

# Friends of Evington Safeguarding Policy

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 This Policy explains key aspects of how Friends of Evington prevents harm in relation to its beneficiaries via its practices and its conduct.

1.2 Friends of Evington's constitution is available to view on-line at [www.evingtonecho.uk](http://www.evingtonecho.uk) or by requesting a copy. We summarise our charitable objects (aims) within our vision as follows:

1.3 Vision: Friends of Evington seeks to inspire a healthy community in Evington through bringing environmental and educational projects to life, providing solutions that benefit local people and protect the planet.

1.4 This policy also sets out how Friends of Evington will fulfil its statutory duties and responsibilities effectively, both within its own organisation, and for the affiliated groups and members that help with Friends of Evington's charitable vision and objectives.

## 2. Purpose of Policy

Friends of Evington is committed to preventing and responding to risks of harm to beneficiaries. It is also committed to promoting the welfare of all volunteers, trustees and staff (if set up) and partners. It is important to commit to safeguarding all beneficiaries without discrimination due to an individual's age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity leave status, marriage or civil partnership status or sexual orientation.

This safeguarding policy is based on the safeguarding laws of England, Wales and Scotland, including related guidance issued by the UK Government and relevant governmental departments, agencies and public bodies. If this Policy is at any time inconsistent with this body of law, Friends of Evington will act to discuss the requirements of up-to-date safeguarding laws and amend this policy appropriately.

Friends of Evington has implemented this Safeguarding Policy in order to meet its obligations as an organisation. Any questions in relation to this Policy should be referred to the Chair of Friends of Evington in the first instance.

### **3. Relevant Activities**

This Safeguarding Policy covers the organisation and operation of all of Friends of Evington's activities involving the Evington Echo, Evington in Bloom and projects led by our volunteer members. This Policy guideline and obligations apply to all individuals working for, volunteering for, or acting on behalf of Friends of Evington in the UK at all levels, including volunteer members, consultants, trainees and agency workers. This policy does not form part of any contract of employment or similar, and Friends of Evington may amend it at any time at our absolute discretion.

### **4. Defining Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is an umbrella term that refers to practices and procedures aimed at preventing or responding to harm or risks of harm posed to children and vulnerable adults, and promoting these individuals' wider welfare. Most safeguarding legal obligations relate to the care of these groups.

Harm can be caused by the activities, practices and conduct of any volunteer member or by people and situations outside of Friends of Evington's trustees and volunteer members' control, where volunteer members are aware or ought to be aware or reasonably suspect the risks posed by a situation.

For the purposes of this Policy, a safeguarding concern is any conduct or situation that is known or reasonably suspected by a volunteer member or another party that risks violating the safeguarding commitments set out above.

### **5. Key Measures**

Friends of Evington is committed to implementing and maintaining safeguards for its beneficiaries by ensuring that:

- Key volunteer members are trained to, and encouraged to, report any safeguarding concerns that they identify. Volunteer leaders will be encouraged to follow safeguarding reporting procedures as closely as possible when reporting concerns (set out below under the heading 'Procedures: Reporting')
- All volunteer members listen to all safeguarding related queries and concerns raised by other volunteer members, beneficiaries or relevant other parties, with respect and professionalism. Volunteer members should be encouraged to then assist with reporting any such concerns via Friends of Evington's regular reporting procedures.
- All reported Safeguarding concerns need to be dealt with by appropriate individuals and teams and in accordance with Friends of Evington's relevant procedures (set out below under the heading 'Procedures: Investigation and Response')

## **6. Procedures, Investigation and Response**

Implements and maintaining comprehensive, accessible, fair and efficient procedures for volunteer members to use when reporting and dealing with safeguarding concerns. These procedures will be made known and easily accessible to all volunteer members.

6.1 Procedures will be designed to ensure all safeguarding issues are dealt with fairly and objectively even when allegations are made against one of Friends of Evington's volunteers, including one of Friends of Evington's trustees.

6.2 Any such allegations will be treated in a manner that takes account of the gravity of the accusations, but which does not vilify or presume the guilt of the accused individual without a fair investigation.

6.3 The trustees will need to find someone else, but in the meantime this role will be held by Helen Pettman (Chair of Friends of Evington).

