



Safeguarding policy

Statement of purpose

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do in Girlguiding, and it's the responsibility of all of us.

As a Girlguiding volunteer you share this responsibility to protect and promote the safety and wellbeing of girls, young women and adults as you help them reach their full potential through great guiding experiences.

So it's really important that you're clear about your safeguarding responsibility, and about Girlguiding's commitment to safeguarding.

Our safeguarding policy will make that clear for you. It's for everyone involved with Girlguiding - whether you're a volunteer, staff or member - and it shows you our safeguarding principles and how we seek to protect children, young people and adults who are involved with the organisation.

You must read and always follow the safeguarding policy, and the safeguarding procedures that go with it. This isn't part of the contract of employment for staff or the code of conduct for volunteers, but it is a condition of your employment or voluntary service.

Girlguiding's commitment to safeguarding

It's our policy to safeguard all adults and children while they take part in Girlguiding activities. This is regardless of their age, disability (physical or mental), gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity status, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation. We recognise that some people are vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, their communication needs, or other issues.

Everyone has a right to live free from abuse, exploitation, harm and fear and to be safe and well. We recognise and respond to all types of abuse and harm including physical, emotional, sexual and domestic abuse, neglect, online abuse, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, bullying, harassment and cyberbullying, radicalisation, trafficking, grooming and harmful sexual behaviour. (You can find more information on the categories of abuse at: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/>)

We work in partnership with children, young people, parents, carers and external agencies to promote the safeguarding and welfare of our young members and our adult members and volunteers.

Our safeguarding policy, procedures and guidance are designed to create a safe space for great guiding, protecting the safety and wellbeing of all our girls, young women and adults, regardless of role. They are also designed to enable everyone associated with Girlguiding to share allegations, concerns or disclosures - whether related to Girlguiding activities or not.

How do we effectively safeguard adults and children?

- We value, listen to and respect them.
- We have a safeguarding structure in place. (Please see: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/girlguiding-policies/safety-and-safeguarding-policy/safeguarding-structure/>).
- We have child protection and safeguarding procedures which reflect best practice.
- We share concerns and information with other agencies when there are significant concerns about an adult's suitability to work with children, or where we believe that someone is at risk of abuse or harm.
- We process information lawfully and securely, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- We share information about child protection and safeguarding best practice with members, staff and volunteers. We do this via 'A Safe Space' pocket guides, e-learning and face-to-face training.
- We recruit volunteers safely, in line with the recruitment and vetting policy.
- We use our procedures to manage allegations against staff and volunteers.
- We make sure volunteers follow the code of conduct.
- We use complaints and whistleblowing policies and procedures.
- We always have health and safety measures in place - in line with the law and regulatory guidance - to provide a safe physical environment.

What does Girlguiding expect of you as volunteers, staff or adult members?

- To follow the good safeguarding behaviours on our website: (<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/making-guiding-happen/policies/girlguiding-policies/safety-and-safeguarding-policy/good-safeguarding-behaviours/>).
- To report all concerns, allegations and disclosures to your commissioner, the national Safeguarding team or, if you are based with British Guiding Overseas, the BGO Chief Commissioner
- To work with your commissioner or the national Safeguarding team to act when there's a report of an allegation, concern or disclosure.
- To be vigilant - so that you are alert when something is wrong.
- To act as soon as there's a problem. Report it within 24 hours, or sooner if it is an emergency or there's an immediate risk of harm.
- To be inclusive when thinking about safeguarding issues.
- To be accountable - don't assume that someone else has responded to a concern.
- To support the development of safeguarding knowledge.
- To help on behalf of others, and support them to develop their voice.
- To take safeguarding training relevant to your role, in line with our A Safe Space programme.

What do I do if I have a concern?

As a volunteer or member of staff you must understand the procedures for recognising, responding to and referring any concerns, allegations or disclosures of harm or abuse. You can find information about this in our safeguarding procedures.

If you have a concern about someone in Girlguiding you should follow our process for reporting. You can find information about this in our *A Safe Space* pocket guide, and in our safeguarding procedure document.

You can contact the national Safeguarding team on:

- Tel: 020 7834 6242 (usual office hours)
- Out of hours emergency phone: 07508 032997 (5pm-10pm Monday-Friday; 9am-10pm Saturday/Sunday)
- Email: safeguarding@Girlguiding.org.uk

In an emergency you can also contact the police, you must let the Safeguarding team know ASAP if you do this.

For volunteers or members of staff from British Guiding Overseas (BGO) you can also contact the BGO Chief Commissioner on (+33) 6224 53553

Timescales

The Safeguarding team aims to respond to all concerns/emails within 1-2 working days, and will always respond within 5 working days. The out of hours phone is for emergencies only.

Legal framework and Girlguiding policies

This safeguarding policy complies with all relevant legislation, policy and guidance which seeks to protect children and adults across all ten of Girlguiding's countries and regions.

The national Safeguarding team will explain all relevant legislation and guidance to you. You can find a summary of this in the appendix.

You should read this policy alongside our other organisational policies, guidance and procedures. Find these on the website: <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/> or on the intranet for staff.

Appendix

Related policies, procedures and documents

You can find these at <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk>. Girlguiding is committed to these policies:

- Managing concerns about adult volunteers policy

- Anti-bullying policy
- Complaints policy
- Managing information policy
- Equality and diversity policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Social media policy
- Recruitment and vetting policy

Procedures - how Girlguiding puts our policies into practice

- Managing concerns about adult volunteers procedure
- Complaints procedure
- Whistleblowing procedure
- Safeguarding procedure

Supporting documents and guidance

- Volunteer code of conduct
- *Dos and don'ts of handling disclosures*
- Risks and issues online guidance
- Sharing photos and videos online guidance
- Privacy notice
- *A Safe Space* pocket guide
- Safeguarding for Girlguiding Staff

Legislation and guidance for safeguarding children and adults (not exhaustive)

You can find an overview of child safeguarding legislation at: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/>

Human Rights Act 1998
Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

England and Wales

Children Act 1989
Children Act 2004
Children and Social Work Act 2017
Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups 2006
Care Act 2014

Wales

Children Act 1989
Children Act 2004
Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
All Wales child protection procedures, 2008
Working together to safeguard people guidance

Scotland

Children (Scotland) Act 1995
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) (Scottish Government, 2018)
National guidance for child protection in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2014a)
Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (PVG Act)

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Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

Northern Ireland

The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995

Co-operating to Safeguard Children and young people in Northern Ireland (Department of Health, 2017)

Revised regional core child protection policies and procedures for Northern Ireland (Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, 2018)

Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership

British Guiding Overseas (BGO)

For relevant legislation please contact the BGO Chief Commissioner for details