



Safeguarding Policy

for Children and Vulnerable Adults

Document management and control	
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Status:	Final
Approved by:	Oliver Lee - Chief Executive Officer
Approval date:	8 May 2018
Review date:	April 2019
Replaces:	2017 Safeguarding Policy
Classification:	External public

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Key Contacts

Urgent concerns

If dialling from outside of the organisation and you wish to report an urgent safeguarding concern please contact our Customer Services team who will connect you with the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Customer Services

0203 510 5050

Head of Safeguarding

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1. Our Policy

1.1. Policy Statement

The Challenge believes that no child or vulnerable adult should experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that safeguards them and the people we work with.

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, they should:

- have a positive and enjoyable experience of our programmes in a safe and person-centred environment;
- be protected from abuse and harm.

The Challenge acknowledges that some participants e.g. those with disabilities, those who are looked after by the local authority, those who English is not their first language or come from a challenging home environment, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved in The Challenge. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. Child / Young Person

A child is defined as anyone who has not reached the age of 18. This is enshrined in UK law and the UN Convention of Human Rights. For the purposes of this policy and relevant procedures the term “**child**” and “**young person**” are used to mean the same thing.

Safeguarding children is defined in “**Working together to safeguard children**” as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children’s health or development;
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2.2. Vulnerable Adults / Adults at Risk

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs is unable to protect themselves.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is defined in the Care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect;

- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect;
- people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action;
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being.

For the purposes of this policy The Challenge will apply similar standards and responses to young people as vulnerable adults.

1.2.3. Types of Abuse

Abuse is defined as: *“a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or by others (e.g. via the internet).”*

The Challenge recognises that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse may be perpetrated by a range of people including family members, adult(s) known to the young person and other young people, and offences are committed by females as well as males.

The Challenge recognises that abuse may take many forms including, but not limited to:

- Physical;
- Emotional;
- Sexual;
- Neglect.

For an overview on these and other forms of abuse please refer to Appendix B.

1.3. National framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people. The Challenge acknowledges the obligations on voluntary and private sector organisations under Section 11 of Children's Act 2004 as defined in Paragraph 4 of Working together to Safeguard Children (2015). See Appendix C for further information.

The Challenge works across many local authorities and has based policy and practice on the published guidance of London Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) as this is the location of our Head Office.

2. Applicable To

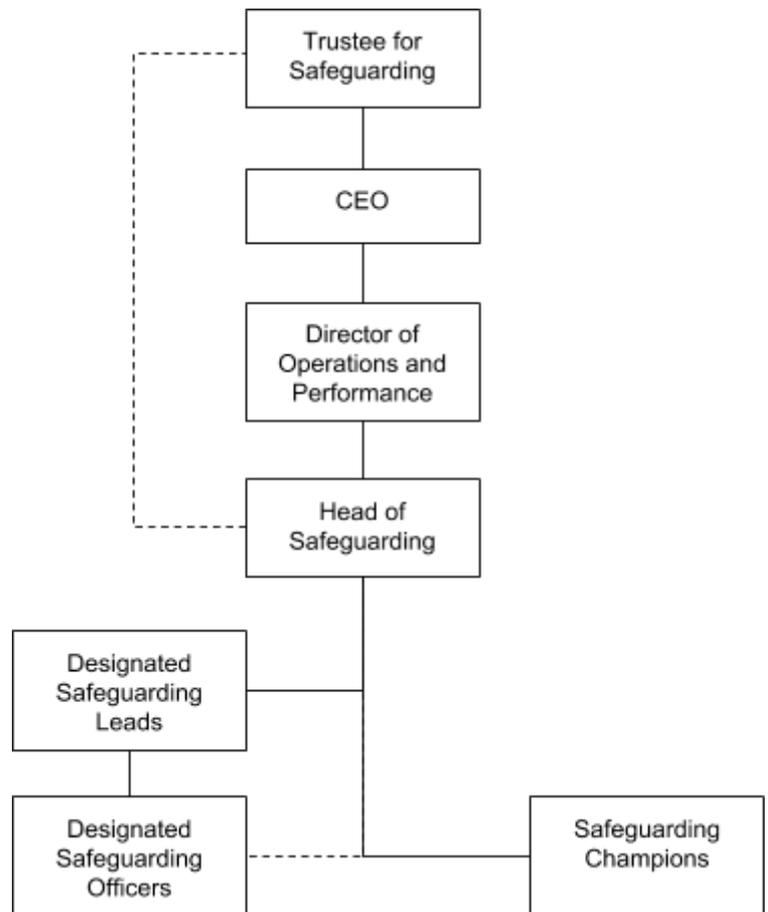
This policy applies to all staff, trustees and volunteers of The Challenge irrespective of their role or contract type and any person or organisation working on our behalf.

Sub-contractors, including NCS Local Delivery Partners, are expected to meet minimum similar standards as those outlined in this document, and have these reflected in their own policies and procedures.

3. Responsibilities

The Challenge believes that the responsibility for safeguarding is shared by everyone working and volunteering with us, but with a clear leadership and accountability structure running through the organisation.

- **Trustee Board:** reviews and approves the Safeguarding Policy and Safeguarding Annual Report each year and has a named trustee with specific responsibility for safeguarding and Prevent.
- **CEO:** sets the organisational culture of safeguarding and ensures that the Head of Safeguarding is appropriately resourced and supported to carry out duties of the role.
- **Director of Operations and Performance:** is the lead director with responsibility for Safeguarding and ensuring organisational compliance with safeguarding policies and procedures.



