

SNAAP Safeguarding, Child Protection and Wellbeing Policy

Last Reviewed: December 2025

Next Review Due: December 2026

1. Policy Statement

SNAAP recognises its moral and statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare and wellbeing of all children, young people, carers and families engaged in its activities.

We believe that every child and young person has the right to be protected from harm and abuse and to grow up in a safe, supportive and nurturing environment. We recognise that some children and families face additional vulnerabilities and barriers to accessing help, and we are committed to responding in ways that are inclusive, equitable and trauma-informed.

SNAAP promotes a culture of vigilance, professional curiosity, respectful challenge and continuous improvement in safeguarding practice.

2. Wellbeing Statement

SNAAP is committed to promoting wellbeing as an integral component of safeguarding. This includes:

- Supporting the emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing of children and young people accessing SNAAP's services.
 - Providing families with information, guidance, and signposting to promote positive wellbeing outcomes.
 - Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive appropriate supervision, training, and access to wellbeing support, particularly where they are affected by safeguarding concerns or exposure to distressing situations.
 - Creating a supportive organisational culture where concerns relating to welfare, safety, or wellbeing can be raised openly and responded to appropriately.
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3. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals working or volunteering for SNAAP, including:

- Senior managers and the Board of Trustees
- Paid staff and sessional workers
- Volunteers and agency staff
- Students or anyone working on behalf of SNAAP

All individuals are required to adhere to this policy and the procedures herein.

4. Safeguarding Responsibilities

SNAAP maintains a clear safeguarding structure to ensure accountability and effective oversight:

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Sarah Selby-Bird
- **Deputy Safeguarding Officer (DSO):** Carrie Wood
- **Safeguarding Trustee:** Cally Vaile - Oversees implementation of safeguarding strategy and compliance.
- **Health & Safety Trustee:** Petra Rouse - Ensures safe environments and compliance with statutory H&S duties.
- **Wellbeing Trustee:** Petra Rouse- Promotes the welfare and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and service users.

All trustees are collectively responsible for ensuring that safeguarding and wellbeing considerations are central to organisational governance.

5. Policy Aims

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children, young people, and vulnerable individuals who receive SNAAP's services.
 - Provide staff and volunteers with clear guidance on how to identify, respond to, and report safeguarding concerns.
 - Outline SNAAP's commitment to safe recruitment, training, and partnership working.
 - Embed wellbeing principles into safeguarding practice.
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6. Policy Commitments

SNAAP will:

- Value, listen to, and respect all children and young people.
- Adopt robust safeguarding and wellbeing procedures aligned with statutory guidance.
- Recruit staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary pre-employment checks are completed.
- Share safeguarding information responsibly with relevant agencies, in line with data protection legislation.
- Provide supervision, support, and training for all staff and volunteers.
- Promote a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous learning.
- Provide an effective Online Safety Policy.

- Use our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, involving children, young people, parents, carers and families appropriately.
 - Review and update this policy annually.
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7. Recognising Vulnerability and Barriers to Support

SNAAP recognises that some children, young people and families may be at increased risk of harm or may face barriers to seeking or receiving help. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Children with disabilities or special educational needs
- Very young children or adolescents
- Children experiencing poverty, housing insecurity or food insecurity
- Children from minoritised ethnic or cultural backgrounds
- Children affected by domestic abuse, parental mental ill-health, substance misuse or criminal exploitation
- Children who identify as LGBTQ+
- Families with limited access to services due to language, digital exclusion or mistrust of professionals

Staff and volunteers are expected to take these factors into account, adapt communication and support accordingly, and seek additional advice where necessary.

8. Definitions of Abuse

SNAAP recognises the four main categories of abuse as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023)*:

1. **Physical Abuse** – Physical harm caused by actions such as hitting, shaking, or burning.
2. **Emotional Abuse** – Persistent ill-treatment that adversely affects emotional development.
3. **Sexual Abuse** – Forcing or enticing a child into sexual activity, whether or not the child understands or consents. This can be physical contact or non-contact.
4. **Neglect** – Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs.

All forms of abuse can have serious, long-term effects on health and wellbeing.

9. Child-on-Child Abuse

SNAAP recognises that children and young people can be harmed by other children. Child-on-child abuse may include:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Physical abuse
- Sexual violence or sexual harassment

- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Emotional abuse or coercive behaviour

All child-on-child abuse will be taken seriously. Staff must not dismiss concerns as 'banter' or a normal part of growing up. The needs of both the child who has been harmed and the child who has caused harm will be considered, with safeguarding and welfare as the priority.

10. Recognising Abuse and Neglect

It is not the responsibility of staff to determine whether abuse has occurred; however, all staff must be vigilant and report any concerns to the DSL or DSO immediately. Indicators may include unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, fearfulness, poor hygiene, or developmental delays.

