

24. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Froglife is legally obliged by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Care Act 2014 in England (and the Protection of Vulnerable groups Act 2007 in Scotland) and fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk that it works with. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect vulnerable people from harm, abuse and exploitation.

Paid staff and 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.

24.1 FROGLIFE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

NB This policy is written using the terms current under English legislation. Scottish terminology and practice is slightly different, but the essential procedures are similar.

Froglife will:

- Take steps in recruitment, training and levels of supervision to protect vulnerable people.
- Ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral obligations to protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm, abuse and exploitation. Including that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for a person over 18 (teacher, student mentor, academic staff etc) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust, even if the relationship is consensual. Froglife staff and volunteers are in a position of trust.
- Ensure that all workers understand their responsibility to work to the standards and procedures detailed in this Section.
- Have a designated Safeguarding Lead as a permanent member of staff.
- Ensure that the designated person understands his/her responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the statutory child protection agencies.
- Keep a log of any concerns reported to the designated Safeguarding Lead and any actions that were taken as a result.



- Ensure that all workers understand their obligations to report care or protection concerns about a child/young person, or a worker's conduct towards a child/young person, to the organisation's designated person for child protection.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are trained to Level One in Child Protection, with other relevant training available concerning boundaries and appropriate behaviour with vulnerable others.
- Maintain recruitment practices and take steps to ensure that staff comply with the requirements of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Care Act 2014. This will include Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for staff required to work with under-18s or adults at risk in regulated activity and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) registration where required. Froglife is committed to ensuring that relevant staff have appropriate checks in accordance with accepted practice to ensure their suitability to work with under-18s and adults at risk or their fitness to practice on certain courses.
- Ensure that all procedures relating to the conduct of workers are implemented in a consistent and equitable manner.
- Ensure that children, young people and adults at risk are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues.
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children, young people and adults at risk.
- Undertake relevant risk assessments to protect the physical and emotional wellbeing of those we work with.

24.2 SAFEGUARDING PEOPLE PROCEDURES

The following procedures work with Froglife's Safeguarding People Policy, and aim to provide protection for children, young people (aged up to 18) and adults at risk (aged over 18 who 1) Has care and support needs 2) Is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect 3) As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.).

24.21 Froglife's designated Safeguarding Lead

Froglife will have a permanent member of staff as a designated Safeguarding Lead. The SL will:

- Keep a log of any concerns reported and any actions that were taken as a result.
- Endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the care and protection of children, young people and adults at risk.

Kathy Wormald, Froglife CEO is the current SL.



24.22 Working with children and young people

When recruiting for roles that involve working with children and young people, the need for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks as they come online or Disclosure Scotland checks as relevant must be included in advertisements and recruitment materials.

Staff and volunteers recruited to work with these groups must:

- Undertake a DBS or Disclosure Scotland check before starting to work with young people.
- Confirm they are not disqualified to work with children under the Childcare Act 2006 (see below)
- Staff must undertake training to Level One in Child Protection.
- Where possible, volunteers must undertake Better Together training which includes a Warner Interview, their DBS check and training on child protection, boundaries and appropriate behaviour (currently only running in Peterborough). Where not possible, alternative means for recruitment and checks will be used.
- Go through the correct procedure (given below) for reporting any child protection concerns to the SL.
- Obtain photo and/or video consent from parents or guardians.
 - If consent is not obtained or if photography is inappropriate, those young people must not be photographed showing their faces or identifiable features (such as in the case of YOS clients or young people on the child protection register).
- Store all information regarding children or young people according to the Data Protection Act.
- As much as possible, adults should not spend time one-to-one with young people away from the main group. If private conversations are needed, stay in view of the group.
- Follow best practice of at least one member of staff and one volunteer per session, more if possible depending on the number of young people in the group and the nature of the activities.
- Make every attempt to avoid unknown adults in a session - check with the school/group as to who their staff are.
- Make it clear to young people that there are no secrets with Froglife staff or volunteers – information cannot be shared in confidence, particularly if the adult believes the young person to be at risk.
- Make clear the role of Froglife staff and volunteers – they do not take the role of social workers or counsellors. Members of the Froglife team can signpost to these services where possible.