- **Head of Safeguarding:** responsible for the strategic lead for safeguarding across the organisation and supporting Designated Safeguarding Leads. Provides support and direction to DSL's for the purpose of safeguarding and has access to Trustee. DSL's will be responsible for a functional or geographic area depending on role. (See Appendix A).
- **Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's):** responsible for the operational response to safeguarding incidents and concerns and liaising with external agencies.
- **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO's) - NCS only:** responsible for supporting the DSL in dealing with safeguarding incidents and concerns during NCS delivery.
- **Safeguarding Champions:** responsible for continuously promoting and safeguarding the welfare of young people within their departments. Safeguarding champions will represent non-delivery departments.
- **All staff (core, seasonal, temporary, contracted and volunteers):** are responsible for ensuring that the welfare of participants remains paramount in all that we do.

4. Managing Concerns and Disclosures

All concerns and allegations will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. The Challenge recognises that whilst some incidents and allegations will require the support and / or intervention of external agencies, others may be supported through existing internal support mechanisms.

4.1. Procedure

If a participant discloses that they have been a victim of abuse, or if an employee has concerns that a child, young person or adult is at risk of harm or abuse, they should immediately:

- Inform the young person that you might not be able to keep what they say confidential (if they are at risk of harm or someone else is).
- If they continue, allow the young person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said. Reassure them that they have done the right thing while passing no judgement.
- Ensure no situation arises that could cause any further concern.
- Record the facts as you know them on a Safeguarding Disclosure and Allegation Form and pass to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the soonest opportunity.
- Escalate it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

If a member of staff suspects abuse, or has concerns about another staff member, but it has not been disclosed, follow the process as above but without Steps 1 and 2.

4.2. Incident Classification

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for ensuring accurate records are kept and will classify the incident / allegation based on The Challenge's **indicative** classification system to help differentiate the types and level of concern. If staff are unsure, it should always be reported up (see Appendix D).

4.3. Police and Social Services - Who to contact

The Challenge will take the following approach if external agencies need to be involved:

- **Child Protection and Welfare Concerns:** Inform Social Services in the borough in which the child lives;
- **Criminal offence committed against a young person or vulnerable adult:** inform the police in the borough in which the offence has occurred.

4.4. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Data protection legislation is not a barrier to sharing reasonable safeguarding concerns.

If it is necessary to share information concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence social services, to prevent a young person or adult at risk from suffering neglect or physical, mental or emotional harm then you must share that information.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make the decision as to whether it is appropriate to contact the parents or guardians of the young person. This decision may be taken with advice from external agencies.

5. Prevent Policy

The aim of the Government's Prevent Strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as the need to have "*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*". Prevent covers international and domestic terrorist threats, and includes the activities of far right groups, and animal rights groups.

The Challenge's Step Forward provision is required to meet the requirements of the Prevent Duty introduced as part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 by virtue of being a specified authority under Schedule 6.

Although the duty does not apply to the wider organisation The Challenge's policy is that it will raise concerns with appropriate authorities if it is identified that any young person, vulnerable adult, staff member or volunteer is expressing vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs on **any of its programmes**.

6. Learning, Monitoring and Review

The Challenge will continually review and evaluate its Safeguarding practice in line with the Safeguarding Review Procedure. The Head of Safeguarding will contribute to the Annual Compliance Report for the trustee board summarising departmental evaluations, analysing safeguarding data and trends, and identifying any key areas for improvement and headlines (see Appendix E).

7. Supporting our Participants

7.1. Recruitment

The Challenge will collect relevant information relating to medical and support needs prior to participation in order to assess and support participant needs.

7.2. Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management

Participants in our programmes will receive information about how to keep themselves safe whilst participating in the programme and the expected standards of behaviour. Young people who do not follow this will be dealt with through appropriate policies.

8. Supporting our Staff and Volunteers

8.1. Recruitment

The Challenge operates a Safer Recruitment Policy based on Local Safeguarding Children's Board practice that is applicable to all roles irrespective of contract type and is overseen by the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development.

8.2. Training

The Challenge believes that staff are able to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities more effectively by providing an effective induction and ongoing training relevant to their roles. There is a Safeguarding Training Matrix for details of training requirements depending on role and

responsibilities. These will be organised and monitored by the Talent, Learning and Culture team who will record participation and completion (see Appendix F).

8.3. Probation

Staff cannot pass their probation unless they have completed their Level 1 Safeguarding induction or without all relevant safer recruitment checks being signed off.

8.4. Staff Code of Conduct

The Challenge expects all staff and volunteers to behave in a professional manner when working with our participants. As part of their commitment to this we ask all staff and volunteers to sign a code of conduct. This may differ depending on role and the level of engagement with young people and vulnerable adults; it includes use of social media and professional appearance (see Appendix G).

8.5. Staff welfare

We recognise that working with young people and vulnerable adults who are victims of abuse can be challenging and impact staff and volunteers wellbeing. The Challenge has the following support mechanisms:

- Access to Employee Assistance Programme advice and counselling for permanent and delivery staff;
- Mental health training for managers;
- Promoting help-lines such as NSPCC to staff.

9. Allegations against staff and volunteers

Any allegation that an employee or volunteer has behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a participant, will be taken seriously and dealt with sensitively and promptly. There is a separate procedure for dealing with Allegations against staff.

10. Whistleblowing

The Challenge has a clear whistleblowing procedure, and is referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and promotes a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed.

Appendices

The appendices contain operational procedures and contact details of staff. If you have a specific question about these please email our Head of Safeguarding: tim.bevans@the-challenge.org