

Safeguarding of Children and Young People Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Introduction Flower Clubs of Cheshire believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people by commitment to practice which protects them. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account. Although children will participate in our activities, in most instances they will be accompanied by a known adult. This doesn't necessarily mean they are "safe".

This policy:

- Aims to provide protection for children and young people who may take part in any activity organised by Flower Clubs of Cheshire
- Aims to ensure that Flower Clubs of Cheshire volunteers do not place themselves in vulnerable positions
- Provides organisers and participants with guidance on procedures to adopt in the event that they suspect that a child or young person may be experiencing, or at risk of, harm

What is meant by children? A child for safeguarding purposes is any child between the ages of birth and 18. Those with special needs are regarded as children until they are 25.

General Principles

- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting children's welfare.
- Flower Clubs of Cheshire will share information and good practice with leaders/volunteers/participants
- Flower Clubs of Cheshire will share information about concerns with agencies who need to know, involving parents and children appropriately

Key Principles

- Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone
- The safety and welfare of children is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse and to enjoy their activities within Flower Clubs of Cheshire
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

- Anyone should report concerns to the appropriate Safeguarding Officer either at Club or Area level
- The views of children will be listened to, valued and respected

Types and Signs of Abuse

- Physical abuse: Deliberate harm causing bruises, cuts, burns, or broken bones.
- Emotional abuse: Ongoing emotional maltreatment.
- Neglect: Persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs.
- Sexual abuse: Inappropriate knowledge or experiences.
- Bullying: Unexplained changes in behaviour, withdrawal, anxiety, aggression, or poor social skills.

Clubs with Junior members, whether members of adult clubs or Young Flower Arranger Clubs, must be registered with the Flower Clubs of Cheshire.

Where a young person under the age of 18 applies to join an adult club, it is expected that one or two committee members will need to have a DBS check, ensuring that at least one of them is available at a club meeting.

The type of check will depend on whether parents are in attendance or not. Further details are available from NAFAS Head Office and the Safeguarding leads of FCoC. The cost of DBS checks is paid by NAFAS.

Leaders/volunteers should actively pursue training through agencies and/or local authorities and social services, to gain more understanding and awareness.

Please contact the FCoC Safeguarding leads for guidance before admitting an under-18 member or starting a Young Flower Arranger club.

Running activities where children or young people occasionally take part

Where a club does engage infrequently with children, care must be taken that the children are accompanied by a parent or other responsible adult at all times, and that no Area or Club member is left alone with a child at any time. In situations involving young people all care should be taken to reduce the possibility of abuse and to ensure their safety.

Ensuring volunteers do not place themselves in a vulnerable situation

All members of Flower Clubs of Cheshire should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. Care should be taken by leaders/volunteers not to put themselves into a vulnerable situation:

- There must be a minimum of two adults present at all times when young people are being taught. Children or young people must be under the supervision of a parent/carers or other designated adult-in-charge e.g. a teacher.
- Adults should ensure that they do not work with a child or young person in a place where they are not clearly visible to other adults. Keep connecting doors and screens open.
 - Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoid private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication with no secrets)
 - Adults must not agree to accompany children to toilet visits or other areas away from the supervision of a parent/carers/teacher.
 - FCoC volunteers should not transport children or young people to or from activities in private vehicles.
 - Adults must remember that someone else might misinterpret actions, no matter how well intentioned. Maintain a safe and appropriate distance during activities
 - Care must be taken when photographing children who are taking part in FCoC activities. It is preferable to only use non-identifiable photographs as far as possible. Children's names must **never** be published under any circumstances. If in doubt, don't take photographs.
 - Portrait or identifiable photographs of children must only be taken with the written consent of parents/guardians (not teachers, childminder, grandparents etc). You must state clearly on the consent form where the image will be published before a parent consents. Avoid close ups. Delete the images from your device after use.
 - Unless specific parental consent is given, photographs **must** be non-identifiable. For example, when photographing members of school groups, use only hands/side view/back of heads, no badges or uniform symbols etc. Choose images of children wearing appropriate clothing. Children's work may be displayed.
 - Those clubs working specifically with children on a regular basis are advised to consider an extended photograph/filming policy taking account of NSPCC and any current guidelines.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/online-safety/photographing-filming-children>

The following are examples of how to create a positive culture and climate: -

- Treat all young people/ disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of each young person first
- Build balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Make working with Flower Clubs of Cheshire fun, enjoyable and safe
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Named designated person(s)

Area DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD: [Mrs Jean Jones](#)

Chairman (Pastoral Responsibility).

