussed it with?

What actions have already been taken?

Name and Details of Person making this report

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Job title/role/connection with The Sandcastle Trust:

Date of this report:

Signature:

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I have read and understood The Sandcastle Trust's Safeguarding Policy and the guidance contained within it. I agree with the principles contained in the Policy and undertake to comply fully with its requirements while working/associated with The Sandcastle Trust. I accept that I am subject to policies and procedures outlined in the Policy document and shall be bound by them.

Print Name	Job title/role/connection to The Sandcastle Trust
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Signature _____ Date _____