

# Safeguarding Policy



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1.** The Eldonian Community Trust (“the Charity”) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all individuals with whom it works, especially children, young people, and adults at risk.
- 1.2.** This policy sets out the Charity’s approach to safeguarding and outlines the responsibilities of trustees, staff, volunteers, and representatives in identifying, reporting, and managing safeguarding concerns.
- 1.3.** This policy aligns with the Charity Commission’s guidance on safeguarding duties for charities and with relevant legislation including the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Care Act 2014, and the Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory framework.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1.** This policy applies to all trustees, volunteers, staff, contractors, and anyone working on behalf of the Charity or representing it in any capacity.
- 2.2.** Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. All individuals involved with the Charity must be vigilant and proactive in promoting a safe and respectful environment.

## **3. Definitions**

- 3.1.** Safeguarding means protecting a person’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- 3.2.** Child: Any person under the age of 18.
- 3.3.** Adult at risk: An individual aged 18 or over who is in need of care and support (regardless of whether they are receiving those services) and is unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
- 3.4.** Abuse: A form of maltreatment that can include physical, emotional, sexual, or financial harm, neglect, or exploitation.

## **4. Principles**

- 4.1.** The Charity believes that:
  - 4.1.1.** Everyone has the right to be protected from abuse, harm, and exploitation.
  - 4.1.2.** All trustees, volunteers, and representatives must act in the best interests of vulnerable people.

4.1.3. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation, training, and accountability.

4.2. The Charity's safeguarding approach is underpinned by the following principles:

4.2.1. Zero tolerance for abuse or harm.

4.2.2. Empowerment and participation of service users.

4.2.3. Prevention through awareness, training, and culture.

4.2.4. Proportionality and timely response to risk.

4.2.5. Partnership with statutory agencies.

4.2.6. Accountability in governance, monitoring, and review.

## **5. Responsibilities**

5.1. The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within the Charity.

5.2. The Vice Chair & Treasurer will act as the Charity's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), supported by any appointed Safeguarding Officer.

5.3. All staff, trustees, and volunteers must:

5.3.1. Complete safeguarding induction training.

5.3.2. Know how to identify signs of abuse or neglect.

5.3.3. Report concerns or disclosures immediately to a DSL.

5.3.4. Maintain appropriate boundaries and confidentiality.

## **6. Recruitment and Vetting**

6.1. Safeguarding training and DBS checks are mandatory for all trustees and volunteers who work directly with, or supervise, children or adults at risk. Trustees in governance or administrative roles are not required to undergo DBS checks but must complete basic safeguarding awareness training to fulfil their oversight duties. Any trustee or volunteer acting in a public or representative capacity on behalf of the charity at events involving vulnerable persons will be subject to safeguarding clearance and training proportionate to their role.

6.2. Recruitment processes will include reference checks and safeguarding awareness.

- 6.3.** No one with a history of harming vulnerable individuals will be permitted to represent the Charity in any capacity.

## **7. Reporting Concerns**

- 7.1.** The Charity encourages a culture of openness and accountability. All trustees, staff, and volunteers are expected to raise concerns if they suspect abuse, neglect, or safeguarding risks.
- 7.2.** Anyone who suspects or is informed of a safeguarding concern must report it immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or appointed Safeguarding Officer. If neither is available, concerns should be escalated to the Chair or Secretary.
- 7.3.** Reports must be factual, clear, and recorded in writing. Reports must include the time, date, individuals involved, nature of the concern, and any actions taken.
- 7.4.** Reports will be treated with the highest degree of confidentiality and will be securely stored in accordance with data protection regulations.
- 7.5.** The Charity will not tolerate victimisation or retaliation against any individual who raises a safeguarding concern in good faith. Whistleblowing protections apply.
- 7.6.** In cases of immediate danger or risk of serious harm, individuals must contact emergency services (999) before notifying the DSL.
- 7.7.** The DSL will determine whether the concern warrants referral to statutory services (e.g., local authority safeguarding team, police) and will ensure that appropriate follow-up actions are taken and documented.
- 7.8.** Concerns about a child or adult at risk must be reported immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer.
- 7.9.** Reports should be factual, timely, and kept confidential. Trustees and volunteers must not investigate allegations themselves.
- 7.10.** The Charity will refer concerns to appropriate statutory services (e.g., local authority social care, police) and cooperate fully with safeguarding investigations.

## **8. Record-Keeping and Confidentiality**

- 8.1.** All safeguarding concerns and actions taken will be documented securely and confidentially.
- 8.2.** Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis, in line with GDPR and safeguarding best practice.

## **9. Training and Review**

- 9.1.** All trustees, volunteers, and staff will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

- 9.2.** Safeguarding will be included in trustee inductions and reviewed annually by the Board.
- 9.3.** This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as required to reflect changes in law or practice.

#### **10. Policy Approval and Adoption**

- 10.1.** This Safeguarding Policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025 and will be reviewed annually.