

YSS Children's Safeguarding Policy

2026/27

This safeguarding policy is written to inform and support good practice. All YSS Staff and Volunteers are expected to comply with it. The policy is updated on an annual basis.

Policy Owner: Designated Safeguarding Lead
Relevant to: All YSS staff and volunteers

Approved by: CEO, SMT and Designated Safeguarding Trustees

Dates

Date of Statement: 17th June 2026

Date of last review: 17th June 2026

Date for next review: 17th June 2026

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Charity Overview

YSS (registered charity 1081992, registered company 4024428) works across Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Warwickshire). We support adults, children, young people and families within the justice and care systems. People involved in the justice and care systems often face disrupted relationships, low confidence, stigma, crisis-driven responses and limited long-term support. Our dedicated teams of Support Workers and Volunteers are based in local communities and walk alongside people to rebuild confidence, purpose and independence. Through restorative, person-centred practice, we influence how services and systems respond. Our vision is for a society where every person has the confidence, support and freedom to make informed choices and shape the future they choose.

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children and young people who receive YSS's services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of YSS including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Partner organisations will be required to have their own safeguarding procedures that must, as a minimum, meet the standards outlined below, and include any additional legal or regulatory requirements specific to their work.

All employees, trustees, volunteers and partner agencies are expected to familiarise themselves with the policy. Those employees and volunteers working directly with children, young people and adults at risk must also read all additional related policies. If clarity is required, employees and volunteers should speak to their line manager or the YSS Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The designated safeguarding lead responsible for safeguarding children and young people is Lia Palios-Hayden, Director of Services and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

YSS have comprehensive safeguarding policies which are reviewed annually.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people and adults at risk in England.

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 make it clear that people who work with children have the responsibility to keep them safe. This is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (to which the UK is a signatory) which sets out the rights of children to be free from abuse. The document '**Working Together to Safeguard Children**' (2026) sets out the arrangements for how all organisations must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. *"Protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation requires multi-agency join up and cooperation at all levels. Local organisations and agencies that work with children and families play a significant and often statutory role when it comes to safeguarding children."*

Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Role description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Safeguarding children policy
- Procedure for children at possible risk of abuse
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Child Protection records and retention
- YSS Company Handbook
- Behaviour codes for children and young people

- Photography and sharing images guidance
- Safer recruitment policy
- Online safety
- Bullying and Harassment policy / Anti-bullying policy
- Complaints, comments and complements policy
- Whistle Blowing policy
- Health and Safety
- Data protection policy
- Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy
- Parental and Young Person Consent Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Lone working policy
- Prevent policies (children and adults)

Policy statement

YSS believe that:

- Nobody who is involved in our work should ever experience abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.
- We all have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.
- We all have a collective responsibility for creating a culture in which our people not only feel safe, but also able to speak up, if they have any concerns.

YSS recognise that:

- The welfare and wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk are paramount in all aspects of our work and in every decision we make.

- All children, young people, and adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or identity, have the right to equal protection from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Some individuals may be additionally vulnerable due to previous experiences, levels of dependency, communication needs, mental or physical health needs, or other circumstances, and may therefore require additional safeguarding measures and support.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, adults at risk, parents, carers, and partner agencies is essential to promoting welfare, wellbeing, and safety.
- We all share a legal and moral responsibility to take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of harm, safeguard those who access our services, and always exercise an appropriate duty of care.
- Positive, respectful, and person-centred engagement with adults who may be at risk is essential in promoting their wellbeing, independence, and safety.

YSS will seek to safeguard children, young people, their families, and adults at risk by:

- Valuing, listening to, and respecting all people who access our services.
- Promoting good safeguarding practice and managing services in a way that promotes wellbeing, safety, and reduces the risk of harm, abuse, neglect, bullying, or exploitation.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads, and Trustee safeguarding leads with responsibility for safeguarding oversight and practice.
- Ensuring all trustees, staff, and volunteers are aware of this policy, understand their safeguarding responsibilities, and know the procedures to follow when concerns arise.
- Providing all staff and volunteers with appropriate induction, safeguarding training, refresher training, supervision, support, and quality assurance to ensure they can carry out their safeguarding responsibilities confidently and competently.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers understand their legal and professional duty to report concerns, disclosures, allegations, or inappropriate behaviour promptly and appropriately.
- Responding appropriately to all safeguarding concerns, allegations, disclosures, or suspicions of abuse, including concerns relating to staff, volunteers, or trustees, and ensuring appropriate support is provided.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely by following safer recruitment procedures, including obtaining references, carrying out enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, and undertaking regular DBS status checks through the DBS Update Service where applicable.
- Ensuring all staff, volunteers, and trustees adhere to organisational policies, professional boundaries, codes of conduct, dignity at work

expectations, and safe working practices at all times, including during online and off-site activities.

- Developing and maintaining effective safeguarding, online safety, whistleblowing, complaints, confidentiality, anti-bullying, and health and safety procedures.
- Recording, storing, and sharing information appropriately, securely, and in accordance with data protection legislation, confidentiality requirements, and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Sharing information with relevant agencies where necessary to safeguard children, young people, or adults at risk, including where there is a legal duty or risk of harm.
- Working in partnership with local safeguarding partnerships, statutory agencies, and other relevant organisations, including attendance at safeguarding meetings and contributing to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements where required.
- Establishing and maintaining safe, inclusive, and respectful environments where individuals feel secure, are treated with dignity, and are encouraged and supported to speak openly about concerns.
- Ensuring trustees and senior leaders receive regular safeguarding updates and reports to support effective governance and oversight of safeguarding practice.
- Responding appropriately to changes in safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice.

