



THE SCHOOL OF
CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

Adult and Child/Young Person
Safeguarding Policy

Contents

CONTEXT	4
STATEMENTS AND AIMS	4
POLICY STATEMENT	4
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT	4
POLICY AIM	5
SAFEGUARDING PERSONNEL	5
LEAD AND DEPUTY FOR SAFEGUARDING	5
LINE OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SAFEGUARDING	6
WHY DO WE NEED A SAFEGUARDING POLICY?	6
DEFINITIONS	6
DEFINITION OF A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON	6
DEFINITION OF AN ADULT AT RISK	7
RELATED POLICIES	7
DATA PROTECTION	7
CONFIDENTIALITY	7
WHISTLEBLOWING	7
INFORMATION SHARING	7
SAFER RECRUITMENT	7
INDUCTION AND TRAINING	8
WORKING PRACTICES	8
CONSENT	8
LONE AND ONE TO ONE WORKING	8
HOME VISITS	9
YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WORK IN OUR ORGANISATION	9
CODES OF CONDUCT	9
RECOGNISING ABUSE IN CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS AT RISK	9
HANDLING DISCLOSURES	10
RESPONDING TO CONCERNS	11
SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL FLOWCHART	11
RECORD KEEPING	12
HANDLING ALLEGATIONS / DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS / DISCIPLINARY & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES	12
BULLYING AND HARASSMENT	12
ONLINE SAFETY	13
WHY DO WE NEED TO INCLUDE ONLINE SAFETY?	13
ONLINE SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT:	13
WHAT ARE THE RISKS?	13
SOCIAL MEDIA	14
WHAT DO I DO IF I AM CONCERNED?	14

ONLINE SAFETY REFERRAL FLOWCHART – CHILD AND ADULT.....	15
SAFEGUARDING PRACTICAL GUIDANCE	16
PHOTOGRAPHY & FILMING GUIDANCE.....	16
TRANSPORT.....	16
ACTIVITIES, EVENTS AND VISITING SPEAKERS/ACTIVITY LEADERS.....	16
ADULT GOES MISSING.....	16
FIRST AID.....	16
BUILDINGS AND VENUES.....	16
SAFECIC RECOMMENDATIONS.....	17
POLICY DATE	17
POLICY REVIEW DATE: 17 TH JANUARY 2024.....	17
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: 16 TH JANUARY 2025.....	17
ANNEX 1 – PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT	18

Safeguarding Policy

Organisation Name

The School of Contemplative Life ("SoCL").

Context

- The SoCL is a charity incorporated in England and Wales
- Our charity number is 1195159 and we work in England and Wales
- Our registered office is at 53 Portland Street, Cheltenham, GL52 2NX
- Our purpose is to teach meditation as a simple pathway to peace, community and oneness
- Our aims can be found [here](#)
- We work with the general public (adults) and school staff
- At present, we do not employ staff. Approximately 8 volunteers support our mission
- Each week, there are over 150 participants at our online practice sessions and we reach others through our schedule of events and special projects

The SoCL does not run any activity that is primarily for at risk groups which may include adults at risk, children and/or young people.

However, from time to time, adults who may be considered vulnerable or at risk may engage with us and our staff may be working in environments where children and young people are present (i.e. schools).

It is possible that, in these circumstances, statements may be made by a child, young person or adult, or questions asked by them, take the form of a disclosure of abuse. Like all organisations, the SoCL has a duty to safeguard any children, young people or adults at risk with whom we have contact. We take our responsibility very seriously and are committed to safeguarding.

If circumstances change, we will review this policy.

Statements and Aims

Policy Statement

We recognise that the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk is paramount and that *all* have equal rights of protection. We have a duty of care whenever they have contact with our organisation, and we will do everything we can to provide a safe environment within which our activities are delivered.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Participant Code of Conduct included as Annex 1.

Equal Opportunities Statement

We recognise that anyone can become subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of:

- Age
- Culture
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Comments and actions that contribute to discrimination, harassment or victimisation are not acceptable and will be challenged. Such incidents will be recorded and shared with relevant agencies when necessary and appropriate.