Area DEPUTY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD: [Mrs Vanessa Lees](#)

Area Secretary

Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of members of Flower Clubs of Cheshire to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting them immediately to the appropriate agency e.g. police, social services, and to report those concerns to the Area/Club Lead Safeguarding Officer.

What should you do if a child or young person reports abuse to you?

If a child or young person discloses to you that they are being abused, whether at home or in any other setting, upon receiving the information, you should:

- React calmly. Do not appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry.
- Act immediately if you think abuse has, or may have occurred
- Reassure the child that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what the child says seriously
- Always make sure the child feels they are being listened to and supported.
- Take reasonable steps to ensure the child is in no immediate danger. Seek medical treatment if required
- Consider the environment and whether the conversation should take place elsewhere in a private space. Do not be alone with the child.
- **FOR URGENT CONCERNS** consider the need to contact Emergency Services via 999 if a crime is in progress or the person is injured or unwell.
- Contact Social Services for advice and support.
- Where a non-urgent crime is suspected this should be reported to the police via 101 and the crime reference number recorded.
- Listen carefully and keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has happened. Obtain sufficient facts to understand what is being alleged.
- Don't ask any explicit details. Leading questions **must not** be asked, as this can cause problems for any subsequent investigation and court proceedings.
- Reassure but do not promise to keep the information confidential between you and the child
- Do not make comments or judgements other than to show concern.
- Inform the child/young person what you will do next
- Make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible.
- Don't delay in passing on the information
- **Do not** confront the potential abuser

What to include in your report

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed report should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern, which should include the following: -

- The child's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, times, and any special factors and other relevant information.
- Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted? *See paragraph below.*
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- If the child was not the person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
- Where possible referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.
- Social services/police

After a disclosure has been reported

After a report has been made and passed on to the relevant safeguarding authority in a timely manner, our duty of care has been discharged. It is **not** the responsibility of Flower Clubs of Cheshire volunteers to approach the alleged abuser. This is the responsibility of social services or the police. Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area.

Contact with parents/carers

Care should be taken before making contact with parents/carers following a child's disclosure. It is recommended that in most cases it is best to allow the police or social services to contact parents/carers as they are trained and qualified to deliver appropriate support.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. This includes the following people:

- Lead Safeguarding Officer at Area and/or club level
- The person making the allegation

Record keeping

It is expected that if a serious disclosure at club level is reported to social services or the police, the Area Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed. Advice will be given on what information should be kept and where it should be stored. Information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people in line with the data protection laws. (e.g. that information is secure, regularly reviewed, relevant and secure.)

Useful numbers

If you think a child is in immediate danger:

Police 101 or 999 in an emergency

If you think a child is at risk, contact:

Cheshire East: 0300 123 5012

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) 0300 123 5022

Cheshire West and Chester: 0300 123 7047

Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) on 01244 977277

Warrington: 01925 443322, press one and either say MASH or the name of the person if known

Outside of office hours call 01925 444400

Trafford: Trafford Children's First Response on 0161 912 5125 during office hours (Mon - Fri 8:30 - 4:30), or 0161 912 2020 out of hours (Emergency Duty Team).

Stockport: Tel. 0161 217 6028 – Out of Hours Tel. 0161 718 2118.

Wirral: Wirral Integrated Front Door on 0151 606 2008 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours call 0151 677 6557.

TEMPLATE FOR RECORDING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF ALLEGATION OF ABUSE OF A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON	
Child's name, Age, Date of Birth	Child's home address and telephone number
Are these your concerns or the concerns of someone else?	Date and time of reporting of alleged abuse
Nature of allegation. Include dates, times, place and any special factors and other relevant information.	
A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs such as behavioural changes.	
The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.	

Have the parents been contacted? If so, what has been said?
Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
If the child was not person who reported the incident, has the child been spoken to? If so, what was said?
Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.
What action has been taken? Referral to the police or social services should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours and the name of the contact who took the referral should be recorded.
Name of person recording the alleged abuse and any other persons present/witnesses. Time and date of report.
Date and time reported to Designated Safeguarding Lead at Flower Clubs of Cheshire

Policy Approved by: The Flower Clubs of Cheshire Leadership Team and adopted by the Club Representatives Forum

Date: 24th July 2025

Date next review due: July 2026

Reviewed by: Jean Jones/Vanessa Lees