

The White Horse Festival Safeguarding Policy

Why Safeguarding is so important

The White Horse Festival is dedicated to providing impactful, high quality musical experiences for people of all ages in the local area. In delivering these services, our primary priority is to ensure a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment for everyone involved.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children and adults who come into contact with the White Horse Festival through its work;
 - volunteering,
 - fundraising events, and
 - joining events.
- to provide The White Horse Festival Trustees, employees and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child and vulnerable adult protection.

Governance and accountability

The Board of Trustees retains ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within the White Horse Festival. Safeguarding is recognised as a core governance priority.

The Board will undertake and formally record an **annual safeguarding review**, covering safeguarding risks, incidents, learning, training and assurance. This review will be approved by the full Board and recorded in Board minutes.

Appendix 3 summarises the Charities Commission [guidance to good safeguarding governance](#).

A child is defined as 'a person who has not yet reached the age of 18 years.' ([UK Government, Children Policy, 2011, accessed June 2026](#))

The NHS defines vulnerability as 'any adult (person over the age of 18) unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation. Many factors can influence adult vulnerability, experiences of vulnerability in childhood may negatively impact adults in later life – particularly if someone has fewer protective factors in place, such as a supportive family or a stable household income.' ([NHS Online June 2026](#))

Definition and scope of safeguarding

Safeguarding is the action the White Horse Festival takes to protect **children, adults at risk, staff, volunteers and others who come into contact with the charity** from harm.

This includes protection from physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm, neglect, exploitation, abuse of power, harassment, bullying and harm arising from **online or digital activity**.

Safeguarding applies across all the charity's activities, including governance, volunteering, events, communications and partnerships.

Responsibility and Conduct

Everyone engaging with The White Horse Festival's activities is responsible for ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are safe and when working with them we must remember we are acting in positions of trust.

This policy applies to members of the charity i.e. Trustees and White Horse Festival staff and includes volunteers who in most instances are employed or contracted by the White Horse Festival, working or volunteering for or on behalf of the charity in any capacity and in any setting.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989 and 2004.
- All children and vulnerable adults, whatever their sex, disability, racial or ethnic background, religious beliefs or sexual orientation, have a right to be in a safe and caring environment when participating in any activities organised by the White Horse Festival and to equal protection from any form of exploitation or abuse. Some children and vulnerable adults are additionally at risk because of their level of dependency or their communication needs.
- Working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies, is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them;
- adopting protection practices through procedures (Appendices 1-3) for members of the White Horse Festival and volunteers;
- adhering to the safeguarding practices of organisations we work with who may be responsible for children and vulnerable adults, for example in schools or hospices;
- providing effective management for employees and volunteers working with vulnerable groups;
- supervising, supporting and training our employees and volunteers so that they are clear about their safeguarding and protection responsibilities;
- obtaining DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks where employees and/or volunteers are legally eligible for such checks, due to the nature of their work/contact with vulnerable groups;
- identifying and implementing good practice in relation to the care, protection and welfare of children and adults at risk; and
- ensuring that any concerns or allegations of abuse are referred appropriately and co-operating with the work of statutory agencies (e.g. local children's safeguarding board, safeguarding adults board, Disclosure and Barring Service) as necessary.
- following the policies and procedures of third parties we work with where they are responsible for managing an activity, venue, event and the people included in that

Online safeguarding

The White Horse Festival recognises that safeguarding risks may arise through digital communications, virtual events, websites, social media and using AI.

Reasonable steps will be taken to promote safe online conduct, maintain appropriate boundaries and ensure clear reporting routes for safeguarding concerns arising in digital contexts.

All Trustees and volunteers are expected to follow these guidelines and report any breaches of the policy to a Trustee of the White Horse Festival, as soon as is practically possible.

Breaches

Volunteers who breach the policy may be asked to leave their volunteer placement with immediate effect. A breach of code by a Trustee may result in them being removed.

Breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police, the local authority children's social care department or Safeguarding Adults Board and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Safeguarding Training

All White Horse Festival volunteers will receive an appropriate level of safeguarding training to ensure that they have awareness of the different forms of abuse and neglect. Training will be appropriate to the roles.