We will:

- Treat everyone with respect
- Carefully recruit and select all staff - whether paid or unpaid
- Respond to concerns and allegations appropriately

When there are concerns about the welfare of any child, young person or adult at risk, all responsible adults in our organisation are expected to share those concerns, without delay, with the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding.

Our policy is approved by our trustees and will be reviewed and updated annually. We will publish the policy on our website so it is publicly available and promote this policy to all staff (paid or unpaid) through induction, training and supervision.

Policy Aim

As members of SAFEcic, we aim at all times to attain best safeguarding practice throughout all our activities.

We endeavour to provide a safe and friendly environment. We will achieve this by adhering strictly to this policy, guidance and risk assessments. Our organisation holds current Public Liability Insurance which covers all our activities.

Safeguarding Personnel

Lead and Deputy for Safeguarding

Our Lead for Safeguarding is:

Name: Catherine Matlock

Job role: Volunteer

Contact details: 07443 475554 or catherineelizabeth5@yahoo.com

Our Deputy for Safeguarding is:

Name: Rachel Sharpe

Job role: Volunteer

Contact details: 07834 626426 or rachel@schoolofcontemplativelife.com

Their role is to oversee and ensure that our safeguarding policy, which includes Online Safety, is fully implemented and that we attain SAFEcic standards.

Their responsibilities are:

- Monitoring and recording concerns
- Making referrals to social care, or police, as relevant, without delay
- Liaison with other agencies
- Arranging training for all staff and trustees

The Deputy for Safeguarding should be available to support or cover for the Lead. S/he will also handle any complaints or allegations against the Lead for Safeguarding if appropriate. It is important that the Lead and Deputy for Safeguarding are unconnected.

Line of accountability for safeguarding

The responsibility for safeguarding at board level is shared between members. Safeguarding is on the organisation's risk register.

Why do we need a Safeguarding Policy?

All organisations that work or come into contact with children, young people and/or adults at risk need to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Government guidance is clear that all organisations working with children, young people, adults at risk, parents, carers and/or families have responsibilities for safeguarding. It is important to remember that children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and that such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

To undertake these responsibilities, we:

- Have senior staff and trustees committed to safeguarding
- Are clear about peoples' responsibilities and accountability
- Have a culture of listening to everyone who comes into contact with the charity
- Undertake safer recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers
- Have procedures for safeguarding children and young people and adults at risk
- Have procedures for dealing with allegations against, and concerns about, any staff
- Make sure staff, paid and unpaid, have mandatory induction and further safeguarding training, supervision, reviews and support as appropriate
- Have agreements about working with other organisations and agencies

Definitions

Definition of a child/young person

There is no single law that defines the age of a child across the UK. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK government in 1991, states that a child "means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier" (Article 1, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989). A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (16th in Scotland).

Definition of an adult at risk

There is no single law that defines an adult at risk across the UK. An adult at risk is a person over the age of 18 years (16 in Scotland) and is:

- Having needs for care and support, and
- Experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect and
- As a result of those care needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Related Policies

Data Protection

We will treat any personal information by which an individual can be identified, for example, name, address, and email, in accordance with the provisions of Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and will not share information with any third party, except where required by law.

Confidentiality

This policy is in line with government guidance about confidentiality.

We fully endorse the principal of the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, overriding any obligations of confidence we may hold to others. No one working, or involved, with our organisation can promise absolute confidentiality. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a “need to know” basis.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern externally about a person or practice within the organisation, which will affect others in an illegal and or harmful way.

Our organisation promotes the sharing of any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk as soon as possible with the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding.

If individuals reporting their concerns within our organisation do not feel they have been acted upon, then we support their right to report these concerns to the Local Authority Designated Office (LADO) (England and Wales only) social care services, the police, and /or the Charity Commission. They can also contact the [NSPCC dedicated helplines](#) and the charity [Protect](#) for advice and support.

