

Safeguarding Policy

First approved by the Board of Trustees: 2 April 2019

Last updated: 28 February 2024

Introduction and background

Although the Foundation does not work directly with children and vulnerable adults, it is committed to proactively safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its ultimate beneficiaries and staff to taking reasonable steps to ensure those who come into contact with the Foundation or any programmes that are funded, promoted or associated with the Foundation do not, as a result, come to any harm.

This policy relates to the Foundation's commitments to safeguarding and protecting its beneficiaries. Where any suspected wrongdoing is in relation to staff, the procedure set out in the Foundation's Whistleblowing or Complaints Policy should be followed, as appropriate.

Over recent years there has been increasing recognition of the way in which vulnerable people can be at risk of harm from organisations and institutions that are supposed to help them, either as a result of abuse and exploitation by individuals in positions of trust, or via programme activities in general.

As a consequence, there has been a significant increase in the efforts made by organisations to ensure that no harm comes to beneficiaries or target communities from contact with their staff and associates or as a result of any of the organisation's activities.

This duty of care extends beyond statutory safeguarding requirements. The Foundation does not engage in any activity with children or vulnerable adults that is regulated by domestic safeguarding legislation but it does take seriously its obligations to operate in a way that ensures, so far as is possible, that its work does no harm to anyone with whom it engages.

Given these values and in light of widely recognised risks, the Foundation has developed this policy to promote protection for all those people it comes into contact with, as well as staff and volunteers within the Foundation itself and the partner organisations with which it has relationships.

Should it come into contact with vulnerable groups (including children), The Foundation takes responsibility to ensure it is doing all it can to protect such groups from all forms of harm, including abuse, neglect and exploitation and to ensure appropriate action is taken if such harm occurs.

Understanding Risks

It is clear that vulnerable persons can be harmed, or put at risk of harm, by organisations and institutions, and that abuse of vulnerable groups (including children) can happen in all types of organisations. Such harm may result from unintentional acts or deliberate actions.

Unintentional acts may lead to harm due to a lack of 'due diligence' or competence or through organisational negligence, such as inadequate care and supervision, lack of policies, procedures and guidance to inform programming and practice, or lack of staff compliance with legal requirements. Also, deliberate actions may be taken by people with intent to abuse vulnerable people.

Scope of this policy

For Foundation staff and contractors

Compliance with this policy is mandatory for all Foundation staff. For the purposes of this policy ‘staff’ is defined as anyone who works for, or is engaged by the Foundation, either in a paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time capacity. This includes directly employed staff, contractors, agency staff, consultants, volunteers, interns and equivalents.

Fundraisers

The Foundation expects that any individuals fundraising on behalf of the Foundation must act in the accordance with this policy. This policy is to be shared with interested parties when the Fundraising Agreement is signed.

For trustees

Trustees (i.e. Board Members) must act at all times in the best interests of the Foundation and its ultimate beneficiaries and they are also expected to comply with this policy. This expectation is made clear to trustees during their induction.

All trustees are asked to undergo satisfactory safeguarding training. Where trustees have not received training or require a refresh of training or have not received a refresher for a period longer than three years, the CareTech Foundation will organise training for them within six months of appointment as a trustee. All independent trustees are required to comply with this requirement before visiting facilities where safeguarding may be a concern as a guest of or on behalf of the CareTech Foundation and its partners/initiatives.

All independent trustees are asked to review and sign the Statement of Commitment (Annex A).

For Partnership organisations

This policy also applies to other organisations with whom the Foundation work including, for the avoidance of doubt, any grant recipients.

The Foundation expects that the principles and approaches already shared with the partnership organisations mean that they will fully support the values and commitments set out in this policy. The Foundation recognises that some will already have protection policies and associated measures in place. Where this is in place they should have no difficulty complying with the standards set out in this policy.

All grant recipients of the Foundation must ensure that they comply (and must ensure that any delivery partnership organisations they work with comply) as a minimum with the commitments and standards as set out in this policy (and in particular those set out in section 4 below) and compliance is a condition of the Foundation’s grant agreement. The Foundation will carry out due diligence on the potential grant recipient as set out in Schedule 2 and grant recipients will be expected to have in place a written safeguarding policy including the elements set out in Schedule 4.

Statement of commitments

The Foundation commits to taking all reasonable measures to ensure vulnerable groups (including children) impacted by projects and programmes delivered and/or supported by the Foundation are protected as far as possible from harm, including exploitation, neglect and abuse of all kinds.

