

Friendly Access Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Detailed information of safeguarding procedures and policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Policy Revised v1.3 April 2025
by Glyn Morris & Kevin Anderson



IMPORTANT PROTOCOL FORENOTE FOR ALL:

SIGNS OF IMMEDIATE DANGER OR RISK

Where a child, young person, or vulnerable adult are in immediate danger - **Phone Police Scotland on 999 if there is immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.**

Friendly Access' Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is **Kevin Anderson**

DSO contact is **07938 214165** or email **kev@friendlyaccess.org**



3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Aims and Objectives

Everyone who participates in activities run by Friendly Access is entitled to do so in an enjoyable and safe environment. Friendly Access has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that, when given responsibility for young people, trustees, staff, instructors and volunteers, we ensure the highest possible standard of care.

Friendly Access is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone involved understands and accepts their responsibilities to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults from harm and abuse, and report any concerns about their welfare to the appropriate authorities.

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice, providing children, young people, and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety/protection whilst in the care of Friendly Access.

3.1.2 Definitions

A child/young person is defined as a person under the age of 18 (Children's Act 1989¹). However, our policies and procedures also support working with vulnerable adults. In accordance with the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007², vulnerable adults are defined as adults aged 16 years and over who:

- are unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests and are at risk of harm
- are affected by disability, illness, or physical limitations, are more vulnerable to being harmed or abused

The safeguarding policy applies to all children, young people, and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or identity, racial heritage, religious belief, or social status.

3.1.3 Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers, students, or anyone working on behalf of Friendly Access.

The purpose of this policy is:

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/adult-support-protection-scotland-act-2007-short-introduction-part-1-act/>



- to protect all children, young people, and vulnerable adults who are involved with Friendly Access
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding

3.1.4 Friendly Access Commitments

Friendly Access commits to the following:

- recognising that the welfare of the child is paramount, as detailed in the Children's Act 1989
- believing that all children, whatever their age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or identity, racial heritage, religious belief or social status should be able to participate in Friendly Access activities in a fun and safe environment
- recognising that some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other factors
- adopting safeguarding and child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers and taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm, discrimination and degrading treatment
- respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- ensuring all concerns and allegations of unsafe or inappropriate practice or abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- ensuring all Friendly Access employees who work with children are recruited with regard to their suitability for that responsibility, and provided with guidance and/or training in good practice and child protection procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through training, supervision and support
- understanding that working in partnership with parents, carers and children is essential in promoting and protecting the welfare of children and young people
- sharing safeguarding and child protection concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and children appropriately
- appointing a member of the management team as Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

3.2 Plan for Safeguarding Children

3.2.1 Responsibilities of key personnel for safeguarding

The DSO will complete appropriate training for safeguarding and ensure this is regularly updated.



The DSO will be responsible for:

1. Promptly addressing any arising concerns reported by Friendly Access staff or volunteers.
2. Recording written information about arising concerns and actions taken and storing securely in the central office.
3. Seeking advice from appropriate professionals in the local area as required.
4. Ensuring activity leaders understand their role in safeguarding for their projects.
5. Ensuring project co-ordinators keep their training up to date.
6. Maintaining a central record of the training that staff and volunteers have undertaken.

DSO and Activity Leaders will be responsible for:

1. Promptly addressing any arising concerns shared by children, young people, vulnerable adults, parents/carers, and volunteers on their project ensuring clear information about the course of action to be taken and making a written record of this.
2. Promptly sharing information relating to concerns with Friendly Access DSO and sharing the written record of this.
3. Seeking advice from appropriate professionals in the local area as required.
4. Completing safeguarding training and ensuring this is regularly updated.
5. Ensuring all volunteers have completed Volunteer Safeguarding Training prior to working with any children, young people, and vulnerable adults.
6. Ensuring all those involved in Friendly Access activities have access to clear information about what to do in the event of a safeguarding concern or disclosure.

3.2.2 Procedure for responding to an arising concern, disclosure or allegation

It is the responsibility of all those involved in Friendly Access to act on any concern or disclosure in relation to safeguarding by following the procedures within the organisation. It is not the responsibility of anyone working with Friendly Access (paid or unpaid) to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. This applies both to allegations relating to abuse taking place elsewhere and any allegation made within Friendly Access organisation.