All media enquiries will be handled by Rachel Sharpe (rachel@schoolofcontemplativelife.com).

Information Sharing

Timely and accurate written records play an essential role in safeguarding individuals, who may have suffered, are suffering or at significant risk of suffering harm. It is important that records are shared at the appropriate time when necessary. Within our organisation the decision to share written information, and with whom, will be undertaken by the Lead or the Deputy for safeguarding.

Safer Recruitment

Our organisation is committed to safe recruitment in line with the relevant legislation and guidance from government and relevant [Regulatory Authorities](#) for recruiting all staff, paid or unpaid. We do this by:

- Advertising paid vacancies with a clear commitment required to safeguarding
- Assigning all posts detailed job descriptions

- Obtaining full personal details via an application form (not CVs) and, for any future roles that relate to regulated activity (i.e. working in schools) with particular relevance to previous work with children, young people and adults at risk
- When a candidate is selected for interview the relevant criminal declaration form will be sent for completion as set out by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, as amended
- Always taking up two written references, one from the most recent employer or education establishment
- Undertaking all interviews face to face, based on the job description
- Ensuring at least one person on each interview panel will have undertaken Safer Recruitment training, in line with the Charity Commission safe recruitment guidelines.
- Having sound procedures and recording for interviewing to ensure we are satisfied, and can evidence that the applicant is appropriate and suitable

Any appointment will only be confirmed subject to:

- A satisfactory ID and criminal records check at the appropriate level, including [Certificates of Good Conduct](#) for foreign nationals and the [International Child Protection Certificate \(ICPC\)](#) for anyone who works with children and has lived in the UK and also travelled overseas
- A follow up of written references by telephone if relevant to the vacant post
- A check of essential qualifications and any specific professional details
- Confirmation of the [Right to Work in the UK](#) for employed personnel
- Fitness to work as relevant

Induction and Training

We have a clear induction and training strategy with clear job descriptions and responsibilities and all relevant procedures. All new staff, paid and unpaid, will receive induction training as soon as possible and sign to record they have:

- Received and understood this policy
- Been given any relevant resources
- Understood the commitment to safeguarding training

When needed, staff will receive further safeguarding training, at the appropriate level, as soon as possible. We also agree a probationary period with clear goals and then provide supervision/mentoring and/or appraisals at regular intervals with Rachel Sharpe.

Updated safeguarding training is normally required every 2 years (online) or three years (face to face).

Staff working directly with at risk groups will also undertake the free online government training for [PREVENT Channel](#) and [FGM](#).

Working Practices

Consent

When consent is required for any activity we will, unless it is an emergency, obtain consent from the individual if of sufficient age and/or understanding. Where relevant, we will ensure we fulfil our obligations under the Mental Capacity Legislation on supporting, where possible, the individual's right to make their own decisions. Any decisions made should be the least restrictive and recorded.

Lone and One to One Working

We do not conduct lone or one to one working with children and adults at risk to protect both individuals.

Home Visits

We do not provide home visits.

Young People who work in our Organisation

No young people under 18 work or volunteer in our organisation.

Codes of Conduct

We aim to provide a safe environment free from discrimination, upholding and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. We undertake to:

- Treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Ensure everyone's welfare and safety is paramount at all times
- Maintain professional boundaries both face to face and when using technology
- Always listen to individuals and take account of their wishes and feelings
- Always act in a professional way and not accept bullying, swearing or other disruptive behaviour
- Only use physical contact if absolutely necessary
- Avoid being alone with children, young people and adults at risk whenever possible
- Listen to, and act upon, any disclosures, allegations, or concerns of abuse
- Participate in approved safeguarding training at appropriate levels
- Ensure restraint is only used as an emergency action to protect from harm. All use of restraint will be reported and recorded by the member of staff concerned to the Lead or Deputy for safeguarding and to the relevant manager. Restraint is always a last resort when de-escalation techniques have not sufficed.
- Follow our safeguarding policy at all times
- Ensure all participants sign up to and adhere to our Participant Code of Conduct and Event Terms and Conditions copies of which are available on our website

Recognising Abuse in Children Young People and Adults at Risk

The following list is for guidance only. It is important to be observant, listen to what is being said and record. (e.g. is what you are observing and being told about an injury consistent with the injury?)

