

Safeguarding Policy

Designated Safeguarding Lead: James Proctor

Last Reviewed: October 2026

Next Review: October 2028



Introduction

Community Foundation for Lancashire and Merseyside (CFLM) is committed to ensuring the rights and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

This policy details the rules and responsibilities of CFLM and CFLM employees, trustees and volunteers in matters relating to safeguarding.

Overview

The purpose of the policy is to set out responsibilities for the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults in relation to CFLM's work.

Definition

In relation to this policy:

- A **child** or **young person** is anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18.
- A **vulnerable adult** is someone over 18 who by reason of disability, age or illness has needs for care and support which mean that they are or may be unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect, or the risk of it. Examples would include but are not limited to adults with learning difficulties or disabilities, or older people living in residential care.

CFLM does not work directly with children, young people, or vulnerable adults. However, safeguarding concerns may arise indirectly in relation to individuals who are:

- beneficiaries or members of an organisation applying for or receiving funding.
- applying for or receiving grants and members, donors or potential donors and their families

Roles and Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with CFLM's Board of Trustees. The Board has delegated operational responsibility for safeguarding to the Programmes Director, who acts as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the organisation. The DSL is responsible for receiving, recording and managing safeguarding concerns and making referrals to appropriate agencies where necessary.

The DSL also has responsibility for:

- Ensuring all employees, volunteers and Trustees are made aware of this policy and related procedures.
- Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are reviewed, and the policy updated as agreed.

It is the responsibility of all employees, trustees, and volunteers to ensure that they are familiar with this policy and any related procedures.

POLICY DETAILS AND PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

1. Principles

CFLM does not currently undertake activities that require routine Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for trustees, employees or volunteers. Should roles or activities change, DBS requirements will be reviewed in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

In carrying out their role with us, CFLM trustees, employees and volunteers cannot be left in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults when travelling to or visiting an organisation or a donor, or when attending an event, and will refuse to do so if asked. When visiting organisations that work with children or vulnerable adults, CFLM will disclose that our trustees, employees, and volunteers are not DBS checked if requested.

Children and vulnerable adults may be present at certain CFLM events or meetings, but they must always be accompanied by an appropriate representative of an organisation, or by a family member or carer. CFLM will take reasonable steps to ensure it knows who is attending any event or meeting in advance.

CFLM requires all grant applicant organisations which intend to work directly with children or vulnerable adults to have an appropriate safeguarding policy in place. They will be expected to demonstrate that the policy is in the name of the applicant organisation, is regularly updated, has a named safeguarding lead, and contains details on definitions of abuse and their reporting procedure upon any disclosures made.

CFLM cannot itself provide advice on safeguarding policies or procedures, however, CFLM will communicate what it requires to be demonstrated if necessary. Those intending to work with children or vulnerable adults can be signposted to other sources of support and will be advised by CFLM of what they are expected to demonstrate.

When dealing with funds that award grants to individual children and young people or vulnerable adults, CFLM will always require the involvement of appropriate adults, carers, or statutory bodies as intermediaries as referrers or advocates.

CFLM will take appropriate steps to adapt, manage or discontinue direct communications where it becomes aware that an individual may be vulnerable under the terms of this policy.

2. Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

CFLM will provide information to trustees, employees, and volunteers on recognising the signs of abuse. Abuse can take a number of forms and may affect children, young people and vulnerable adults. Examples include:

Physical abuse including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Sexual abuse including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Neglect or acts of omission including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. This also includes spiritual abuse, which is a form of emotional and psychological abuse, characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, the requirement of secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, the requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism.

Discriminatory abuse including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

Financial (or material) abuse including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Domestic abuse: including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or so-called 'honour' based violence.

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Trafficking and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

Possible signs of abuse include:

- 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, or if the explanation of the cause of the injury does not seem right.
- The child discloses abuse or describes what appears to be an abusive act.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained change in behaviour, such as withdrawal or sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends; and/or
- Eating disorders, depression, self-harm, or suicide attempts

3. Reporting a Safeguarding Issue

If CFLM has reason to believe children or vulnerable adults may be at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or harm, or if an allegation or concern is raised during the course of our work, the concern must be taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

All safeguarding concerns must be recorded and reported internally. Where appropriate, referrals will be made to the relevant statutory agencies, including Children's Social Care, Adult Social

Care, the Police, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or other relevant safeguarding authorities.

Immediate Risk

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult is believed to be at immediate risk of serious harm, danger or injury, emergency services should be contacted immediately by calling 999. The Chief Executive and DSL should then be informed as soon as practicable.

Stage 1 – Reporting and Recording

Any employee, trustee or volunteer who becomes aware of a safeguarding concern must:

- Record the concern as soon as possible, including what was seen, heard, disclosed or reported
- Record only factual information and avoid personal opinions or assumptions
- Include the date, time, location and names of those involved (where known)
- Notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Where appropriate the DSL will notify the Chief Executive. If the concern relates to the DSL, the matter should be reported directly to the Chief Executive. If the concern relates to the Chief Executive, it should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.
- Maintain confidentiality and ensure any documentation is stored securely in accordance with data protection requirements.

Stage 2 – Assessment and Referral

Upon receiving a safeguarding concern, the DSL will:

- Review the information without delay
- Assess whether urgent action is required to protect the individual concerned.
- Determine whether the matter should be referred to the appropriate statutory agency.
- Keep a written record of all decisions made and actions taken.
- Seek advice from safeguarding professionals where necessary.

Where a referral is made, this should normally take place as soon as possible and, where required, be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information relating to safeguarding concerns will be shared only with those who need to know in order to protect a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or where disclosure is required by law. Concerns should never be ignored on the basis of confidentiality.

4. Allegations Against Employees

In the event an allegation is made against an employee, another member of the team or trustee must notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The criteria for a referral to be accepted by LADO are:

The person has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.

The person has possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or the person has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Employees and trustees should contact the LADO for advice or a consultation if they're unsure.

Employees and trustees must ensure that the child or vulnerable adult is safe and away from the person whom the allegation is made.

Any allegation involving an employee, Trustee or volunteer will be investigated in accordance with this policy and CFLM's disciplinary procedures and may result in disciplinary action, dismissal for gross misconduct or removal from office, as appropriate.

5. Breaches of Policy

Concerns around abuse should be dealt with as above and statutory bodies notified.

Where the concern is not around abuse but around other aspects of compliance with this policy, employees and trustees must notify the Chief Executive as soon as possible. Volunteers should notify their normal point of contact within CFLM in the first instance. Where any concern relates to the Chief Executive the Chair of the Board should be notified.

Any alleged breach of this policy by employees will be dealt with under CFLM's disciplinary procedure and could result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

Any alleged breach by a Trustee will be investigated by the Chief Executive in the first instance and could result in disqualification from the Board.

Any alleged breach by volunteers or others associated with CFLM will be investigated by the Chief Executive and could result in individuals being removed from voluntary roles or contracts being terminated.