

Strongbones Children's Charitable Trust

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1. Policy Statement

Strongbones Children's Charitable Trust ("Strongbones") recognises that safeguarding and child protection is a fundamental responsibility. We are fully committed to ensuring that all safeguarding concerns, including allegations of abuse, are taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately.

This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of Strongbones, including:

- Trustees
- Employees
- Volunteers

For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

A young adult is anyone from the age of 18 to 21.

2. Guiding Principles

Strongbones operates in accordance with the following principles:

2.1 Child-Centred Approach

The welfare of the child or young person is paramount and central to all decision-making.

2.2 Equality and Inclusion

All children have the right to protection from harm regardless of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or cultural background.

2.3 Shared Responsibility

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff and volunteers must remain vigilant and proactive in protecting children and young adults.

2.4 Taking Action

All safeguarding concerns must be taken seriously and may result in:

- Contact with emergency services
- Referral to children's social care
- Referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

2.5 Supporting Vulnerable Children

Additional safeguards will be implemented for children with increased vulnerability.

3. Scope of Safeguarding Concerns

Concerns may arise through:

- Direct disclosure by a child
- Observations of harm or risk
- Concerns regarding staff, trustees, or volunteers
- Environmental or venue-related risks

All concerns must be reported immediately. Failure to act may place a child at risk.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Key Safeguarding Contacts

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** April Fitzmaurice
- **Deputy DSL:** Rachel State
- **Named Trustee:** Christine Sketchley

4.2 Organisational Accountability

The Board of Trustees holds overall responsibility for safeguarding. Day-to-day responsibility is delegated to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

4.3 Responsibilities of All Staff and Volunteers

All individuals must:

- Promote the welfare of children
 - Remain alert to safeguarding concerns
 - Report concerns immediately
 - Follow safeguarding procedures
 - Complete required training
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5. Safeguarding Procedures

Strongbones will safeguard children by:

- 5.1 Creating a safe and supportive environment
 - 5.2 Listening to and respecting children
 - 5.3 Implementing clear safeguarding procedures
 - 5.4 Ensuring safe recruitment practices
 - 5.5 Providing training and supervision
 - 5.6 Maintaining secure and accurate records
 - 5.7 Sharing concerns appropriately with relevant agencies
 - 5.8 Promoting an anti-bullying culture
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6. Recognising Abuse

Abuse and neglect occur when harm is inflicted or not prevented. Abuse may take place in a variety of settings and may involve adults or other children.

6.1 Categories of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

6.2 Additional Risks

Children may also be at risk from:

- Bullying
 - Grooming and exploitation
 - Domestic abuse
 - Radicalisation
 - Trafficking
 - Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
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7. Responding to Disclosures

If a child discloses information:

- 7.1 Stay calm and listen carefully
 - 7.2 Take the disclosure seriously
 - 7.3 Do not promise confidentiality
 - 7.4 Reassure the child
 - 7.5 Avoid leading questions
 - 7.6 Record the information accurately in the child's words
 - 7.7 Report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
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8. Record Keeping

Accurate and complete records must be maintained, including:

- Names
- Dates (including year)
- Locations
- Details of concerns and actions taken

All safeguarding records must be stored securely and confidentially.

9. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

9.1 Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where a child is at risk

9.2 Information must be shared to protect children

9.3 Data protection laws do not prevent safeguarding-related information sharing

9.4 Concerns about sharing information must not delay action

10. Escalation of Concerns

Any individual raising a concern is responsible for ensuring it is addressed appropriately and followed up if necessary.

11. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

All allegations must be taken seriously and reported immediately.

These may involve:

- Social care investigations
 - Police involvement
 - Internal disciplinary action
 - Referral to regulatory or safeguarding bodies
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12. Serious Incident Reporting

Serious incidents must be reported to the Charity Commission where they involve:

- Financial loss

- Damage to property
- Harm to beneficiaries or reputation

The CEO is responsible for reporting, or the Chair of Trustees if the CEO is implicated.

13. Creating a Safe Environment

Strongbones is committed to:

- Providing a safe physical environment
 - Encouraging open communication
 - Supporting children and families
 - Promoting equality and respect
 - Maintaining effective complaints procedures
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14. Partnership Working

Strongbones recognises the importance of working in partnership with:

- Children and young people
 - Parents and carers
 - External agencies
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15. Training and Development

Strongbones will:

- Provide safeguarding training appropriate to roles
 - Ensure ongoing learning and development
 - Support staff and volunteers in safeguarding responsibilities
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16. Policy Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Protect children and young people from harm
- Provide clear safeguarding procedures
- Support staff and volunteers in fulfilling their responsibilities
- Promote a strong safeguarding culture

17. Key Principle

The welfare of the child is paramount in all circumstances.

Approval and Review

- **Policy Owner:** Strongbones Children's Charitable Trust
 - **Last Reviewed:** June 2026
 - **Next Review Due:** June 2029
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Designated Safeguarding Lead

April Fitzmaurice