3.2.3 Receiving Evidence of Possible Abuse; where a child, young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger

Trustees, staff, and volunteers may become aware of possible abuse in various ways. They may see it happening, they may suspect it happening because of signs of abuse (as detailed in [Appendix 1 & 4](#)), or it may be disclosed by someone else or directly by the child or young person affected.

Where a child, young person or vulnerable adult are in immediate danger - Phone Police Scotland on 999 if the child is at immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.

3.2.4 Reporting a concern where there is no immediate danger

Concerns, allegations or disclosures must be reported immediately to the DSO.

Should the DSO not be available, they should make contact with the CEO at Friendly Access or the relevant Local Authority (LA) Health and Social Care Department (contact information detailed in [Appendix 2](#)).

Once a concern has been raised the DSO will take appropriate steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk. This may include the following:

- Friendly Access will refer the matter to the LA
- The parent/carer of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the LA
- Friendly Access CEO will be notified to decide who will deal with any media enquiries and implement any immediate disciplinary proceedings
- If the DSO is the subject of the concern or allegation the report must be made to the CEO who will refer the matter to the LA where necessary

3.2.4 Recording Information

To ensure that information is as factual as possible, a detailed record in the child's / young person's own words should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern.

This should be recorded on the standard Friendly Access safeguarding 'Record of Disclosure' form ([see Appendix 3](#)) and shared immediately with the DSO.

When contacting the LA or making a referral, ensure that you have as much factual information about the child as possible when you phone. Include:

- Full name
- D.O.B
- Address
- Family composition details (including names of parent(s) and siblings), if known



- Any key professionals working with Friendly Access
- Factual information about the concerns you have

In the event of a disclosure by a young person (who is not deemed to be in immediate danger), it is particularly important to respond appropriately and timeously. If a young person says or indicates that they are being abused, you should:

- **stay calm** so as not to frighten the young person.
- **listen** to the child, showing that you are taking them seriously.
- **keep questions to a minimum** so that there is a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. The law is very strict and child abuse cases have been dismissed where it is felt that the child has been led, or words and ideas have been suggested during questioning. Only ask questions to clarify (see below for more information).
- **inform** the child that you have to inform other people about what they have told you. Tell the child this is to help keep them safe.
- **Place the safety of the child** as paramount. If the child needs urgent medical attention call an ambulance, inform the doctors of the concern and ensure they are made aware that this is a child protection issue.
- **write down** exactly what the child has said without adding any interpretation.
- **report** the incident to the DSO as soon as possible.

Asking questions is fine to help understand what the issue is BUT you must ensure the questions are open and give the child the ability to clarify.

Types of Questions you can ask:

- Tell me? (tell me what happened)
- Explain? (explain what you meant by)
- Where did this happen/where were you?
- When did this happen?

3.2.5 Confidentiality

Staff and volunteers abide by the Friendly Access Confidentiality Agreement³ to protect the personal information of our participating surfers. This is overridden by the requirement of the safeguarding policy to report a safeguarding concern.

Staff and volunteers must never guarantee confidentiality to any individual including parents, children, or colleagues. Staff should make children aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken.

³ <https://eu.jotform.com/sign/241063642317046/invite/01hvpvmrbbd8444d3cd26706bf>



Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances, obtaining consent may not be possible or in the best interest of the child or young person, e.g., where safety and welfare of that child or young person necessitates that the information should be shared. The law permits the disclosure of confidential information necessary to safeguard a child or young person. Disclosure should be justifiable in each case, according to the particular facts of the case, and legal advice should be sought if in doubt.

Information should be shared on a need-to-know basis only. This may include the following persons:

- The DSO
- Friendly Access CEO
- Friendly Access Board of Trustees
- The parents or carers of the child/young person/vulnerable adult
- The person(s) making the allegation
- LA
- The alleged abuser (and parents or carers if the alleged abuser is a child)
- School Headteacher

If the information given relates directly to the safety and welfare of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult, then the DSO must be informed immediately.

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- The DSO
- Friendly Access CEO
- Friendly Access Board of Trustees
- The parents or carers of the child/young person/vulnerable adult
- The person(s) making the allegation
- Local Authority (LA) Health and Social Care
- The alleged abuser (and parents or carers if the alleged abuser is a child)
- School Headteacher



If the information given relates directly to the safety and welfare of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult, then the DSO must be informed immediately.