- Abuse related to faith or belief
- Alcohol and Substance misuse
- Breast Ironing
- Carrying offensive weapons
- Child criminal and sexual exploitation including County Lines
- Child on child abuse, including sexual violence and upskirting
- Concealed pregnancy
- Criminal exploitation
- Discriminatory
- Domestic abuse, including "honour" based abuse
- Emotional
- Exploitive use of technology
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Financial or material abuse
- Forced marriage
- Gangs
- Gambling
- Hate and "mate" crime
- Hazing and initiation rites

- Hoarding
- Modern slavery
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Online safety
- Organisational or institutional
- Psychological
- Physical
- Radicalisation
- Self-neglect
- Sexual
- Trafficking

Handling Disclosures

When a disclosure is made by a child, young person or adult at risk it is important to remember to:

- Take what you are being told seriously
- Stay calm and reassure
- Do not investigate
- Do not delay

And always:

- Seek advice from the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding
- Make a careful recording of anything you are told or observe, date and sign.

A disclosure may come from someone telling you:

- They have or are being abused
- They have concerns about someone else
- They are themselves abusing or likely to abuse someone else

Responding to Concerns

Safeguarding Referral Flowchart

We ensure and emphasise that everyone in our team understands and knows how to share any concerns immediately with the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding. Everyone, including the Lead, Deputy and Additional Senior Lead for Safeguarding (trustee), will deal with concerns using the following:

Step One:

If you are worried a child, young person or adult at risk has been abused because:

- you have seen something
- someone says they have been abused
- somebody else has told you they are concerned
- there has been an allegation against a colleague
- there has been an anonymous allegation
- an adult has disclosed that they were abused as a child
- a child, young person or adult say they are abusing someone else.

Step Two:

Check this safeguarding policy for guidance. Talk to the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding without delay. If they are implicated, then call Rachel Candlin (trustee) on 07740 856897.

Step Three:

The Lead, Deputy or Additional Senior Lead should refer the concern to the relevant adult's or children's social care service and/or the Police and follow up the referral in writing within 24 hours.

For England and Wales, in cases of allegations against a "person of trust" with a "duty of care" towards a child, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will co-ordinate the next procedural steps.

Under "whistle blowing", anyone can refer directly to the Police, social care services, the LADO for personnel child abuse allegations (England & Wales only), relevant regulatory authorities, or the NSPCC (child concerns only) and also the charity Protect for support when they are concerned the organisation is not managing safeguarding concerns appropriately.

Any consultations should not delay a referral.
In an emergency do not delay: dial 999

**CONSULT,
MONITOR
AND RECORD**
Sign/Date/Time
*Include name and job
role*

When the concern is about the welfare of a child or adult at risk from schools, colleges, health providers, GP practices, prisons or social care settings, you should refer to that organisation's Lead for Safeguarding in the first instance. Inform the Lead or Deputy of your organisation that you have referred a concern.

Record Keeping

At all times when required, and especially where there is a safeguarding concern, we are committed to keeping records which are:

- Recorded on a safeguarding incident form
- Of sufficient details of child, young person or adult at risk to identify individual who is subject of concern and any significant others
- Accurate and factual/based on fact, as a true record of:
 - what has been monitored/observed
 - what has been said and by whom
 - what has given cause for concern
 - what action has and/or will be taken including the reason for those actions
 - the reason stated for no action being taken and by whom
- Non judgmental
- Timely (within 24 hours)
- Signed, timed and dated by the author and co- signed by the Lead or Deputy
- Shared as appropriate by the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding
- Stored safely and securely by the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding

Handling Allegations / Dealing with Complaints / Disciplinary & Grievance Procedures

Our policies and procedures are in line with the statutory guidance, the relevant Regulatory Authorities (see above) our guidelines, disciplinary, complaints and grievance procedures. These will be made available to everyone.