The Foundation Commits to:

- Developing a zero tolerance ‘safety culture’ within the Foundation that creates and maintained protective environments.
- Placing safeguarding at the heart of recruitment practices by carrying out the highest level of DBS checks to which we are entitled (and in the case of partner organisations overseas, the local equivalent), requesting two written references, and checking qualifications and certifications.
- Ensuring the Foundation’s staff and board members are fully cognisant of protection issues.
- Increasing understanding and raising the awareness of staff within the organisation of risks relating to safeguarding.
- Taking appropriate and proportionate action if this policy is not complied with.
- Developing criteria to ensure that staff understand what constitutes non-compliance.
- Carrying out appropriate due diligence on partners, ensuring they have appropriate controls and safeguarding measures in place, and integrating safeguarding and onward reporting requirements in the Foundation’s partnership or fund-related agreements.
- Making sure protection considerations are integrated into all aspects of the organisation.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities to report concerns and of steps to take/who to go to in order to report such concerns.
- Ensuring that safeguarding concerns are addressed and investigated promptly and through the appropriate channels.
- Reporting safeguarding incidents, allegations or concerns to external authorities and regulators, as appropriate, and in accordance with best practice. The Foundation will fully risk assess such reporting to ensure that making a report is not likely to cause further harm to the individual(s) to whom harm has already been caused.
- Ensuring that its privacy policy (if any) remain suitably updated so that it is clear that, in keeping with the Foundation’s zero tolerance policy, it will report wrongdoing on the part of its trustees, staff and partners to appropriate authorities; will share such information as may be necessary to protect individuals from harm; and will provide fair and accurate references, which appropriately reflect the Foundation’s experience and interaction with trustees, staff, volunteers, partners and grant recipients.

Embedding organisational commitment

In order to make its policy commitments a practical reality, the Foundation will instigate or strengthen a range of measures that focus on making sure this policy and associated procedures are in place, that people are supported to understand and work within the provisions of the policy, that it is fully and effectively integrated into all of our activities, and that it is subject to monitoring and review.

The Foundation’s staff will receive regular training/briefing on their responsibilities and obligations under this policy and it will form part of the induction for new staff and trustees.

The Foundation's staff (and trustees) will be expected to acknowledge and accept their responsibilities under this policy. Breaches of this policy by staff will be treated seriously and will be treated as a potential cause for disciplinary action.

Reporting and responding to concerns and the Foundation's safeguarding procedures

Foundation staff are required to immediately report any concerns or suspicions of possible/actual harm to a beneficiary, including abuse, exploitation and neglect and policy non-compliance, or risk of such, resulting from action or inactions by anyone covered by this policy. This includes any suspected historical abuse. In the first instance, these should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Reports can reach the organisation through various routes. This may be in a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or message on social media. It may also be in the form of informal discussion or rumour. If a staff member hears something in an informal discussion or chat that they think is a safeguarding concern, they should report this to the appropriate staff member in their organisation.

The person making the report should otherwise keep the matter strictly confidential and not seek to investigate the incident or suspicion.

The Safeguarding Lead Trustee, who sits on the Foundation's board of trustees, will have oversight of safeguarding and welfare arrangements and will receive reports of any safeguarding and welfare incidents that arise. The Safeguarding Lead Trustee will have a regular slot at meetings of the board of trustees to ensure that trustees are appropriately apprised of matters that arise.

The names of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Safeguarding Lead Trustee can be found in the 'Contact Information' section at the end of this policy.

The Foundation is committed to reporting all relevant incidents to the Charity Commission for England and Wales via a serious incident report. We will also report incidents to other regulatory bodies and government departments or funding bodies, where appropriate. Where there is evidence that criminal activity may have taken place, or concerns have been raised in relation to a child or vulnerable adult, we will report to the relevant police and/or safeguarding authorities as appropriate (for example to the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Adult Safeguarding Board). Decisions to report to external authorities will be fully risk assessed and anonymization/pseudonimisation considered when necessary. Reporting will not be avoided on the basis that it may harm the Foundation's reputation or give rise to litigation and any concerns in relation to data protection will not act as a barrier to reporting, although will be carefully considered to ensure that the disclosure is made within the legal framework for so doing.

The Foundation will develop strategies and tools to ensure effective implementation of this policy and to enable the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Board and others monitor its performance.

Existing systems for risk management, due diligence, monitoring and evaluation, audit and review, and other organisational performance mechanisms will be adapted to include indicators and processes by

which implementation of the safeguarding policy can be measured and these processes will be periodically reviewed to ensure that they remain effective and up-to-date in respect of best practice.

