



## CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### POLICY STATEMENT

The Soil Association is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of abuse or neglect. We want every individual that has contact with us to feel safe and protected from harm and abuse. We are committed to preventing abuse before it happens and, when working in settings or coming into contact, with children, young people and adults at risk, we aim to safeguard and promote their welfare in the following ways:

- Valuing, listening and respecting their views.
- Appointing a nominated safeguarding lead for children and young people, a deputy and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding
- Implementing safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of behaviour
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring that a responsible and robust recruitment process is followed that supports responsible selection decisions and all necessary checks are made to the appropriate level including appropriate DBS (or Disclosure Scotland for roles in Scotland or AccessNI in Northern Ireland) and reference checking.
- Considering all the different environments we interact with children, young people and adults at risk, including online
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training so that all within our organisation know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour code confidently and competently, and understand and accept their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk in any context they may interact with these groups – including any business/ organisational contexts, online, or in public.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns to relevant agencies and involving third parties appropriately.

- Demonstrating our commitment to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk by reviewing good practice and our policies in this area regularly at a senior management level.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure in place to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Promoting a culture of openness within the organisation and making efforts to ensure staff and volunteers feel able to discuss concerns with their colleagues and line managers.

This policy applies to all those that work for and on behalf of the Soil Association whether paid or unpaid. This includes all trustees, employees, casual workers, volunteers, as well as contractors including self-employed or Ltd companies, temporary workers, agency workers, non-executive Directors (known as "Soil Association staff" from here after).

We are committed to ensuring that all Soil Association staff are aware of their responsibility to be alert to the possibility of abuse and to know what to do if they suspect abuse.

When Soil Association staff are working collaboratively with a setting such as in education, community, care, hospital or catering setting, they must and will also ensure that they understand and adhere to the partner/ client's safeguarding policies and procedures that apply to the setting.

## **RELATED SOIL ASSOCIATION POLICIES**

The following Soil Association policies will be relevant when considering some of the issues outlined in this policy (available internally via PeopleHR):

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Candidate Privacy Policy
- Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy

## **DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER**

The Soil Association has an appointed Designated Safeguarding Officer who is responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns as well as helping the Soil Association operate appropriate safeguarding policies/practices. In their absence the deputy will be available to consult with.

The Soil Association's Designated Safeguarding Officer is:

**James Cashmore, Deputy CEO**

Email: [JCashmore@soilassociation.org](mailto:JCashmore@soilassociation.org)

Tel: +44 (0)117 914 2445

Mob: +44 (0)7970 085131

Address: Spear House, Victoria Street, Bristol BS1 6AD

The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer is:

**Liz Brunwin, Food for Life Head of Operations**  
Email: [LBrunwin@soilassociation.org](mailto:LBrunwin@soilassociation.org)  
Mob: +44 (0)7584 056038  
Tel: 07584 056038

The role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is to:

- Advise and support the SA Executive team in developing and establishing the organisation's approach to safeguarding.
- Play a lead role in maintaining and reviewing the organisation's plan for safeguarding.
- Coordinate the distribution of policies, procedures and safeguarding resources throughout the organisation.
- Advise on training needs and development, providing training where appropriate.
- Provide safeguarding advice and support to staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that all those working on behalf of or for the Soil Association who may come into contact with children, young people or adults at risk are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that an individual may be subject to abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that any concern about a child, young person, or adult at risk is acted on, clearly recorded, referred on to the relevant bodies where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- Record any reported incidents in relation to a child, young person or adult at risk or a breach of our Safeguarding policy and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **Child or Children**

"Child" or "Children" means anyone up to the age of 18 years including an unborn child. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, and maybe living independently, does not change their entitlement or status to services or protection.

### **Harm**

"Harm" means the ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.

### **Abuse**

"Abuse" is a form of maltreatment of a child or adult at risk. Someone may abuse or neglect a person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Individuals 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). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. The abuser may not realise they are abusing.

