SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT
The Soil Association is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We are committed to ensuring that every child and young person who has contact with us feels safe and is protected from harm and abuse. When delivering our services, we aim to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in the following ways:

1. Valuing, listening and respecting their views.
2. Devising and implementing procedures to ensure that all within our organisation understand and accept their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
3. 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 for roles in Scotland) and reference checking.
4. Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training to an appropriate level consistent with their job role and its level of involvement with children, as well as local safeguarding practices.
5. Reporting any safeguarding concerns to relevant agencies and involving schools or third parties appropriately.
6. Demonstrating our commitment to child/young people protection and safeguarding by reviewing good practice and our policies in this area regularly at a senior management level.

This policy applies to all those that work on behalf of the Soil Association that has contact with children/young people and their families. This includes all trustees, employees, workers, volunteers, as well as contractors including self-employed or Ltd companies, temporary workers, agency workers, non-executive Directors.

When Soil Association staff are working collaboratively with a setting such as a school, early years, community, hospital, care or catering setting, they must also ensure that they understand and adhere to the partner/client’s Safeguarding policies and procedures that apply to the setting.
DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN OFFICER
The Soil Association has appointed a 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, Director - Food and Farming
Email: 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
Mob: +44 (0)7584 056038
Tel: 07584 056038

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

- Ensure that all Soil Association staff who are likely to come into contact with children and/or young people 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 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 a breach of Safeguarding Children and Young People policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

POLICY 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. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN SETTINGS

When working in schools, early years, community, hospital, care or catering setting and any other setting with children/ young people, Soil Association staff will always follow the setting’s safeguarding policies alongside our own policies. We will only work with children and young people with the supervision of the setting’s staff, parents and/or guardians recognised in the settings policies.

Whilst it is always the primary responsibility of the setting to ensure the welfare of children/young people 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 members 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.

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 supervised at all times 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 and Young People 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 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
the child/young person the staff member must always call 999 to contact the
emergency services.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON
If a Soil Association staff member has a concern regarding the behaviour of
a child or young person, or a child/young person 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)

Under no circumstances must or will a Soil Association staff member
investigate the child or young person’s claim or their own concerns.

REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT SOIL ASSOCIATION STAFF
If any person including a member of the public, has or suspects concerns
about the behaviour, conduct of a Soil Association employee, volunteer,
trainer, contractor or any person that is working on behalf of the Soil
Association in a setting with children and/or young people, 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.

Suspecting or being suspected of 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.

CONFIDENTIALITY
All individuals that access our services or come into contact with us have the
right to expect that all staff, volunteers and contractors 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 or young person 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 be handled under the Data Protection Act 2018 at all times.

**RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES**

To help safeguard the children and young people 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 including volunteers that work with children and young people.

To ensure a robust process we will request to obtain a criminal record check processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all Soil Association staff working within England, Wales and Northern Ireland, including contractors where their role is eligible for a check in accordance with the guidance on the Government website ([www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview)).

For staff, volunteers and contractors working within Scotland we will follow the procedures and guidelines as outlined by Disclosure Scotland’s ‘Protecting Vulnerable Groups’ Scheme ([www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/disclosureinformation/pvgscheme.htm](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/disclosureinformation/pvgscheme.htm)).

For certain roles this check will include information held on the DBS’s children’s barred lists (or other relevant agency’s barred lists), together with any information held locally by police forces that is reasonably considered to be relevant to the post.

During a recruitment process, the check will take place before appointments are confirmed. Further information can be found in the Soil Association DBS and Recruitment Policy available in the “documents” section of PeopleHR or by request.

**SAFEGUARDING TRAINING**

All Soil Association staff who come into contact with children and young people as part of their job will be trained in child protection and 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 members of staff working with children and young people, including contractors and volunteers, will be made aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people as part of their induction. They will
be provided with a copy of this Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, the NSPCC guidelines on working with children and young people.

All employed staff and volunteers who come into contact with children and young people as part of their job will also complete the NSPCC safeguarding level 1 training online in their probationary period, they will be required to maintain their CPD in relation to Safeguarding and attend any local safeguarding training available to them.

**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

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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 (make 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 school 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 ................................ (School/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.