

# Gamlingay Community Centre

## Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

Last updated January 2025

### 1. Purpose

Gamlingay Community Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding means:

- Preventing harm
- Recognising concerns early
- Responding appropriately and promptly

This policy explains how we do this.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Trustees
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Hirers and organisations using the premises
- Anyone acting on behalf of the Community Centre

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.**

### 3. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by UK legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough)

### 4. Key Definitions

#### Child or young person

Anyone under the age of 18.

#### Adult at risk

A person aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs, and
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- Is unable to protect themselves because of those needs

An adult may be at risk even if they are not receiving formal care or services.

### 5. Core Safeguarding Principles

- The welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount
- Everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect

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- Safeguarding concerns must be acted on, not ignored
- Safeguarding is a shared responsibility
- **Gamlingay Community Centre has zero tolerance for abuse**

### 6. What to Do – Immediate Action Guide

If you are worried about a child or adult at risk:

1. **If there is immediate danger, call 999**
2. Report the concern immediately to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy
3. Record what you saw or were told – use facts only, include dates, times, and exact words if possible
4. Do not investigate – do not promise confidentiality – do not question or challenge the person involved

### 7. Types of Abuse Recognised

We recognise and respond to all forms of abuse.

#### Children:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Online abuse
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Grooming, trafficking, and FGM

#### Adults at risk:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Modern slavery
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Radicalisation

### 8. Roles and Responsibilities

#### Everyone:

- Must follow this policy
- Must report concerns immediately
- Must act in a way that protects vulnerable people

#### Safeguarding Lead:

Gamlingay Community Centre is a company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales number 7343640.  
It is also a registered charity number 1137588.  
Registered office: The Eco Hub, Gamlingay, Sandy, Beds. SG19 3JR

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- Receives and manages safeguarding concerns
- Seeks advice and makes referrals where required
- Ensures concerns are recorded and handled confidentially

#### **Named Safeguarding Lead: Paula Wilson (Trustee)**

A Deputy Safeguarding Lead will be appointed to cover absence.

## **9. Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers, or Trustees**

If a safeguarding concern involves a member of staff, a volunteer, or a trustee, the concern must be reported immediately to:

- The Chair of Trustees, or
- Another trustee if the Chair is unavailable

If the concern involves the Safeguarding Lead, it must not be handled by them.

Where required, concerns will be referred to:

- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- The local authority safeguarding team
- The police

## **10. Adults at Risk – Consent and Information Sharing**

Adults at risk should be involved in decisions about their safeguarding wherever possible.

Information may be shared without consent if:

- A child is at risk
- A serious crime has occurred or may occur
- There is an immediate risk of harm

## **11. Safe Recruitment and Supervision**

Anyone with unsupervised access to children or adults at risk must:

- Complete a safe recruitment process
- Provide appropriate references
- Hold a satisfactory DBS check
- Receive safeguarding training before unsupervised contact

Contractors must not have unsupervised access and will be supervised where required.

## **12. Training**

- All trustees, staff, and volunteers receive safeguarding induction
- Refresher training is provided at least annually
- Trustees ensure safeguarding arrangements remain effective

## **13. Online and Digital Safeguarding**

Safeguarding includes online and digital activity.

- Photos or videos of children require appropriate consent
- Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries online
- Direct messaging with children or adults at risk is not permitted unless authorised

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- Hirers are responsible for safe online practice during their activities

### 14. Use of Premises and Hirers

Organisations hiring the premises for activities involving children or adults at risk must:

- Provide their safeguarding policy
- Confirm appropriate checks and supervision
- Comply with licensing and age-related laws

Individual hirers will be made aware of this policy and expected to follow it.

Alcohol, gambling, or adult entertainment is not permitted where children are present.

### 15. Premises Safety

- The premises are inspected regularly
- Hazards are addressed promptly
- Higher-risk areas (e.g. toilets, shared spaces) are managed appropriately
- Access will be restricted where safety issues cannot be immediately resolved

### 16. Recording, Confidentiality, and Data Protection

- Safeguarding records are factual, dated, and signed
- Records are stored securely
- Information is shared on a need-to-know basis only
- Records are retained in line with data protection requirements

### 17. Serious Incidents and Governance

Trustees are responsible for oversight of safeguarding.

Safeguarding incidents will be escalated to the trustee board where required and considered for reporting to the Charity Commission as a serious incident.