11. Safe Recruitment and Selection

SNAAP applies a robust recruitment process in line with *Safer Recruitment* principles:

- All candidates must complete an application form and provide identity verification.
 - References are obtained and verified.
 - Interviews are conducted by at least two individuals, one of whom has completed Safer Recruitment Training.
 - All gaps in employment or inconsistencies are explored.
 - Enhanced DBS checks are mandatory before unsupervised access to children.
 - Induction includes safeguarding and wellbeing procedures, followed by a probationary period.
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12. Responding to Allegations or Concerns

When a child makes an allegation of abuse:

- Remain calm and listen carefully.
- Avoid leading questions and do not promise confidentiality.
- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing.
- Record the information accurately using the child's words.
- Report immediately to the DSL or DSO.

It is not the role of staff to investigate; this responsibility lies with statutory agencies.

13. Recording, Reporting and Secure Storage of Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns, disclosures or allegations must be:

- Recorded promptly, clearly and factually using the child's own words where possible
- Signed, dated and passed to the DSL or DSO without delay

Safeguarding records are:

- Stored securely, separately from general records
- Accessed only by authorised personnel
- Retained in line with SNAAP's Data Protection and Retention policies

Electronic records are password protected. Paper records are kept in locked storage.

Information is shared strictly on a need-to-know basis.

14. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

SNAAP recognises the importance of confidentiality but understands that it must not prevent safeguarding.

- Staff must not promise absolute confidentiality to a child or family
- Information will be shared where there is a concern that a child is at risk of harm
- Information sharing will follow UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and local safeguarding guidance

The safety and welfare of the child is always the overriding consideration.

15. Professional Challenge and Escalation

SNAAP is committed to respectful professional challenge where safeguarding concerns are not being adequately addressed.

Staff are encouraged to:

- Question decisions where they believe a child remains at risk
- Escalate concerns through the DSL, management or trustees if necessary
- Use local authority escalation procedures where appropriate

No member of staff or volunteer will be penalised for raising concerns in good faith.

16. Site Security, Lone Working and Health & Safety

SNAAP takes reasonable steps to ensure safe environments for children, including:

- Risk assessments for activities and venues
- Appropriate supervision ratios
- Secure entry and exit procedures where applicable
- Lone working procedures to protect staff and service users
- First aid provision and accident reporting

This policy should be read in conjunction with SNAAP's Health & Safety, Lone Working and First Aid policies.

17. Complaints and Whistleblowing

SNAAP is committed to creating an environment where concerns can be raised safely.

- Complaints relating to safeguarding may be made to the DSL, Manager or Chair of Trustees
- Whistleblowing concerns can be raised without fear of reprisal
- Serious concerns may be escalated to external agencies such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or NSPCC

All concerns will be taken seriously and handled appropriately. Please refer to our *Safeguarding Complaints Policy* and *Whistleblowing Policy* for further information.

18. Reporting Procedures

Designated Contacts:

- **DSL:** Sarah Selby-Bird – Family Support Worker
 - Tel: 01227 367555 / 07842 127825
- **Manager:** Carrie Wood
 - Tel: 01227 367555 / 07821 881610
- **Chair of Trustees:** Stephanie Swan
 - Tel: 01227 367555

External Contacts (for emergencies):

- Kent Children's Social Services: 03000 41 11 11 (03000 419191 out of hours)
- Canterbury Police Station: 01622 690 690
- NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

If none of the designated persons can be reached, contact any member of staff or the Board of Trustees without delay.

19. Staff Wellbeing and Support

SNAAP acknowledges that safeguarding responsibilities can be emotionally demanding. The organisation will:

- Provide regular supervision and debriefing opportunities.
- Offer access to wellbeing resources, including mental health support.
- Encourage open discussion of emotional impact without stigma.

- Ensure staff and volunteers feel valued and supported in fulfilling their safeguarding roles.
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20. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is underpinned by current legislation and statutory guidance, including but not limited to:

- *Children Act 1989 & 2004*
 - *Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023)*
 - *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)*
 - *Children and Social Work (Act 2017)*
 - *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Act 2006)*
 - *Care Standards Act 2000*
 - *Human Rights Act 1998*
 - *Equality Act 2010*
 - *Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR*
 - *Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)*
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21. Monitoring and Review

SNAAP is committed to continuous improvement in safeguarding and wellbeing practice. The Board of Trustees, led by the Safeguarding Trustee, will:

- Review this policy annually or sooner if legislation or best practice changes.
 - Ensure regular audits of safeguarding procedures.
 - Monitor training, supervision, and staff wellbeing initiatives.
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22. Review Information

Policy Approved by: SNAAP Board of Trustees

Date of Approval: December 2025

Next Review Due: December 2026
