

# POL61 - APM Safeguarding Policy

## 1. Introduction

APM is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people, and at-risk adults. We aim to provide a safe and secure environment for all individuals involved with our organisation, including employees, volunteers, contractors, and beneficiaries, while complying with UK safeguarding legislation such as the Children Act 1989 and 2004, the Care Act 2014, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, and the Equality Act 2010.

APM is particularly committed to safeguarding children under 18 and vulnerable adults at risk in any activities we run or support, on or off our premises. We achieve this through robust arrangements to prevent abuse, respond appropriately to concerns, and ensure a secure environment for all.

This policy lays out the commitments made by APM and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy is not part of your employment contract and may be amended or withdrawn at any time.

## 2. Definitions

<b>Safeguarding</b>	Safeguarding is the legal duty to protect the health, well-being, and rights of children, young people, and adults at risk, ensuring they live free from abuse, harm, and neglect.
<b>Child</b>	Anyone under the age of 18. A young person is classed at 16-25 years with certain disabilities.
<b>At-risk Adult</b>	<p>Defined under the Care Act 2014 as individuals aged 18 or over who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have care and support needs (whether or not these needs are being met);</li> <li>• Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect; and</li> <li>• Are unable to protect themselves as a result of their care and support needs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples of vulnerability include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical disabilities or sensory impairments.</li> <li>• Mental health conditions such as depression, schizophrenia, or anxiety.</li> <li>• Learning disabilities or cognitive impairments, including dementia.</li> <li>• Age-related frailty or illnesses.</li> <li>• Chronic illnesses requiring significant care, such as cancer or diabetes.</li> <li>• Situational vulnerabilities, such as homelessness, substance misuse, or financial exploitation</li> </ul>
<b>Serious Incident Reporting</b>	A serious incident is "an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to your charity's beneficiaries, staff, volunteers or others who come into contact with your charity through its work"

## 3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed by APM, workers, volunteers, trustees, contractors, consultants, agency staff and anyone participating in activities organised by or on behalf of the organisation.

## 4. Our commitment

Everyone has a responsibility to uphold the safety and well-being of children, and at-risk adults and to act in accordance with this policy to prevent harm and promote a safe environment for all. A good approach to safeguarding includes clearly assessing risk and taking actions to mitigate these risks:

- Prevent harm those most vulnerable and at risk in our care or sphere of influence.
- Develop and implement robust safeguarding policies.
- Appoint trained Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL).
- Provide role-appropriate safeguarding training for all relevant individuals.
- Follow safer recruitment practices, including DBS checks where appropriate.
- Respond to safeguarding concerns promptly and appropriately.
- Comply with all relevant UK safeguarding laws and sector regulations.
- Foster a culture of safety, transparency, and accountability.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

All those who work for or with APM share the responsibility for safeguarding children and at-risk adults but there are individuals within APM with specific safeguarding responsibilities

It is expected that all staff and associated personnel would contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy. Also, that they report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an APM staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member.

**Head of People and Facilities** – ensures that all staff and contractors are made aware of the policy and that it is updated as per the quality management system guidelines.

**Executive Lead, Deputy CEO** – ensures adherence to legal and regulatory standards.

**Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL):** Oversees safeguarding within the organisation, ensures appropriate policies and procedures are in place, and acts as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns.

- Online Community Manager
- Senior Volunteer Manager
- People Generalist

**Leadership Team:** accountable for embedding safeguarding in their directorate. This includes making sure that employees are adequately trained.

**All Staff and all Volunteers:** have a responsibility to understand, uphold, and implement the safeguarding policy and report any concerns to the appropriate DSL.

**Nominated Trustees and Senior Management:** act as a champion, review as per the quality management process (QMS) or as new changes/legislation come into force.

## 6. APM safeguarding at events

We are committed to delivering safe and secure events. These can be both face to face and virtual. It is important that we provide an environment where individuals can be treated with dignity and respect.

At events we expect everyone to conduct themselves in a professional manner and be respectful of all other guests, members and staff. Bullying, discrimination, harassment or inappropriate behaviour of any kind before/during and after an event will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to:

- Making verbal or non-verbal comments which reinforce prejudice, are considered discriminatory or unwanted, relating to gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, race, age, or religion.
- Engaging in behaviour or actions that are considered threatening or inappropriate.
- Demonstrating violent or criminal behaviour.
- Behaving inappropriately towards another guest or member of the staff in the form of unwanted/unsolicited attention.
- Behaving in a way that intimidates or makes others feel unsafe.
- Bringing or consuming any unlawful drugs at or during an event.

We will not accept any of the above-mentioned behaviours and will take the appropriate action to either warn the offender or remove them from the event.