### 18. Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy is reviewed annually and updated sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- A safeguarding incident occurs
- Learning or feedback identifies improvements

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## Appendix A: Signs and Indicators of Abuse – Children and Young People

This appendix helps staff, volunteers, and hirers recognise possible signs of abuse.

**You do not need proof to report a concern. If something does not feel right, report it.**

### Physical abuse:

- Unexplained injuries or injuries with unclear explanations
- Frequent bruising, burns, or fractures
- Fear of going home or flinching when approached
- Wearing clothing to cover injuries, even in hot weather

### Emotional abuse:

- Low self-esteem or lack of confidence
- Extreme behaviour (withdrawn, anxious, aggressive, or attention-seeking)
- Fear of making mistakes
- Delays in emotional development

### Sexual abuse:

- Sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate for age
- Fear of a specific person
- Sudden changes in behaviour or mood
- Pain, soreness, or bleeding in genital areas

### Neglect:

- Poor hygiene or consistently dirty clothing
- Hunger or tiredness
- Untreated medical or dental issues
- Lack of supervision

### Online abuse:

- Distress linked to online activity
- Being secretive about devices
- Receiving gifts or messages from unknown adults

### Remember:

- Signs alone do not prove abuse
- Changes in behaviour are often more important than single indicators
- Always report concerns promptly

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## Appendix B: Safeguarding Adults at Risk – Easy Read Guide

### **Everyone has the right to feel safe.**

An adult at risk may be someone who:

- Needs extra help or support
- Has a disability, illness, or mental health condition
- Is older or isolated

### **Abuse can happen to anyone.**

Abuse may include:

- Being hurt or threatened
- Being touched when you do not want to be
- Being shouted at or controlled
- Having money taken or misused
- Being neglected or ignored

### **If you are worried about yourself or someone else:**

- Talk to someone you trust
- Speak to a member of staff or volunteer
- Ask to speak to the Safeguarding Lead

### **What will happen next:**

- You will be listened to
- You will be treated with respect
- You will be involved in decisions where possible

Sometimes information must be shared to keep people safe, especially if:

- Someone is in immediate danger
- A child is at risk
- A serious crime may have happened

### **If there is immediate danger, call 999.**

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## Appendix C: Safeguarding Principles and Types of Abuse

### The Six Safeguarding Principles:

- **Empowerment** – people are supported to make their own decisions
- **Prevention** – action is taken before harm occurs
- **Proportionality** – responses are appropriate to the risk
- **Protection** – support is provided to those most at risk
- **Partnership** – organisations work together
- **Accountability** – safeguarding responsibilities are clear

### Types of abuse (Adults at Risk):

- **Physical abuse** – hitting, pushing, misuse of medication
- **Sexual abuse** – unwanted sexual contact or activity
- **Psychological or emotional abuse** – threats, humiliation, coercion
- **Financial or material abuse** – theft, fraud, pressure around money
- **Domestic abuse** – abuse by a partner or family member
- **Discriminatory abuse** – abuse linked to race, disability, gender, religion
- **Organisational or institutional abuse** – poor care practices
- **Modern slavery** – exploitation, forced labour, trafficking
- **Neglect or acts of omission** – failure to provide care or support
- **Self-neglect** – neglecting personal care or health
- **Radicalisation** – being drawn into extremist beliefs

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#### Appendix D: Responding to Disclosures – Do's and Don'ts

**If a child or adult tells you they are being abused:**

##### **DO:**

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Take what they say seriously
- Reassure them they were right to speak up
- Tell them they are not to blame
- Explain you may need to share the information to keep them safe
- Record what was said as soon as possible
- Report the concern immediately to the Safeguarding Lead

##### **DON'T:**

- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading or probing questions
- Investigate or try to resolve the issue yourself
- Express shock, disbelief, or anger
- Delay reporting
- Do nothing

***You may be the only person in a position to protect them.***

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### Appendix E: Safeguarding Contacts and Helplines

**If there is immediate danger: Call 999**

#### Safeguarding Lead:

Paula Wilson (Trustee) – Gamlingay Community Centre

#### Local Authority Safeguarding:

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Website:  
[safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk](http://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk)

#### Children's Services (Cambridgeshire):

Cambridgeshire Children's Social Care

#### Adult Safeguarding (Cambridgeshire):

Cambridgeshire Adult Safeguarding

#### National Helplines:

- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
- **Childline (under 19s):** 0800 1111
- **National Domestic Abuse Helpline:** 0808 200 0247
- **Samaritans:** 116 123

*If you are unsure who to contact, speak to the Safeguarding Lead.*