Additionally, identified volunteers will be able to attend specific safeguarding training where relevant to the types of volunteering opportunity they are involved in. Volunteers will be asked to confirm they understand the White Horse Festival's safeguarding policy and guidance, prior to completing their volunteering activity.

Document Control

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This is a dynamic policy that is reviewed yearly by the White Horse Festival Trustees.

Appendix 1

Guidance to Appropriate Behaviour - working with Children and Adults at risk

When working with children and vulnerable adults at risk we are acting in a position of trust. Trustees of the White Horse Festival and volunteers are likely to be seen as role models by children and adults at risk and must act in an appropriate manner at all times. The following list provides a guide for what we consider to be important and appropriate:

- follow the White Horse Festival's Safeguarding Policy at all times;
- ensure that your contact with children and vulnerable adults is only in direct connection to your role with the White Horse Festival;
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and vulnerable adults or if this isn't possible, that you are always within sight or hearing of other adults;
- listen to and respect children and vulnerable adults at all times;
- avoid favouritism and treat children and vulnerable adults fairly and without prejudice or discrimination;
- value and take children's and vulnerable adults contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible;
- ensure language is appropriate to age and ability and not offensive or discriminatory;
- always ensure equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose;
- provide examples of good conduct you wish children and adults to follow;
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse;
- be close to where others are working. If a child or adult at risk specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, respectfully re-direct them to someone in authority within the organisation that the child or adult at risk is connected with
- respect a young person or adult's right to personal privacy;
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or adults;
- report any breaches of this code promptly to the White Horse Festival; and ensure appropriate permission is obtained to display any images on our website or social media accounts.

Things to avoid – in no circumstances must you ever:

- conduct a sexual relationship with a child or vulnerable adults or indulge in any form of sexual contact, behaviour or discussion with a child or vulnerable adults;
- develop inappropriate relationships such as contact with children and vulnerable adults that is not a part of the work of the White Horse Festival;
- develop a relationship through connecting with children or vulnerable adults on social networking sites, including inviting them, or requesting to join contacts/friends lists,
- do things of a personal nature for a child or vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves;
- administer any medication unless qualified and authorised to do;
- patronise or treat children and vulnerable adults as if they are silly or in a degrading or demeaning way;
- let children and vulnerable adults have your personal contact details (mobile number, address, social networking accounts, personal website/URLs, online image storage sites);
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and vulnerable adults;

- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive;
- make inappropriate promises to children and vulnerable adults, particularly in relation to confidentiality;
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- either exaggerate or trivialise child or vulnerable adults' abuse issues;
- rely on your reputation or that of the White Horse Festival to protect you; or
- allow allegations of abuse or misconduct to go unreported.

Appendix 2

Reporting & Incident Handling Procedure

1. Reporting

If you are concerned about the safety of a child or adult e.g. you see or suspect abuse, an allegation of abuse is made or a child or an adult reports abuse, you must discuss your concerns with a Trustee of the White Horse Festival, or a member of staff at an organisation responsible for the child or vulnerable adult.

If the concern relates to the behaviour of a volunteer from the White Horse Festival the matter should be raised with a Trustee of the White Horse Festival.

You should focus your discussion on:

- The nature of concerns
- Removing the immediate risk to child or children, or vulnerable adult(s)
- Documenting what has happened
- Action/next steps

Report concerns as soon as possible – this should normally be immediately on the same working day. Do not delay in passing the information on and seeking further advice on what action should be taken.

Make a record – ensure you make a detailed record of all events (including dates and times) and include what the child or vulnerable adult has said (if applicable).

Next Steps – the Head of The White Horse Festival [Alex Davies], in consultation with any other appropriate persons, will decide the appropriate course of action and who of the following should be informed:

- The local authority designated officer
- The police and/or children's social care
- Parents, carers and/or referral agents

Implement agreed actions.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In an emergency and where there is immediate risk to a child or adult **ACT IMMEDIATELY**. It is essential to avoid delay as inaction may place the child or adult at further risk. **Contact**

the Police as soon as possible.

Reporting concerns outside the charity (e.g. suspected abuse by a parent or carer)

Report your concerns to a Trustee of the White Horse Festival who must contact social services or the police as soon as possible.

2. Investigation

It is not for Trustees or volunteers to decide whether child or adult abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to a Trustee of the White Horse Festival or the appropriate authorities, as outlined in Section 1.