- Where possible, any disclosures made by young people to Froglife staff or volunteers are to be discussed with the school or referring group's Child Protection Officer before being taken to the Froglife Child Protection Officer.
- Where possible, adult supervision from schools or other groups should be in attendance, with responsibility for behaviour management.
- Take steps to get information on the young people attending activities so that plans can be put in place to best support their needs, particularly for higher risk young people.
- Carry out all work in a suitable location agreed with Froglife management staff, with a relevant risk assessment undertaken.
- Complete incident reports where necessary.
- Carry a mobile phone and a first aid kit.

24.23 Childcare Act 2006

Froglife must make staff aware of their obligations relating to disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 which came into force in English schools in late 2014.

Statutory guidance relating to disqualification was issued in late February 2015 and we need to ensure that we comply with the new guidance.

We have a duty to ensure staff are all aware of the legislation and they then need to let us know if they think that they are disqualified from their role. Staff will be committing an offence if they work in relevant early or later year's childcare if they are disqualified.

An employee becomes disqualified by having:

1. been cautioned or convicted of certain violent or sexual offences
2. had children taken into care, or
3. registration relating to childcare refused or cancelled.

Staff are also disqualified if they live with someone if any of the three points above applies to them. This is known as 'disqualification by association'.

This is only relevant for those working with children but as most of our projects may come into contact with children at some point we'd like everyone to comply.



24.24 Working with adults at risk

When recruiting for roles that involve working with adults at risk, the need for DBS checks must be included in advertisements and recruitment materials. Written references need to be obtained prior to interview in these instances.

Staff and volunteers recruited to work with these groups must:

- Undertake a DBS/Disclosure Scotland check before starting to work with young people.
- Where possible, volunteers must undertake Better Together training which includes a Warner Interview, their DBS check and training on child protection, boundaries and appropriate behaviour (currently only running in Peterborough). Where not possible, alternative means for recruitment and checks will be used.
- Go through the correct procedure (given below) for reporting any adults at risk concerns to the SL.
- Obtain photo and/or video consent from the people themselves or guardians as appropriate.
 - If consent is not obtained or if photography is inappropriate, those individuals must not be photographed showing their faces or identifiable features.
- Store all information according to the Data Protection Act.
- As much as possible, adults should not spend time one-to-one with adults at risk away from the main group. If private conversations are needed, stay in view of the group.
- Follow best practice of at least one member of staff and one volunteer per session, more if possible depending on the number of people in the group and the nature of the activities.
- Make it clear to participants that there are no secrets with Froglife staff or volunteers – information cannot be shared in confidence, particularly if we believe that person is at risk.
- Make clear the role of Froglife staff and volunteers – they do not take the role of social workers or counsellors. Members of the Froglife team can signpost to these services where possible.
- Higher risk individuals need to be identified before working with a group, and plans put in place to best support that person's needs.
- Carry out all work in a suitable location agreed with Froglife management staff, with a relevant risk assessment undertaken.
- Complete incident reports where necessary.
- Carry a mobile phone and a first aid kit.



24.25 Protection from Abuse

Froglife staff and volunteers should take the following steps to help protect the young people and adults at risk we work with from abuse.

Please Note: Appendix A and B of Section 24 contain Protection from Abuse Report Forms – The Form in Appendix A is to be used for individuals where Froglife is the main point of contact, and the Form in Appendix B when there is a referral agency responsible for the young person or adult at risk.

If you discover or believe a young person or adult at risk is at risk:

How was the abuse revealed?	Steps to take:
Suspicion – you believe abuse is occurring, but have no evidence	Be careful how you discuss your concerns with the person – try not to ask leading questions or be confrontational with them. Observe their behaviour and keep a record of why you are suspicious rather than discussing it with the person themselves. Report to your Line Manager with notes about your concerns. The Line Manager must then make a judgement on the seriousness of the situation. To help in this decision here is some general guidance on what to consider when assessing the seriousness of the situation:- 1. The vulnerability of the individual 2. The nature & extent of the suspected abuse 3. The length of time it is believed to have been occurring 4. The impact on the individual 5. The risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts of abuse 6. Risk of harm to other children, young people or adults at risk.