Ensuring Children and Young People are Protected

NSPCC best practice informs our approach to safeguarding children and young people. We will:

- Ensure children, young people, and their families know about our safeguarding and child protection procedures and understand how to raise concerns or seek support.
- Share safeguarding and child protection information, advice, and good practice with children, young people, parents, carers, staff, and volunteers.
- Use child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies that need to know, while involving children, young people, parents, and carers appropriately.
- Ensure all practitioners working directly with children and young people receive up-to-date safeguarding and child protection training in line with local safeguarding partnership requirements.
- Create and maintain environments where children and young people feel safe, respected, listened to, and confident that they can approach trusted adults with concerns.
- Support children and young people who have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm in line with agreed safeguarding and child protection plans.

- Ensure staff and volunteers follow recognised safe working practices when engaging with children and young people in both face-to-face and virtual settings.

Internal safeguarding contact details

The designated member of staff responsible for safeguarding is -

Lia Palios-Hayden, Director of Operations – lia.palios-hayden@yss.org.uk

Deputy DSLs

Laura Fullelove, Team Manager – laura.fullelove@yss.org.uk

Elaine Stewart, Team Manager – elaine.stewart@yss.org.uk

Jamie Swartout-Phipson, Team Manager - jamie.swartout-hipson@yss.org.uk

Olivia Gallacher, Every Step Together Practitioner – olivia.gallacher@yss.org.uk

Local Authority Safeguarding Contact details

If you believe that a child or young person is at immediate risk of harm:

- Contact the Police by phone: 999

If there is no emergency but you think a crime may have been committed:

- Telephone: West Mercia Police 101*

HEREFORDSHIRE

To report a child protection concern:

- If you think that a child has been harmed or is being neglected, contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 01432 260800.
- To email the team – ReferralsCYPD@herefordshire.gov.uk
- Outside of normal office hours please contact 01905 768020 when MASH is unavailable – do not email.
- If you are a professional, complete the [Multi-agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#) to make a referral to the MASH. The MARF and accompanying guidance can also be found on the [West Midlands Child Protection Procedures](#) website.

- Please follow this link to access the Herefordshire Children's Safeguarding Partnership <https://www.herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/>

Children's Help and Advice Team (CHAT)

01432 260261

The Children's Help and Advice Team offers advice to children, young people and their families, where they need some extra support and guidance. Professionals can also contact the CHAT team for advice about children and families that they know who may need extra support.

WORCESTERSHIRE

To report a Child Protection concern

Then please refer the child to children's services on:

- phone: 01905 822666 Monday to Thursday from 9:00am to 5:00pm and Fridays from 9:00am to 4:30pm

In safeguarding emergencies out of normal office hours (weekday evenings and 24 hours at weekends and bank holidays), phone: 01905 768020

Please note:

- you do not need consent to share information with children's services if there is a safeguarding concern in line with Working Together 2023
- if you refer a child protection matter to the children's Family Front Door via phone, you must follow this up in writing in line with our Worcestershire safeguarding procedures within 3 working days

Before making a referral please refer to the levels of need guidance by following the link below

- <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/home/wscp/professionals/levels-of-need-thresholds/>

Please follow this link to access Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership

- <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/home/wscp/>

SHROPSHIRE

If you think a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed you must contact Children's Services and tell them your concerns.

- You can report your concerns by calling **0345 678 9021**.
- Out of hours **0345 6789040**

Please follow this link to access Shropshire's Safeguarding Children's Partnership

- <https://www.shropshiresafeguardingcommunitypartnership.co.uk/>

[The SSCP Threshold Tool](#) helps in identifying at what level a child, young person's or family's needs are at, to help us to identify the most appropriate response. This is an inter-agency procedure. It's a document for assisting in analysing information and making informed decisions about risk.

TELFORD

If you are worried about a child, call Family Connect now:

- 01952 385385 option 1
- 01952 676500 (out of hours)

To report your concern on line, follow the below link:

- <https://webforms.telford.gov.uk/form/198>

To report a child exploitation concern, follow the below link

- <https://webforms.telford.gov.uk/form/489>

Please follow this link to access Telford & Wrekin's Safeguarding Children's Partnership

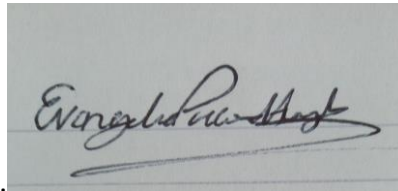
- <https://www.telfordsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/site/index.php>

The NSPCC also has an advice line to provide expert advice and support
0808 800 5000*

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/our-services/nspcc-helpline/?utm_old=helpline

All local authorities with responsibilities for safeguarding children have signed up to the West Midlands Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures

<http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/>



Signed:.....

Signator: Lia Palios-Hayden- Director of Services

Date: 17th June 2026