Where a complaint is made against a volunteer of the White Horse Festival, there may be three types of investigation:

- a criminal investigation
- a child or adult protection investigation
- a disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child or adult protection investigation may well influence and inform the disciplinary investigation, but all available information will be used to reach a decision.

Following an allegation against a volunteer, the individual will be informed of the allegation and given an opportunity to respond.

If the individual is a volunteer the individual will be removed from duties that have direct contact with children/ adults at risk.

If the person is a member of a union or professional association, they should be advised to seek support from that organisation from the outset.

If an allegation is substantiated and the volunteer is dismissed from volunteering, the Trustees of the White Horse Festival will consult with the local authority designated officer to determine whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is required. If a referral is appropriate, the report should be made within one month. It is also likely that a report will need to be made to the Charity Commission under its 'serious incident' reporting process. Legal advice should be sought as appropriate.

After an allegation or suspicion about a safeguarding concern and whilst it is being investigated, there may be strong feelings among employees and volunteers, beneficiaries, parents and carers and possibly the wider community, which will need to be addressed. The Trustees of the White Horse Festival will give careful thought to the provision of appropriate support to volunteers, affected. Volunteers will be supported in accessing counselling services, where appropriate, should they require this.

Volunteers of the White Horse Festival accused of abuse, if permitted to return to work and volunteer for the White Horse Festival following the outcome of internal and external investigations, will follow the Safeguarding policy of the White Horse Festival.

3. Record keeping

Information about suspected abuse must be accurate and a detailed record must always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. All those involved in dealing with the allegation should keep clear records of the allegations made, how they were followed up, and any actions and decisions taken, together with the reasons for these.

These records should be compiled gradually as the situation unfolds, with each entry being made as soon as possible after the event it describes. The records should be signed and dated by the person making them, and the person's name should be printed alongside. It must be kept confidentially.

The records should be held on file for a 10-year period, whether or not the person remains contracted by The White Horse Festival or volunteering with the Foundation for this period.

4. Confidentiality

The welfare of the child or adult is paramount. Privacy and confidentiality should be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a child or adult at harm then the child or adult safety **MUST** come first.

Every effort must be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information must be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.

This includes the following people:

- the parents or carers of the person who is alleged to have been abused
- the person making the allegation
- social services/police
- the Board of Trustees

Information must be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection regulations (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

5. Allegations of previous abuse

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a volunteer who is still currently working with children). Where such an allegation is made, the Trustees must follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police. This is because other children may be at risk from this person. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children.

Appendix 3

Online Safeguarding resources

[Charities Commission - Summary](#) of requirements for good safeguarding governance.

[Charities Commission - Safeguarding and protecting people](#) – provides guidance of the regulatory expectations for charities.

[NCVO - Steps to a safer organisation](#)

Introduction to understand the steps to doing safeguarding well, with links to policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities, reporting and more; including.

- [NCVO's - What is Safeguarding?](#) - describes what safeguarding is and why we need to do safeguarding well. It looks at the different examples which helps to illustrate how safeguarding is for everyone.
- [NCVO's - Laws, Rules & Duties](#) - reviews the additional obligations applicable to charities working with the general public, children and/or adults at risk.
- [NCVO's -Six steps to successful safeguarding](#) - focuses on the expectations the Charity Commission has and gives guidance on how to achieve them. Through focusing on six steps, this will help to show the breadth of safeguarding and is a great source of additional information.
- [NCVO's - Understanding the Risks](#) - emphasises that anyone can be at risk, it focuses the reader's attention not only on children and adults at risk, but also at their own staff and volunteers.

[Ann Craft Trust - Safeguarding Checklist](#)

This is a checklist which any charity working with adults at risk will be encouraged to use. It generates a report based on their answers which will help them to understand what they need to improve on and why.

[NSPCC - Safeguarding Self Assessment tool](#)

This is a tool which any charity working with under 18's will be encouraged to use.

[NSPCC's - Writing safeguarding policies and procedures](#)

This resource will help any charity, not just those working with children, to build a safeguarding policy. It explains what information and details need to be included in a safeguarding policy and provides a guide to writing the policy. It gives all the information and structural support required.