	If, having considered these factors, the Line Manager believes the abuse is a serious and real concern, they must complete the relevant Report Form and pass this onto the SL. If this is not the case, they must record the suspicion and ensure that the person is monitored carefully for other signs of abuse.
Discovery – You witness or find evidence of abuse	Support the person being abused. Keep a detailed report and complete the relevant report form to pass onto the SL and follow the steps below to report the abuse.
Disclosure – You are told of abuse by the person or a third party	If the abuse is historical (has not occurred in the last 12 months), report to your line manager. Complete the relevant Report Form and pass onto the SL. They will consider the factors above and take appropriate action. If the abuse is current, complete the relevant Report Form and pass onto the SL to follow the steps below.

24.26 Registering a Concern

If a young person or adult at risk has disclosed a serious concern, or a member of staff or volunteer has good reason to believe that the young person is at risk of abuse, the following procedure should be followed:

- Let the person know that you need to take action to help – you can't keep their confidence and will be taking steps to ensure their protection.
- Make notes as soon as possible, creating as accurate a report as possible of what was said. Record dates and times.
- Record your concerns using the report form, in discussion with your line manager as advised above, and pass the information onto the SL.
- Do not discuss the issue with anyone other than your line manager, the SL and the potential relevant contact at the referring agency that is responsible for the young person or adult at risk.
- If you are worried about the young person going home to a dangerous situation, immediate contact should be made with Social Services or the police only with the SL's permission or their deputy.



- The SL will clarify the information received, by interviewing the informant and recording the following information:
 - Details of the young person or adult at risk & family
 - Nature of the allegation and the alleged perpetrator
 - Dates and times of the incident(s)
 - Anyone else involved
- Where the young person or adult at risk has been referred from another agency, contact the SL there with the information and pass on
- The allegation will then be reported to Social Services along with the details obtained.

24.27 Managing allegations made against a worker

Allegations made against workers must be managed according to the following procedure:

1. The allegation must be reported immediately to Froglife's Chief Executive Officer.
2. On receiving the concerns, the Chief Executive Officer will report the incident to the Chair of the Trustees and will contact immediately the agency through which the young person has been referred to Froglife.
3. The Chief Executive Officer will contact immediately the Social Services and/or Police and act on any advice given. In particular, whether or not it is appropriate for Froglife to approach the worker implicated in the allegation as part of the organisation's internal enquiry.
4. The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written report 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.
5. The Chief Executive should add any steps that she/he has undertaken e.g. contacting the agency/police.
6. The individual worker and the Chief Executive Officer must sign and date the report.
7. A copy of the report should be passed to the Social Services and/or Police. The original report will be stored in a secure locked cabinet.
8. Where the Social Services/Police have advised that it is appropriate to inform the worker that an allegation has been made against them, the worker should be told this and Froglife will consider suspending the worker whilst an internal review is carried out.
9. The internal review will not compromise the work of the child protection agencies or involve questioning the child or young person about the nature of the abuse that is alleged. This is the responsibility of the child protection agencies.
10. If Froglife's own internal review suggests that the worker's actions have breached the Code of Conduct/Working with children and young people policies Disciplinary



Procedure (Section 10, *Policies and Procedures*) will follow. Sanctions may involve dismissal or removing the worker from access to children and young people where his/her actions are considered to be a serious breach of the policies.

11. If Froglife's own internal review suggests that the worker harmed or placed a child at risk of harm the worker will be removed from access to children.

Appendix A. Protection From Abuse Report Form

Name of Child/Adult at Risk _____

Name of Worker _____

Position of Worker _____

Date & Time of Report _____

Nature of Concern _____

Who have you spoken to about your concerns?

Child YES/NO

Carer YES/NO

Sen Staff/SL YES/NO Name _____

Social Services YES/NO Name _____

Feedback

Signature of Worker: _____

Signature of SL/Line Manager: _____

Date and Time: _____



Appendix B. Protection From Abuse Report Form: When another organisation takes primacy

Name of Agency/School _____

Name of Contact _____

Position of Contact _____

Contact Details _____

Date & Time of Report _____

Name of Child or VA _____

Nature of Concern: _____

Who in the agency did you speak to about your concerns?

What action was agreed? _____

When will Froglife receive feedback? _____

Who will give Froglife feedback? _____

Signature of Worker: _____

Signature of SL/Line Manager: _____

Date & Time: _____