6.4 Following an appropriate recruitment process, when recruiting new volunteer members, the following procedures should be followed:

## **7. Conducting Appropriate Checks (DBS)**

7.1 Friends of Evington will risk assess and where relevant, undertake voluntary and statutory checks on individuals working closely with participant and volunteers in a supervisory capacity, ensuring that;

7.2 New volunteer members that take part in and understand the content of all necessary safeguarding training before having any contact with the Friends of Evington's beneficiaries.

7.3 All contributors understand the Friends of Evington's charitable objects (aims).

7.4 If leading a Friends of Evington project, leaders should be familiar with this safeguarding policy and should be required to familiarise themselves with their role and responsibilities, and degree and type of contact with beneficiaries.

7.5 Volunteer members should, where appropriate, be aware of the different types of abuse including physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect, and others.

7.6 How to listen to and respond to concerns or disclosures about safeguarding issues during an initial conversation (e.g. how to explain when information can and cannot be kept confidential).

7.7 How to define and identify potential signs of different types of abuse including physical abuse, emotional abuse sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect and others.

7.8 How to listen to and respond to concerns or disclosures about safeguarding issues during an initial conversation (e.g. how to explain when information can and cannot be kept confidential).

7.9 How to use Friends of Evington's safeguarding reporting procedures and when doing so is appropriate.

7.10 Which additional resources (e.g. policies, other supporting documents, or external educational resources) are available to ensure volunteer members who are leading projects remain informed about safeguarding.

7.11 Ensuring that all information related to Safeguarding concerns, including the content of reported concerns as well as the personal data of anybody involved, is handled safely and securely.

7.12 Following the requirements set out by the UK's data protection laws, including the UK General Data Protection regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

7.13 Following Friends of Evington's data protection policies and procedures.

7.14 Providing volunteer members with information on data protection and privacy.

7.15 Ensuring volunteer members always have an identifiable point of contact for questions or concerns about data protection and privacy. This is currently written down in the Friends of Evington's Data Protection Policy.

7.16 Only sharing information about Safeguarding concerns internally as far as is necessary to manage the concern for the relevant Beneficiary's benefit.

7.17 Ensuring transparency and awareness regarding safeguarding information and procedures.

7.18 Providing information to beneficiaries about our safeguarding procedures so that they are aware of how to raise any concerns.

7.19 Ensuring all volunteer members are aware of safeguarding laws, Friends of Evington's safeguarding commitments and procedures, and Volunteer members' responsibilities in relation to these.

7.20 Regularly reviewing all safeguarding policies and procedures.

7.21 Ensure that they are up-to-date with safeguarding law and that they remain suitable for Friends of Evington's relevant activities and workforce, and meeting any review and evaluation requirements specific to Friends of Evington's charity and organisational type.

## **8. Volunteer Members Responsibilities**

8.1 All Volunteer Member Leaders have a responsibility to promote the safety and wellbeing of all of Friends of Evington's beneficiaries. This means that all of Friends of Evington's policies and procedures relevant to safeguarding and all UK laws relevant to safeguarding must be followed at all times. Specifically:

8.2 All volunteer members must contribute to upholding the key measures that Friends of Evington has committed to taking to safeguard its beneficiaries (set out above) to an extent that is appropriate for their role, responsibilities, and degree and type of contact with beneficiaries. Specific ways that Volunteer members should do this will be clarified during meetings to discuss this.

8.3 Volunteer members (including all trustees) must actively participate in all safeguarding meetings they are assigned to, if they do not understand any aspects of their training, they must raise this with the Board of Friends of Evington.

8.4 Volunteer members must never do anything to actively risk the safety or wellbeing of any of the Friends of Evington's beneficiaries. This includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Subjecting them to or facilitating abuse of any sort.
- (b) Engaging in any sexual activity with children (i.e. anybody under the age of 18).
- (c) Participating in or facilitating any activities that may commercially exploit beneficiaries. For example, failing to report suspected child labour or trafficking.

8.5 Volunteer members must report all safeguarding concerns that they have regarding beneficiaries, regardless of whether the concerns relate to potential wrongdoing or other staff

members, other beneficiaries, or external parties (e.g. parents, teachers, other organisations, or members of the public).

## **9. Reporting**

9.1 Volunteer members will receive safeguarding meetings that should enable them to identify safeguarding concerns (e.g. suspected abuse, neglect, or threats to wellbeing) relevant to Friends of Evington's beneficiaries.