The Foundation will implement and keep updated a Whistleblowing and a Complaints Policy aimed at encouraging a culture of openness and accountability wherein staff and members of the public are, respectively, confident that they can raise any matter of genuine concern without fear of reprisal in the knowledge that they will be taken seriously and that matters will be investigated appropriately and managed on a need-to-know-basis, with appropriate remedial action taken.

The Foundation's detailed safeguarding procedures, including due diligence on grant recipients, are set out in Schedule 2.

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer

The Designated Safeguarding Officer shall:

- Be the point of contact for all concerns, incidents and disclosures within the Foundation;
- Conduct an investigation of the reported incident(s);
- Receive information from professionals, children and vulnerable adults, parents, carers about safeguarding concerns;
- Monitor the overall trend of safeguarding concerns and report annually to the Board of Trustees on the implementation of the Foundation's safeguarding policy and procedures;
- Maintain records of any safeguarding concerns raised, action taken and follow-up required;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers working for the Foundation are aware of their safeguarding duties, have read the Foundation's policies and will adhere to them at all times;
- Offer advice and support to professionals working for the Foundation to enable them to understand and fulfil their responsibilities;
- Be familiar with legislation and statutory guidance and have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.

Policy Review

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice regularly. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of trustees once every three years or when there is a change in UK Law and/or best practice or when an incident occurs that highlights a need for change – whichever occurs first.

Contact Information

The Foundation's Designated Safeguarding Officer is Jonathan Freeman, Chief Executive Officer. If the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable for any reason then the concern must be reported to Tariq Raja, Foundation Manager.

The Foundation's Safeguarding Lead Trustee is Victoria Bouamama.

These individuals have access to the e-mail inbox for reporting concerns, which is info@caretechfoundation.org.uk.

If you are not comfortable with submitting your report via e-mail to that address, please call 01707 291 591 and ask to speak to the relevant person.

Publishing this policy

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will ensure that this policy is at all times publically accessible on its website.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Trustees on 2nd April 2019.

This policy was last reviewed on 16th February 2024.

Definitions

A child or younger person

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as everyone under 18 years. The UK has ratified this convention in conjunction with the Children Act 2004.

An adult at risk

Within the Care Act 2014, safeguarding duties apply to any adult aged 18 years and older who: has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and, as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

Where young adults (aged 18 or over) are still receiving children's services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements.

Types of abuse

The Foundation adopts the following definitions for the main types of abuse, in line with the Government's 2014 guidance¹

- **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 pressured 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;

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/194272/No_secrets_guidance_on_developing_and_implementing_multi-agency_policies_and_procedures_to_protect_vulnerable_adults_from_abuse.pdf

- **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 and 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; and
- **Discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance

Child Protection v Protection of Adults at Risk

Although children and adults at risk can experience the same types of harm and the causes are often similar, the main difference between child protection and adult protection hinges on the right to make a choice.

Where a child is at risk of serious harm, or has been seriously harmed, it is likely that action would be taken by Statutory Services to protect them whether or not the parents/guardians agreed.

Sometimes adults at risk do not want Statutory Services to take action to protect them from harm. Taking action to protect them against their will can create a dilemma and staff are required to consult with the Safeguarding Team to ensure a balance between 'the need to protect' and the rights of the adult is attained.

Schedule 2 - Safeguarding Procedures

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers (including trustees)

The Foundation's Recruitment Policy sets out the procedures by which staff should be recruited. This includes the following requirements:

- completing an application form;
- interviewing each person to assess their suitability; and,
- requesting a minimum of two references.

All staff appointments are made subject to DBS basic checks.

The process for the appointment of trustees is set out in the Foundation's Deed of Trust. All trustee appointments are made subject to DBS basic checks.

Should the Foundation decide to engage volunteers, it will put in place a Volunteer Policy to govern the recruitment and management of all individuals volunteering their time with the Foundation, including the requirements regarding DBS checks.

Training of staff and volunteers

All staff, trustees, fundraisers and volunteers should be provided with a copy of the Foundation's Safeguarding Policy and be required to sign the Statement of Commitment in Annex A to acknowledge that they have read and understood it and agree to abide by it.

To enable effective delivery of safeguarding, all staff and volunteers will receive induction training, providing an overview of the organisation and to ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure. This will include training on the Foundation's policy and will take place within three months of appointment.

All staff, trustees and volunteers will receive refresher training on Safeguarding at least once every two years. Foundation staff will be encouraged to access external training on safeguarding to ensure that they are aware of latest best practice.

