

**Safeguarding Children Policy
The Old Library**

The Chair is: Helen Verity

Date of policy development: 1st January 2026

This policy was signed off by the Trustees on: 7th January 2026

The policy will be reviewed on: 7th January 2027

The Secretary is: Sadie Ryan

The Named Person for Safeguarding is Jo Leighton

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Anne-Marie Killeen

Contacting the Named Person for Safeguarding

**The Named Person for Safeguarding is Jo Leighton.
The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Anne-Marie Killeen.**

Preferred mode of contact is by WhatsApp phone call. To make a call, click on Jo's name in the membership list of the Volunteers WhatsApp group.

Introduction

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to confirm The Old Library's commitment to maintaining best practice and provide support for everyone involved in delivering activities, as well as those who take part, about what to do in certain situations.

With regard to safeguarding children, it is important that all volunteers know what to do if they are concerned about a child. It is equally important that parents/carers and young people themselves are aware that we take the safety and welfare of children/young people into consideration in the activities we undertake.

We recognise the importance of sharing this policy and its application throughout our work so everyone understands that safeguarding is a priority and that people know what to do if they have concerns.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) is the current Government guidance for working to safeguard and protect the welfare of children. Safeguarding is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

The Old Library also uses as guidance [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#) which is produced by the Government. This document contains guidance for groups such as ours and is aimed at anyone working directly with children and young people and their families. The document helpfully identifies signs and indicators of abuse and neglect and identifies 4 main principles which are:

- children have a right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse
- safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility
- it is better to help children as early as possible, before issues become more damaging
- children and families are best supported and protected when there is a co-ordinated response from all relevant agencies.

Purpose of a Safeguarding Children Policy

In adopting this policy The Old Library will:

- Ensure that all trustees and volunteers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation
- Ensure that all trustees & volunteers understand their duty to report any concerns about a child or young person, or a trustee's or volunteer's conduct towards a child/young person, to the library's named person for safeguarding.
- Ensure that the named person understands their responsibility to refer any safeguarding concerns to Calderdale's Multi Agency Safeguarding Team (MAST)
- Ensure that any procedures relating to the conduct of trustees & volunteers are implemented in a consistent and equal manner and the procedures for making a referral to the Designated Local Authority Officer (LADO) are followed if concerns about a trustee or volunteer are identified.
- Provide opportunities for all to develop their knowledge around safeguarding.
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

Safeguarding Children Policy Statement

The Old Library is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people. We recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. Furthermore, we acknowledge our duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

1. We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that any children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they suffer harm.
2. We want children who use or have contact with The Old Library to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
3. We want children and parents who use The Old Library to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well-being and keeps them safe.
4. If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm, we will contact Calderdale's Multi Agency Safeguarding Team (MAST) in order that they can be protected.
5. This safeguarding policy and procedure applies to all volunteers and users of The Old Library and anyone carrying out any work for us or using our premises.
6. We will review our safeguarding policy and procedures annually to make sure they are still relevant and effective.
7. We are committed to ensuring that those we employ in a paid or voluntary capacity and the people we serve, are not discriminated on the basis of disability, race, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender.
8. We will provide opportunities for all volunteers to develop their knowledge in relation to safeguarding children and young people
9. We will endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

Signed: *Helen Venly*
Position: *Chair*
Date: *28/1/26*

Safeguarding Children & Young People Guidelines and Procedures

The Old Library's Safeguarding Children & Young People's procedures detail the steps to follow when concerns are raised that a child or young person could be experiencing abuse and/or neglect. The procedures should ensure an effective response for dealing with concerns.

We are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people and recognise our responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation. We commit to providing a safe environment for children and young people and will follow the procedures set out in this policy to protect those we come into contact with through our activities.

We further acknowledge our duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Volunteers will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

Our Activities

We are a lending library and community hub. We provide library services and we have a small café. We run regular craft and story times for children but we insist that children are accompanied by a responsible adult for these activities.

We ensure that volunteers and trustees receive safeguarding training appropriate to their roles.

All within our organisation are given information that allows them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. Such signs include (but are not limited to):

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is causing physical harm to a child and may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, but also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. It may also involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter, protecting a child from physical and emotional harm, inadequate supervision or a lack of access to appropriate medical care.

The Old Library will ensure that all staff and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse as we recognise there are various ways in which concerns about a child or young person's safety can come to light.