### **Adult at Risk**

Under the Care Act 2014, safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of these needs); and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

## RECOGNITION

The most common types of abuse for Adults at Risk are:

- **Physical abuse:** usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include burns, bruising, scratches, or accidents that cannot be explained. Also included is misuse of medication or forcing someone, for example, to stay in a care home against their wishes.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** where an adult at risk adult does not have their basic needs met, such as adequate food or warmth or help with personal hygiene. Signs might include deteriorating health, appearance or mood.
- **Financial or material abuse:** where an adult at risk adult is exploited for financial or material gain. Often valuables will go missing or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained.
- **Sexual abuse:** this includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts which the adult at risk has not or could not consent to or was pressurised or manipulated into. Signs can include changes in behaviour or physical discomfort.
- **Psychological abuse:** this might be emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour, or verbal and racial insults. Signs may be fear, confusion or disturbed sleep.
- **Discriminatory abuse:** any sort of abuse based on an adult at risk adult's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health.
- **Institutional abuse:** poor professional practice, including neglect, which can take the form of isolated incidents right through to ill treatment or gross misconduct.
- **Domestic Violence:** including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse.
- **Modern Slavery:** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Self-neglect:** this covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Please be aware that this is not an exhaustive list.

## **WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK IN SETTINGS**

When working in schools, early years, community, hospital, care or catering settings and any other setting with children or young people or adults at risk, Soil Association staff will always follow the setting's safeguarding policies alongside our own policies. We will only work with children, young people and adults at risk with the supervision of the setting's staff or responsible adult as recognised by the setting's policy.

Whilst it is always the primary responsibility of the setting to ensure the welfare of children or young people or adults at risk in their care, the Soil Association will make sure that it operates its own risk assessments and measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people we may work with.

Soil Association staff must and will never spend time with an individual child/young person alone or with groups of children/young people. When meetings with individual or groups of children/ young people may be required to seek their feedback, such meetings must and will take place as openly as possible with the supervision of the staff in accordance with the setting's safeguarding policies.

When working with a setting, Soil Association staff may suggest the setting invite special guests, speakers, members of the community to take part in Soil Association activities or volunteer to support a programme. It is the setting's responsibility to make sure these individuals are always supervised, and children are not left alone with these guests.

At the commencement of activity in schools or any settings with children and young people, the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the setting will be made aware of and offered a copy of our Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy.

## **REPORTING CONCERNS IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE**

If any staff member of the Soil Association is made aware of abuse or has any grounds for concern about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk they must report this suspected abuse immediately.

Suspecting abuse may be very concerning to a staff member and they are encouraged to seek the support of their line manager and/or the Designated Safeguarding Officer to assist them with managing the situation and reporting concerns.

In an emergency situation, where there is any immediate danger or injury to a child, young person or adult at risk, the staff member must always call 999 to contact the emergency services.

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CONCERNS**

If a Soil Association staff member has a concern regarding the behaviour of a child, young person or adult at risk adult, or a child, young person, or adult

at risk adult confides in a staff member on a matter relating to abuse, they must attempt to seek the consent of the individual (if consent was not obtained please record reasons why) and then the concerns must be immediately reported to both the:

- Safeguarding lead for the setting or organisation (please check and follow the safeguarding policies for the setting)
- Soil Association's Designated Safeguarding Officer & your line manager within 24 hours of the concerns being raised, by completing the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (appendix 1)
- If you feel unable to report concerns to the above, you can follow the procedures outlined in the Whistleblowing Policy

Under no circumstances must or will a member of Soil Association staff personally investigate the child, young person or adult at risk's claim or their own concerns.

## **REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT SOIL ASSOCIATION EMPLOYEES**

If any person including a member of the public, has or suspects concerns about the behaviour, conduct of Soil Association staff with children, young people, or adults at risk, this must be reported immediately to the Soil Association's Designated Safeguarding Officer and within 24 hours at the latest. The concerns will be investigated and handled in accordance with the Soil Association's Disciplinary Procedure.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All individuals that access our services or encounter us have the right to expect that all Soil Association staff will deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. Information will be treated as confidential and handled with sensitivity, and only shared with external agencies where consent has been requested or agreed.