If you experience or witness any behaviour which violates this policy or have any concerns for anyone's safety at our events, please contact either a member of the APM Events Team or a member of the venue staff who will direct you or escalate accordingly.

## 7. Supervision

For any APM run or supported activities, outlined below, involving children or vulnerable adults at least two adults who are not vulnerable will be in attendance at all times (including during provision of transport for children or vulnerable adults).

- Educational visits by children to APM premises or APM volunteer events.
- Visits by APM staff or volunteers to schools or other educational establishments.
- Apprenticeship connected events.
- Mentoring activities.

## 8. How to report a safeguarding concern

Concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults or for anyone engaged in APM-run or supported activities could arise in a variety of ways and in a range of situations; at work, events/conferences, volunteer related activities, telephone or online activities,

If any of our staff or volunteers have concerns about customers, colleagues, or volunteers, we expect them to identify and report their concerns internally in the first instance to the appropriate DSL or responsible persons outline below. Please follow our safeguarding procedures and maintain appropriate boundaries.

You can raise your concern ideally in writing using the **Safeguarding Reporting Form**. It is important that you set out clearly:

- the background and details of the suspected wrongdoing
- whether you've raised the concern with anyone else and their response
- the names of any individuals involved
- any relevant dates
- any documentation/evidence

**Employee or contractor** - report any concerns or incidents to the DSL for HR

**Volunteer** - report any concerns or incidents to the DSL for volunteers

**Online community members** - report any concerns or incidents to the DSL for Online Community

**Trustee/Contractor/Volunteer** - report any concerns or incidents to the APM Company Secretary.

If for any reason you are uncomfortable about reporting this to any of the above, alternatively you can report your concerns to the CEO/Deputy CEO or a Trustee or via our dedicated safeguarding inbox - [safeguarding@apm.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@apm.org.uk).

If you genuinely feel unable to raise the matter internally, you can also contact the independent charity, Protect on 020 7404 6609 for independent advice.

In some cases, it may be necessary to ask you to attend a meeting to clarify the nature of your concern. This will be arranged as soon as possible. You may, if you wish, bring a colleague or a trade union representative with you to the meeting. Where it is considered appropriate, a member of the HR department may also be present.

## 9. Responding to disclosures

We will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in associated policies).

## 10. What will happen next

The DSL is responsible for assessing the information and will need to determine if immediate action is required (most likely to be in cases where there is an immediate and serious risk to someone's life) and act on that.

Any incidents of alleged abuse will need to be **investigated** and resolved in the most appropriate way:

- In cases of allegations against an employee the staff disciplinary procedure may be invoked.
- In cases of allegations against a volunteer the Professional Conduct Procedural Rules may be invoked if the volunteer is a member of APM or a Chartered Project Professional.
- If the report suggests that a criminal offence has been committed, the matter will be referred to the police, social services, and /or the person's employer (if not directly employed by APM) or the Charity Commission if appropriate.
- All reports will be logged in a central register maintained by the HR Department.

## 11. Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout safeguarding processes, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis, kept secure, and compliant with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## 12. Safeguarding records

The DSL is responsible for maintaining records about any safeguarding concerns which should include the following information:

- The name of the DSL
- Date concern received
- Who else the concern has been discussed with
- Action taken
- Rationale for any decisions taken
- Details of any external organisations reported or referred to
- Information sharing (who, when and why)

Records should be used to compile concerns log of ongoing cases and actions which can in turn, be used for reporting internally, and if necessary, externally.

All safeguarding records should be stored securely by the Head of HR or the HR DSL.

## 13. Monitoring and reviewing

This policy will be reviewed annually and approved by the Board of Trustees. Updates will reflect changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational needs.

## 14. Relevant policies

This policy should be read alongside our policies on:

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Recruitment Policy

## 15. Additional support and guidance

Employees who require further information on safeguarding are encouraged to contact their line manager or the HR team. APM will endeavour to provide up to date support and guidance to all when it comes to safeguarding and their duty to protect from harm. If you think someone, such as a child or vulnerable adult with care and support needs, is in immediate danger you should call 999.

More information can be found in:

- [Keeping children safe in education](#)
- Local Authority Children's Services or Adult Safeguarding Board
- NSPCC Helpline (for children): 0808 800 5000
- Police (in emergencies): 999
- [NSPCC](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

### Version control

Author	Reason for revision	Version number	Date
Sarah Slater/Debbie Bird/Rosemary Mathews	New policy	1	14/10/2021
Tanya Cooke	Rebranded policy for link in handbook	2	17/08/2021
Caroline Brooks & Tanya Cooke	Reviewed and updated. Approved by A&A Committee.	3	19/02/2025