



Off the Ropes (OTR)

Charity 1180290

Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy

(Recommended to be reviewed & updated every 1 years)

Policy raised & agreed: February 2024
Policy last reviewed: February 2025
Policy updated: December 2025

1. Policy statement

Our charitable activities include working with children and vulnerable people. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All individuals must be valued and treated with equality and fairness, regardless of their age, gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, ability, disability, religion or belief or sexual identity. Some adults may need additional safeguards and/or protection, known as Adults at Risk.

We take a zero-tolerant approach to any form of abuse and work proactively to ensure our programmes, staff, volunteers and environment are safe, respectful and supportive.

A lead trustee will be appointed to provide oversight of safeguarding and to lead on any incident investigation and reporting.

Safeguarding should be appropriately reflected in other relevant policies and procedures.

2. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working on our behalf, including our trustees and other volunteers, also visitors or partners working on our premises.

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. These include, but are not limited to other UK regulators, if applicable.

It includes all Off The Ropes activities involving under-18s, including supervised gym sessions, outreach work, 1-to-1 mentoring and events.

3. Legal & regulatory framework

Our safeguarding responsibilities follow:

- Children Act 1989 & 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR

- Local authority safeguarding partnership procedures

4. Definitions

Child: Anyone under the age of 18.

Young person: Someone aged 16-18, particularly those in transition to adulthood.

Adult at risk: An adult at risk is a person aged 18 years or older and at risk of experiencing abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and/or support and because of those needs is unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect or risk thereof. They may also lack the mental capacity or ability to make a decision.

Abuse: Physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, exploitation, or online abuse.

DBS Regulated Activity: Activities requiring enhanced DBS + barred list check.

5. Safeguarding principles

We 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 work in a way that protects them, with all staff and volunteers essential to follow our Code of Conduct and boundaries.
- 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.
- We act early to prevent escalation.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Leads safeguarding across the organisation.
- Receives all concerns and referrals.
- Liaises with the local authority MASH team.
- Ensures training and safer recruitment.

Deputy DSL

- Acts when the DSL is unavailable.

All staff & volunteers

- Attend safeguarding induction training
- Report concerns immediately
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Record incidents factually and securely

Trustees must:

- Oversee safeguarding governance
- Ensure compliance with legislation
- Review policy annually

7. Safer recruitment

- Enhanced DBS checks for all staff/volunteers working with under-18s for more than xhours per week.....??
- Risk-based DBS decisions for any “non-regular” roles
- Two references
- ID & right-to-work verification
- Safeguarding interview questions
- Probation period monitoring

8. Code of conduct when working with under-18s

Adults must:

- Use positive, encouraging language.
- Work in open, visible space.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries at all times.
- Report incidents immediately.

Adults must not:

- Communicate privately with young people online.
- Transport young people alone (two-adult rule wherever possible).
- Use physical punishment or humiliating language.
- Allow or ignore unsafe behaviour.

9. Safeguarding concerns – types of abuse

Harm and risks you must be alert to, whether online or in person, include:

- sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation
- criminal exploitation
- a charity's culture, which may allow poor behaviour and poor accountability
- people abusing a position of trust they hold within a charity
- bullying or harassment
- health and safety
- commercial exploitation
- cyber abuse
- discrimination on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010
- people targeting your charity
- data breaches, including those under General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- negligent treatment
- domestic abuse
- self-neglect
- physical or emotional abuse
- extremism and radicalisation
- forced marriage
- modern slavery
- human trafficking
- female genital mutilation

At Off The Ropes we should be vigilant for signs, symptoms or indications of abuse or mistreatment of children, young people and vulnerable adults. This includes conduct at home or at school, outside of our responsibilities.

Possible signs include but not limited to include:

- Visible injuries for which there is no reasonable or sensible explanation
- Child or young adult appear hungry, dirty and/or inadequately dressed
- Child or young adult loosing or gaining weight or other deterioration in wellbeing
- Reluctance to go home or to school

10. Reporting procedure

If a crime is in progress, or an individual in immediate danger, call the police - 999, as you would in any other circumstances.

If not immediate danger: follow the flow below:

- Listen calmly and avoid leading questions
- Reassure eg “you’ve done the right thing in telling me”
- Do not promise confidentiality!
- Record the concern immediately, factually
- Report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within the hour.
- DSL will:
 - assess risk
 - consult MASH (local authority)
 - escalate if required
 - store records securely

If you are a beneficiary, or member of the public, make your concerns known to a member of our team, who will alert a senior member of the charity.