3.3 Personnel working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults

3.3.1 Safer recruitment process

Safe recruitment processes apply to all Friendly Access trustees, staff, and volunteers, both full and part time. The following steps are taken when recruiting to ensure appropriate protection within the organisation. Volunteers are recruited to contribute to activities under the direct supervision of staff.

Staff:

- All new staff complete an application form. All staff are required to complete a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) check, and consent is obtained from the applicant to seek information in order to process this.
- Two confidential references, including one involving previous work with children are obtained. These references are taken up, confirmed through telephone contact and held on central record.
- Evidence of identity (passport or driving licence with photo) is obtained and held on central record.

Volunteers:

- All volunteers will be required to complete a Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme⁴ application through Disclosure Scotland, and this will be checked by Friendly Access.
- Volunteers work under the direct supervision of Friendly Access staff at all times and should never be alone with any child, young person or vulnerable adult.

3.3.2 Training

- All activity leaders will have completed safeguarding training.
- All activity leaders will have an up to date first aid qualification.
- All staff who, through their role, are in contact with children and /or vulnerable adults will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level.

⁴ <https://www.mygov.scot/pvg-scheme/>



3.3.3 Ongoing Support

Safeguarding issues can be traumatic to anyone involved. Friendly Access will provide support to any team member, trustee, staff or volunteer in the aftermath of any event they have reported on or witnessed, where there has been the potential harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

In the event of a child / vulnerable adult protection issue the team involved will debrief, discuss, and allow reflection on the event led by the DSO and activity leader. The DSO will follow up with everyone involved within one week later and as a precaution may advise additional counselling.

3.4 Code of Conduct

It is the responsibility of each person working within Friendly Access to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults and provide a role model for these.
- they follow the procedures following any disclosure or safeguarding concern (as detailed in this policy).
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed and, in every respect, the relationships they form with the children, young people and vulnerable adults in their care are appropriate.

3.4.1 Code of Conduct – Do's & Don'ts

- DO treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- DO set an example you would wish others to follow.
- DO treat all young people equally.
- DO respect the right to personal privacy of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- DO allow children, young people and vulnerable adults to talk about any concerns they may have.
- DO take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately (procedures found in this safeguarding policy).
- DO NOT permit abusive peer activities e.g., initiation ceremonies, bullying.
- DO NOT engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact - physical, verbal, sexual.
- DO NOT make suggestive remarks or threats to a young person, even in fun.
- DO NOT use inappropriate language via any medium including verbally, in writing, by telephone on email or the internet.



- DO NOT let allegations, suspicions, or safeguarding concerns go unreported.
- DO NOT give out your personal details including addresses and mobile telephone numbers to children and vulnerable adults.

3.5 Monitoring and Reviewing Arrangements

This policy is reviewed by the board of trustees annually or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
- As a result of any other significant change or event.



Appendices

Appendix 1. Understanding Abuse

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional, sexual mistreatment, or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. It commonly occurs within a relationship of trust or responsibility and is an abuse of power or a breach of trust. Abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of their age, disability, gender, sexual orientation or identity, racial heritage, religious belief, or social status.

Any individual may abuse or neglect a young person directly or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming the young person. Abuse in all of its forms can affect a person at any age.

Young people with disabilities may be at increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation, and in some cases the inability to protect themselves or adequately communicate that abuse had occurred.

Signs and Indications of abuse

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. Most people are not experts in such recognition, but indications that a child is being abused may include one or more of the following:

- unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- an injury for which an explanation seems inconsistent
- the young person describes what appears to be an abusive act involving them
- another young person or adult expresses concern about the welfare of a young person
- unexplained changes in a young person's behaviour e.g. becoming very upset, quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- inappropriate sexual awareness
- engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- distrust of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- difficulty in making friends
- being prevented from socialising with others
- displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite
- losing weight for no apparent reason



- becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt
- signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

Bullying / Peer on Peer Abuse

Bullying (including cyber bullying) may come from another young person or an adult. Bullying is defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. There are four main types of bullying. It may be physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, slapping), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, name calling, graffiti, threats, abusive text messages), emotional (e.g. tormenting, ridiculing, humiliating, ignoring, isolating from the group), or sexual (e.g. unwanted physical contact or abusive comments) and including sexting.