9.2 If a volunteer member identifies a safeguarding concern, to report it they should contact Helen Pettman on 0116 2204525 or 07910431044.

9.3 If a volunteer member feel unable to follow the above steps they should report their Safeguarding Concern in a reasonable alternative manner. This may be the case if for example:

(a) Following the above procedure would require disclosing the concern to somebody who is implicated in the Safeguarding Concern or who the Volunteer Member is otherwise uncomfortable contacting about this concern.

(b) If the matter is time-sensitive and involves a risk of serious harm to somebody, in which case, contacting an external agency (e.g. the police the ambulance service or a mental health crisis line) or a more senior member of the Friends of Evington's Board of Trustees first may be more appropriate.

## **10. Investigation and Response**

Volunteer members who report a Safeguarding concern will be kept informed about the progression of the matter they reported to an appropriate degree. Note that, depending on the nature of the concern and consequent investigations, some information about matters may be kept confidential and not shared with the reporter.

If a Volunteer member is found to be in breach of this Safeguarding Policy or safeguarding law in general, they will be treated fairly and will only be asked to leave if appropriate in the circumstances and in accordance with Friends of Evington's constitution.

Referrals or notifications to external organisations (e.g. police services, local authorities, or regulatory bodies) will be made when, and only when, this is appropriate, and will always be made in accordance with the law (e.g. data protection law).

## **11. Supporting Documents and Other Protections**

11.1 All of the policies, procedures and other documents set out above are available on line at [www.evingtonecho.uk](http://www.evingtonecho.uk) or on request from a members of the Board of Trustees or via Volunteer members' activity leader. This safeguarding policy is to make it clear what Friends of Evington will do to keep children and vulnerable adults safe.

11.2 The safeguarding duties outlined within this policy apply to children (those under 18 years old) and an adult who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).
- Is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs, are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

11.3 This policy is designed to ensure that no act or omission by the Friends of Evington, as a charitable organisation, put adults at risk of abuse or neglect. This policy identifies the procedures and resources that must be in place to proactively safeguard adults at risk of abuse or neglect, and thereby support volunteers in fulfilling their roles as protectors of vulnerable people who may be at risk of abuse, exploitation or neglect.

11.4 This policy describes how the Friends of Evington will discharge their collective responsibility for ensuring Friends of Evington is able to fulfil its legal and moral obligations and duties to safeguard adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

11.5 This policy must be referenced and understood by all volunteers registered by Friends of Evington, including partners and stakeholder groups who wish to work with Friends of Evington, who have their own policies in these matters.

11.6 All volunteer trustees and volunteer members are expected to make themselves aware of the principles and practices outlined in this policy.

## **12. Safeguarding Principles**

The six principles of safeguarding are:

- **Empowerment:** People are supported and confident through being encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality:** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection:** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership:** Local solutions through communities working with services.
- **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

## **13. Positive Learning Culture**

In developing this policy, the Friends of Evington recognises that safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility and that there is the need for effective joint working between agencies and professionals who have different roles and expertise if those vulnerable adults in society are to be protected from harm. In order to achieve effective joint working, there must be constructive relationships at all levels, including:

- Clear lines of accountability for safeguarding, i.e. a named trustee to take overall leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.
- Clear policies informing volunteers, trustees and partners organisations of their responsibility in recognising and reporting safeguarding issues.
- Effective interagency working with local authorities, the police and third sector organisations, which includes appropriate arrangements to cooperate with local authorities in the operation of any associated safeguarding matters.
- Effective systems for responding to abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults.
- Support for the development of a positive learning culture across Friends of Evington, including partnerships for safeguarding adults, to ensure that organisations are not risk-averse, nor seek to scapegoat or blame volunteer practitioners.
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The Care Act 2014 provides a comprehensive framework for the care and protection of adults, stating the following aims:

- To stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving the life of the adult concerned.
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, work alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult; and

- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect.
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To achieve these aims, it is necessary to:

- Ensure that everyone, both individuals and organisations, are clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- Create strong multi-agency partnerships that provide timely and effective prevention of and responses to abuse or neglect.

#### **14. Types of Abuse**

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

#### **15. Monitoring and Reporting**

All reports and feedback to Friends of Evington regarding this policy will be fully recorded, and a report made to the Trustee Board on any issues dealt with via this procedure. A written record will be retained of all complaints.