The trustees are mindful of their reporting obligations to the Charity Commission in respect of Serious Incident Reporting and, if applicable, other regulator. They are aware of the Government guidance on handling safeguarding allegations.

Trustees. This safeguarding policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board annually.

Trustees are aware of and will comply with the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding and protecting people and also the 10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-for-charities-and-trustees>

A lead trustee will be given responsibility for the oversight of all aspects of safeguarding.
This will include:

- Creating a culture of respect, in which everyone feels safe and able to speak up.
- An annual review of safeguarding
- Regular reporting (eg Safeguarding to be a standing item on regular meeting agendas)
- Providing oversight of any lapses in safeguarding.
- And ensuring that any issues are properly investigated and dealt with quickly, fairly, and sensitively, and any reporting to the Police/statutory authorities is carried out.
- Leading the organisation in way that makes everyone feels safe and able to speak up.
- Ensuring safeguarding risk assessments are carried out and appropriate action taken to minimise these risks, as part of our risk management processes.
- Ensuring that all relevant checks are carried out in recruiting staff and volunteers.
- Planning programmes/activities to consider potential safeguarding risks, to ensure these are adequately mitigated.
- Ensuring that all appointments that require DBS clearance and safeguarding training are identified, including the level of DBS and any training required.
- Ensuring that a central register is maintained and subject to regular monitoring to ensure that DBS clearances and training are kept up-to-date.
- Ensuring that safeguarding requirements (eg DBS) and responsibilities are reflected in job descriptions, appraisal objectives and personal development plans, as appropriate.
- Listening and engaging, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and others and involving them as appropriate.
- Responding to any concerns sensitively and acting quickly to address these.
- Ensuring that personal data is stored and managed in a safe way that is compliant with data protection regulations, including valid consent to use any imagery or video.
- Making staff, volunteers, and others aware of:
 - Our safeguarding procedures and their specific safeguarding responsibilities on induction, with regular updates/reminders, as necessary.
 - The signs of potential abuse and how to report these.

Everyone. To be aware of our procedures, undertake any necessary training, be aware of the risks and signs of potential abuse and, if you have concerns, to report these immediately.

In working with other organisations, including any grant making, we will comply with Charity Commission guidance by carrying out relevant due diligence and having a written agreement that sets out:

- Our relationship.
- The role of each organisation.
- Monitoring and reporting arrangements.

11. Information sharing

We share information only:

- With consent where appropriate.
- Without consent if a child is at risk of significant harm

Records are stored in encrypted or password-protected systems.

12. Parental consent & participation

- Under-18s require parental/carer consent to attend sessions.
- Emergency contact information must be collected.
- Medical information must be reviewed for risk assessment

13. Training requirements

- Induction safeguarding training for all staff / volunteers
- Annual refresher training
- DSL receives advanced safeguarding training every 2 years



SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FORM

Date of referral:	
Date of incident:	<i>[Could be a number of incidents or concerns, list all seperate incidents]</i>
Referrer details:	<i>[Name/club/role, incl contact details]</i>
Who is this report about:	<i>[If relates to more than one person, please specify about who they are and whether they have specific needs, such as disabilities, special education needs or other vulnerabilities. Include whose welfare you are concerned about or adult whose behaviour concerns you]</i>
Family info:	<i>[Details of mother, father, carer / guardian, siblings]</i>
Family awareness:	<i>[Has the family been spoken to? What view did they express? Consent for information sharing?]</i>

<p>How do you know about the concerns being reported?</p>	<p><i>[Directly witnessed a concern, or been told about it?]</i></p>
<p>Details of your concerns:</p>	<p><i>[What has happened? Where did it happen? When did it happen? Who is involved, and who did what?, why did it happen]</i></p>
<p>Any actions taken:</p>	<p><i>[eg police called, reported to social services. Who has been spoken to about the matter? Any suspended persons?]</i></p>
<p>Any witnesses:</p>	<p><i>[Details of anyone who might have witnessed anything relevant]</i></p>
<p>Are you aware of any other evidence which supports your concerns?</p>	<p><i>[eg photos or videos, doctor or medical reports]</i></p>