Signs of bullying / peer on peer abuse can include:

- behavioural changes such as reduced concentration and/or becoming withdrawn, clingy, depressed, tearful, emotionally up and down, reluctance to go training or competitions
- an unexplained drop off in performance
- physical signs such as stomach aches, headaches, difficulty in sleeping, bed wetting, scratching and bruising, damaged clothes
- a shortage of money or frequent loss of possessions

It must be recognised that the above list is not exhaustive, but also that the presence of one or more of the indications is not proof that abuse is taking place. It is **NOT** the responsibility of those working in Friendly Access to decide that child abuse is occurring. However, it **IS** their responsibility to act on any concerns.



Appendix 2: Key contacts for the Local Area Safeguarding Board

Area	Contact
Moray (Children)	Moray Child Protection Committee 01343 554370 (during office hours) 03457 565 656 (Social Work - Emergency Out of Hours) Alternatively, you can email childrensaccessessteam@moray.gov.uk Police Scotland - Phone 999 if the child is at immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.
Moray (Adult) A useful resource to The Moray Council's child protection committee http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_55497.html	Moray Community Care Access Team Tel. 01343 563999 Email: accesscareteam@moray.gov.uk Police Scotland - Phone 999 if the child is at immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.
Aberdeenshire (Child)	Health & Social, Care Children & Families Monday to Friday during office hours contact 01467 537111 Evenings and weekends call the out of hours service on 03456 08 12 06 Police Scotland - Phone 999 if the child is at immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.
Aberdeenshire (Adult)	Call 01467 533100 the Adult Protection network if it is less urgent or e-mail adultprotectionnetwork@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. Call 03456 08 12 06 our out of hours emergency service out of office hours. This service is available through the night and at weekends. Police Scotland - Phone 999 if the child is at immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.
Other Areas	Contact DSO for details. Police Scotland - Phone 999 if the child is at immediate risk, or phone 101 if a crime has been committed.

Appendix 3: Friendly Access - Recording Safeguarding Concern Form

Standard template form for recording and reporting all safeguarding and child protection concerns and disclosures. To be used across all activity areas.

Name of Client / Young Person / Adult		
Date safeguarding concern / disclosure was raised		
Details of safeguarding concern / disclosure (incl. observations made at time)		
For DSO to complete - Actions taken / proposed to help resolve concern raised.		
Person(s) raising concern		
Name of person making report		
Signature		Date



Appendix 4: Specific Safeguarding Issues

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status.

This can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults, but does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. For example, young people may be persuaded or forced to share sexually explicit images of themselves, have sexual conversations by text, or take part in sexual activities using a webcam. Children, young people, or vulnerable adults who are being sexually exploited may not understand that they are being abused. They often trust their abuser and may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship.

If a member of staff or volunteer suspects CSE, they will discuss this with the DSO. The DSO will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the police, if appropriate.

Indicators of sexual exploitation can include a child:

- Appearing with unexplained gifts or new possessions.
- Associating with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Having older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Suffering from sexually transmitted infections or becoming pregnant.
- Displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.
- Suffering from changes in emotional wellbeing.
- Misusing drugs and/or alcohol.
- Going missing for periods of time or regularly arriving home late.
- Regularly missing school or education or not taking part in education.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Although situations of FGM may be unusual it is important that you do not assume it could not happen here. 8–15-year-old girls are the most vulnerable. If a member of staff or volunteer suspects FGM, they will discuss this with the DSO. The DSO will trigger the local safeguarding procedures, including a referral to the police, if appropriate.

Indicators may include:

- Days absent from school.
- Not participating in physical education.
- In pain/has restricted movement/frequent and long visits to the toilet/broken limbs.
- Confides that she is having a special procedure, cut or celebration.
- Unauthorised and or extended leave, vague explanations or plans for removal of a female in a high-risk category especially over the summer period.
- Plans to take a holiday which may be unauthorised, unexplained or extended in a country known to practice FGM.
- Parents from a country who are known to practice FGM