



Wealden Volunteering – Safeguarding Policy
(Updated for 2026 Compliance)

Approved by the Board: April 2026

Next Review Due: April 2028

Chair Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul P. K.", is written on a light yellow rectangular background.

1. Purpose of this Policy

This policy applies to all individuals working on behalf of Wealden Volunteering (WV), including employees, trustees, volunteers, contractors and sessional workers.

Wealden Volunteering is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, in accordance with:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)** – statutory guidance [\[gov.uk\]](https://www.gov.uk)
- **The Care Act 2014 and Care & Support Statutory Guidance (2014, updated)**
- **The Human Rights Act 1998**
- **UK GDPR (2021)**
- **The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment or voluntary involvement.

WV expects partner organisations, suppliers and contractors to adhere to equivalent safeguarding standards.

WV will ensure:

- safe recruitment, induction and training
- concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly
- confidentiality and dignity are respected
- actions are proportionate to risk
- secure, accurate safeguarding records are maintained
- every event/activity includes a safeguarding risk assessment
- staff and volunteers know how to report concerns
- information is shared appropriately following statutory guidance

We encourage all staff and volunteers to raise any concerns openly and in confidence, without fear of reprisal, in line with our Volunteers Policy and whistleblowing procedures.

2. Safeguarding Principles

WV follows the principles of:

For children (Working Together 2026)

- Child-centred, rights-based practice
- Inclusive, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice [\[send-network.co.uk\]](https://send-network.co.uk)
- Partnership with families and local safeguarding partners
- Proportionate action
- Timely and effective information sharing

For adults (Care Act 2014)

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

WV is committed to **Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)**.

3. Accountability and Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

- Holds ultimate accountability for safeguarding
- Ensures policies and training are in place
- Reports serious safeguarding incidents to the Charity Commission if required

CEO – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Email: CEO@Wealdenvolunteering.org.uk

Telephone: 01825 760019

Responsible for:

- responding to safeguarding concerns
- liaising with statutory partners (police, social care)
- maintaining safeguarding records

- ensuring training and supervision
- identifying safeguarding lead for each event/activity

All Staff, Volunteers and Trustees

Must:

- follow this policy and procedures
 - complete safeguarding training
 - report concerns immediately
 - record factual information only
 - maintain confidentiality
 - act with dignity and respect
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4. Definitions of Abuse

Children (under 18)

Categories (Children Act 1989):

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Neglect

Additional harms recognised in WTSC 2026:

- Coercive control
- Online harms
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Domestic abuse
- Bullying/cyberbullying
- Grooming
- Hidden harms (CSA) [sacpa.org.uk]

Adults at Risk

- Physical abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Emotional/psychological abuse
 - Financial abuse
 - Neglect and self-neglect
 - Domestic abuse
 - Organisational abuse
 - Modern slavery
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5. Safe Recruitment

WV uses safer recruitment practices consistent with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

All applicants:

- complete an application form
- attend an interview
- provide two references

DBS checks are carried out **only where roles meet the regulated activity threshold**.

6. Induction and Training

All volunteers, staff and trustees receive:

- safeguarding induction
- online safeguarding training
- refresher training at least every 4 years

Those working directly with children or adults at risk receive additional role-specific training.

7. Procedures for Responding to Concerns

If someone is in **immediate danger**:

→ **Call 999** (police or ambulance).

→ Inform the CEO/DSL as soon as possible.

If **not** in immediate danger:

- share your concern with the CEO/DSL
- record the concern factually
- follow local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (SSCs) [[send-network.co.uk](https://www.send-network.co.uk)]

Local authority contacts:

- **Children's Services:** 01273 35906
- **Adult Social Care:** 03456 080191
- **Police (non-emergency):** 101

If the concern involves a volunteer or trustee

Report to the CEO immediately.

If the concern involves the CEO

Report to the Chair of Trustees.

Do:

- listen carefully
- record exact words
- remain calm and non-judgmental
- report promptly
- explain you cannot keep safeguarding information confidential

Do NOT:

- promise secrecy
- investigate or question the alleged person
- ask leading questions
- delay reporting

8. Record-Keeping

WV will keep clear, accurate safeguarding records, including:

- date, time, person involved
- factual observations only

- decisions made and actions taken

All records are stored securely in line with **UK GDPR**.

9. Charity Commission Reporting

Trustees must submit a **Serious Incident Report** where:

- a beneficiary is harmed or at serious risk of harm
 - there is a safeguarding failure
 - the organisation's reputation or beneficiaries' safety is at risk
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10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- every 2 years
- following legislative changes
- after a serious safeguarding incident

Volunteers and staff will be notified of updates.