For example:

- A child or young person alleges that abuse has taken place or they feel unsafe;
- A third party or anonymous allegation is received;
- A child or young person's appearance, behaviour, play, drawing or statements cause suspicion of abuse and/or neglect;

The purpose of all procedures is to ensure that all concerns about the care and protection of children/young people are managed appropriately. All volunteers and trustees are required to implement the procedures and not solely those who come into contact with children and young people under the age of 18 years when working in the library.

Person(s) for Safeguarding Children & Young People

We have an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding concerns, alongside a deputy (below). One or other individual will always be available for volunteers and trustees to consult with. Their telephone numbers will be available to volunteers.

These are the Named Persons for Safeguarding within our organisation:

Named Person for Safeguarding: Jo Leighton

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Anne-Marie Killeen

Preferred mode of contact is by WhatsApp phone call. To make a call, click on Jo's name in the membership list of the Volunteers WhatsApp group.

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The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- a. To ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned about a child or young person.
- b. Ensure that any concern about a child/young person are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- c. The Named Person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person or breach of Safeguarding policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

Stages to Follow if you are Worried about a Child or Young Person

The Old Library recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse and believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts, hesitations, or other considerations (such as the potential to have a negative impact on professional relationships with a family).

When worrying changes are observed in a child's or young person's behaviour or physical appearance, staff will:

Stage 1

- Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing.
It is okay to ask questions, for example: "I've noticed that you don't appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions.
- Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously
- Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person talks

about matters that may be indicative of abuse

- Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others, if this indicates they and or other children are at risk of harm
- Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure
- Respect confidentiality and file documents securely
- Notify the Group's Named Person for Safeguarding.

Stage 2

- The Named person(s) will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the Named Person will contact Calderdale Children's Social Care for advice or to make a referral.
 - Call MAST (Multi-Agency Screening Team): **01422 393336** (in normal working hours)
 - Out of hours call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on: **01422 288000**
- If the Named person cannot be contacted, volunteers should contact MAST (or the Emergency Duty Team, if outside normal office hours), as above. The Chair or another Trustee should be informed as soon as possible.

Managing Allegations Made Against a Volunteer or Trustee

The Old Library commits to having procedures in place to ensure that any allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer is dealt with appropriately. This reflects our ethos of listening to children and young people and their parents/carers and taking any concerns seriously. It also reflects our commitment to ensuring that volunteers and Trustees feel safe to express their concerns about the practice of others within the organisation.

The Old Library will ensure that any allegations made against volunteers or Trustees will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

- The worker should listen carefully to what the child says but not ask detailed questions.
- The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person against who the allegation is made.
- The named person for Safeguarding should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the Named Person for Safeguarding, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be any trustee believed to be independent of the allegations being made).
- The named person should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO - based within Calderdale Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Services: 01422 394086) for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the Police.
- The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The Named Person for Safeguarding for the library (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the Police and/or Calderdale Children's Social Care.

Regardless of whether a police and/or Calderdale Children's Social Care investigation follows, The Old Library will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident. Any actions should be discussed with the LADO to avoid compromising the Police or a Safeguarding investigation.

Safer Recruitment

The Old Library has been advised that checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) are not required for its current activities. This will be reviewed at the time this policy is reviewed to ensure this is still correct) and that any relevant history is followed up.

If The Old Library has any concerns that someone involved in the organisation should not be working with children, the Named Person for Safeguarding will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay. The LADO can be contacted on 01422 394086 or email ladoadmin@calderdale.gov.uk.

DBS checks are intended to improve vetting but we recognise there is no perfect system in keeping people safe. As such, we will remain vigilant when making decisions that will give people access to children and vulnerable groups. All potential volunteers are subjected to a recruitment and selection process including take up of references and identity checks.

Disseminating/Reviewing Policies and Procedures

This policy will be shared with all volunteers and Trustees upon them joining the organisation. Furthermore, this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and subsequent changes will be cascaded to all those involved with the organisation.

Where needed, amendments or updates that require any changes to practice will be shared with volunteers directly to ensure understanding of, and adherence to, the new ways of working.

Useful Numbers

The NSPCC Safeguarding Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 0800 800 5000 - Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Telephone Numbers

- Police - Non emergency 101 / Safeguarding 01422 337041
- Calderdale Emergency Duty Team (EDT) – 01422 288000
- Calderdale Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – 01422 394086
- Calderdale MAST Tel: 01422 393336 or email MASTadmin@calderdale.gov.uk

For further safeguarding information, including advice and training for professionals, visit: <http://calderdale-safeguarding.co.uk/>