Due Diligence

As identified above, a key safeguarding responsibility for the Foundation is ensuring that any organisation with which the Foundation funds, appropriate arrangements in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

The Foundation will ensure through its due diligence procedures that all grant recipients adhere to the standards and have in place appropriate Policies and Procedures. We will ensure that the delivery organisation has and carries out an appropriate written policy and has a set of procedures in place at

all times to safeguard children and vulnerable people, which will include procedures to check backgrounds and disclosures of all employees, volunteers, trustees or contractors who will supervise, care for or otherwise have significant direct contact with vulnerable people. We will ensure that all delivery organisations regularly review their policy and procedures for safeguarding vulnerable people to ensure they adhere to any applicable legislation and/or regulations and the Standards. We will, in particular, use the Safeguarding Checklist as part of the due diligence procedures, to assess whether a potential grant recipient has an appropriate written safeguarding policy in place and can commit to the statement of commitments in section 4.

Schedule 3: Guidance on how to deal with safeguarding concerns

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult confides to someone that they are being, have been or believe that they may be abused, they have placed that person in a position of trust. In all cases:

Ensure the immediate safety of the child or vulnerable adult. The overriding priority in any situation is the immediate safety of the child or young person. Stop other activity and focus on what you are being told, or have just seen. Responding to suspicion of abuse takes immediate priority. Consideration must be given to removing the victim from any potential harm to a place where any physical/emotional needs can be cared for.

Do not promise confidentiality. Make it clear to the individual that the information must be passed on if they think the young person has been, is being or may be harmed in some way. Explain clearly to the person raising the concern about what you expect will happen next. Confirm that you will only tell those

you have to tell to get the issue dealt with. You can and should state that the matter will be dealt with quickly and appropriately. Don't promise to keep information to yourself. All concerns and allegations of abuse must be raised and investigated.

Reassure the child or vulnerable adult. React calmly, panic may frighten or silence the person Tell the person they were right to tell and make it clear the person themselves is not to blame. Take what is said seriously recognising that there may be difficulties in interpreting what is said

Avoid any actions that could harm subsequent investigations, including legal proceedings. Obtain the necessary information needed to make a referral Keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what is being said. Only ask questions needed to clarify what they are being told. Do not ask about explicit details – it is up to Children's Services/the Police to investigate fully.

Report the concern to the Foundation's Safeguarding Officer. Do not delay in passing on the information and seeking further advice on next steps.

Make and keep a record of the incident and action taken.

Schedule 4: Safeguarding Checklist

The aim of a safeguarding policy is to ensure an organisation understands its duty to protect its beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, and operate in a safe and secure environment. In addition to complying with the statement of commitments in section 4 of this policy, grant recipients will be expected to have a written safeguarding policy including the following sections:

Policy Statement	This is the introduction to the policy and a good policy will be tailored to the organisation's aims and activities	It will include a definition of safeguarding and outline of the organisation's commitment to safeguard and protect the welfare of all who use its services. It should include the definitions for adults at risk and types of abuse experienced by children and adults at risk
Recruitment and Selection	It is good practice to include recruitment processes for staff and volunteers. However some policies may not have a section on this and may have a separate policy for this.	This section can include: Completing an application form Interviewing each person to assess their suitability Requesting a minimum of two references Criminal checks where these are available.
Training and induction	To enable effective delivery of safeguarding staff and volunteers should receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure.	It will be good to see mention of relevant safeguarding training and support and whether it will be provided on an ongoing basis; such as refresher courses in safeguarding – usually one-year refresher or every two years If training volunteers - that a member of staff is qualified to deliver the training.
Staff responsibilities	It is the duty of all staff, trustees and volunteers to ensure that the beneficiaries are protected from any harm and the policy should be designed to help staff and volunteers recognise and respond to cases of abuse.	The policy should have a designated safeguarding person – this usually is the most senior member of staff such as Director/CEO or a senior manager. Some organisations have a Child Protection or Safeguarding Officer that may also be direct delivery officers such as welfare officers or family support officers It is usually the designated person that has responsibility for recording all instances of alleged or reported abuse. Staff should approach the designated person with any concerns of abuse

Annex A:

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT to CareTech Foundation's Safeguarding Policy
CareTech Foundation – staff, contractors, trustees, officers, interns and volunteers**

"I, _____, have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Safeguarding Policy. I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing safeguarding policies and practice while working with CareTech Foundation.

(Print name)

(Job title / role)

(Signature)

(Date)