

Safeguarding;

Protecting people involved in your organisation or group from harm

Whether you are called Trustees, Directors or Committee members it is a key part of your responsibilities to take reasonable steps to protect people who come into contact with your charity from harm. This doesn't just mean children, but anyone vulnerable to being bullied, exploited or abused.

There is no "one size fits all" approach to safeguarding, but there is a wealth of good information available. Below are some of the key links you can use to research what you need to do and how to do it. You will also find it useful to ask other organisations you know that do similar things, and that are the same size as you, to share their policies, procedures and experience so that you can benefit from their learning.

If none of you have any safeguarding knowledge or experience, look for training to enable you to understand your responsibilities properly. You may be able to find training for free (contact Bristol Safeguarding for information), or if there will be a charge consider making a small grant application to cover the cost (Quartet Express Fund is a good option <https://quartetcf.org.uk/grant-programmes/express/>).

Bristol Safeguarding provides information, advice and training for local individuals, families and organisations. They also provide a link that can be used to report serious concerns;

<https://bristolsafeguarding.org/>

Government guidance on Trustee safeguarding duties

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees>

DBS checks on employees and volunteers

Anyone with contact with, or responsibility for, vulnerable people must be checked. You will be charged for checks on employees but checks for volunteers are free.

<https://www.gov.uk/dbs-check-applicant-criminal-record/get-a-basic-dbs-check-for-an-employee>

Policies and procedures

You will need to have a written policy that sets out your approach to safeguarding, and procedures that set out the actions you, your staff and volunteers will take to ensure safety for all. The amount of detail in your policies and procedures, and how often you review them, depends on what your charity does, where it

works and the level of risk. If you are a new group taking your first look at this issue make sure you spend time finding the right policy and procedures for you, ones that meets your needs and the needs of your beneficiaries. Review your policies and procedures regularly, and that each time they are reviewed you check that everyone is still following them.

Your policies and procedures aren't just paperwork; they must be put into practice. Everyone involved in your organisation, in any way, needs to know about safeguarding and understand how to apply your procedures.

In your policy make clear how you will:

- protect people from harm
- make sure people can raise safeguarding concerns
- handle allegations or incidents
- report to the relevant authorities

Useful templates and resources to help you build your policy

<https://www.bond.org.uk/resources/safeguarding-policy-templates>

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/>

Voscur is a council for voluntary service and a development agency for the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector in Bristol.

We deliver **training** on different aspects of running a VCSE organisation. Follow this link to our VCSE Academy to look for upcoming courses: <https://www.vcseacademy.org/courses/> We can also offer bespoke training for your organisation, so do get in touch to discuss your training needs.

Voscur is here to **support** VCSE organisations. For support, advice and guidance on how to apply this information in your particular circumstances, please contact us: info@voscur.org 0117 909 9949