However, if abuse is suspected, the need to safeguard the child, young person or adult at risk overrules the right to confidentiality and information that has been given in confidence may in such instances be shared with the relevant authorities. Any information and data connected to safeguarding will always be handled under the Data Protection Act 2018.

## **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES**

To help safeguard children, young people and adults at risk that access our services, we will ensure that robust procedures and a safe recruitment process is followed for the recruitment and selection of all Soil Association staff that come into contact with children, young people and adults at risk.

To ensure a robust process we will request to obtain a criminal record check processed through the appropriate and authorised Checking Body for all Soil Association staff working in the UK whose role is eligible for a check in accordance with the guidance on the Government website ()

For further information on these procedures, please refer to the following linked policies - the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy, Recruitment Policy and Recruitment of Ex-Offenders (available on PeopleHR or by request to the Soil Association HR team).

## **SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

All Soil Association staff who may encounter children, young people or adults at risk as part of their job, will be trained in safeguarding to an appropriate level and in accordance with local safeguarding practices and guidance. They will also receive refresher training every two years, learning needs will be reviewed and identified annually as part of the Performance Development Review process.

The Soil Association's Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy will attend advanced safeguarding training and subsequent refresher training every two years.

All Soil Association staff working with children, young people or adults at risk, will be made aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding as part of their induction. They will be provided with a copy of this policy through PeopleHR and a copy of the guidelines on working with these groups will be provided.

All Soil Association staff who may encounter children, young people or adults at risk as part of their job are recommended to complete safeguarding level 1 training online. For Soil Association staff whose roles are subject to Enhanced DBS checks, level 2 training is mandatory and to be completed within the probationary period. They will be required to maintain their CPD in relation to Safeguarding, with refresher training every 2 years, and attend any local safeguarding training available to them.

## **WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

We will carry out proper due diligence when we work with, or make grants to, any other bodies (including delivery partners, trading subsidiaries of the charity, organisations we fund or connected charities), checking their suitability and that they have in place appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures. We will have processes to ensure there are documented clear lines of responsibility and reporting between all bodies involved.

## **DOCUMENT CONTROL**

<b>Date of current issue</b>	<b>November 2020</b>
<b>Date of last update</b>	<b>May 2019</b>
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>September 2021</b>

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Contact point</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>
<b>Applicable to</b>	<b>All Soil Association and Soil Association Certification employees, volunteers and contractors</b>
<b>Reference number</b>	<b>HRP0017</b>
<b>Version</b>	<b>3</b>



## APPENDIX 1



### SAFEGUARDING INCIDENT REPORT FORM - PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

To comply with the Soil Association's policy and procedure on Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and/ or adults at risk it is important that we record details of any suspicions of abuse. Information provided on this form will only be used for this purpose and will be stored confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Your Name:

Your contact details:

Address:

Email:

Tel:

Date/Time and location of incident/conversation:

Name of individual(s) involved in incident/conversation:

Organisation where individual is registered:

Brief description of incident/conversation (makes clear distinction on what is fact/opinion/hearsay) use an extra sheet if necessary. Please try to record exact quotes where possible and please detail if you obtained consent/ or record reasons why consent was not obtained from the individual:

Brief outline of actions/advice taken, including any other services/people contacted at this point:

Details of any witnesses to incident/conversation including names:

Date form was completed:

Date form was passed on to setting or relevant authority:

Any further actions needing to be taken by the Soil Association or Designated Safeguarding Officer? If yes, please give details below of action taken:

Signed by:

..... Date ..... (Soil Association representative)  
..... (Name)

..... Date ..... (Organisation)  
..... (Name)

**Please send this form to the Soil Association Safeguarding Officer and for GDPR purposes, once you have confirmed receipt of this form, do not retain a copy of it and ensure you securely and confidentially dispose of any emails, electronic or paper copies of this form.**