Where a complaint or allegation has been made with regards to any inappropriate behaviour or poor practice relating to a child, young person or adult at risk, the Lead or Deputy will, in all cases, discuss the situation with social care services (the LADO with regards to children England and Wales only) and/or the police before making an open decision about the best way forward.

In the case where the Lead is implicated, the Deputy should be informed. In the exceptional circumstances that both are involved, the person concerned will inform the Senior Lead. If there is a belief that the concern has not been taken seriously or acted upon, then any one can “Whistleblow”.

With regards to disciplinary and grievance procedures, relating to an incident involving a child, young person or adult at risk we will take no steps until we have fully discussed and agreed a strategy with social care services and/or the police, (the LADO, with regards to children England and Wales only). Any investigation will override the need to implement any such procedures. Our management are responsible for making referrals to the relevant:

- Criminal records service
- Regulatory Authority

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment can take many forms and include:

- Physical violence including threats, verbal assaults and taunts, the destruction of property, extortion, unwanted sexual interest or contact
- Indirect forms of bullying including ignoring a person and the withdrawal of friendship, malicious gossip and spreading rumours, abusive or oppressive graffiti, the use of social media, electronic messages and websites.
- Motivation of prejudice against certain groups for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender and disability.

Whether directed at children, young people, adults at risk, staff, volunteers, parent and carers, bullying and harassment, physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse will not be tolerated. All such behaviour will be treated as a safeguarding concern when aimed at children, young people and or adults at risk. If children, young people and/or adults at risk are engaging in bullying or harassment it is also a safeguarding concern and should be reported to the Lead or Deputy for safeguarding.

We will:

- Provide a culture of equality and respect for all with zero tolerance to any form of bullying or harassment
- Report all incidents of bullying or harassment observed or disclosed, to the Lead or Deputy who will take the appropriate action
- Take immediate steps to stop the behaviour and mitigate the effects of bullying and harassment
- Record all incidents with observations and witness statements, and action taken, signed, timed and dated

Online Safety

Why do we need to include Online Safety?

Modern digital technology has made access to information and communication increasingly easy for everyone. This is especially so for those who cannot always go out to socialise and rely on websites for social networking, watching films, downloading music, shopping etc.

Government guidance is clear, that all organisations working with children, young people adults at risk, families, parents and carers have responsibilities. It is also important to remember, children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

Online Safety Code of Conduct:

We expect everyone in our organisation to agree and sign up to our Online Safety code of conduct to:

- Use the internet and other forms of communication in a sensible and polite way.
- Only access websites, send messages or access and use other resources that will not hurt or upset anybody.
- Seek permission if they want to use personal information or take photographs of other people.
- Report any concerns to the Lead or Deputy.
- Not maintain confidentiality if there is a concern about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk.

What are the Risks?

There are many potential risks including:

- Accessing inappropriate or illegal websites.
- Receiving unwanted or upsetting texts, e-mail messages or images.
- Being “groomed” by another with a view to meeting the child, young person or adult at risk for their own illegal purposes including sex, drugs or crime.
- Sharing nudes or semi nudes.
- Viewing or sending unacceptable material such as inciting hatred or violence.
- Sending bullying messages or posting malicious details about others.
- Ignoring copyright law by downloading e.g. music, videos, homework cheat materials etc.
- Overspending on shopping and gambling sites.
- Being at risk of identity fraud for money transactions.
- Inappropriate relationships or prostitution.

Social media

The [Online Safety Act 2023](#) and associated government guidance [A Guide to the Online Safety Bill](#) now makes social media companies more responsible for their users' safety on their platforms. This means children and adults will be protected online by making social media platforms:

- Remove illegal content quickly or prevent it from appearing in the first place. This includes removing content promoting self-harm
- Prevent children from accessing harmful and age-inappropriate content
- Enforce age limits and age-checking measures
- Ensure the risks and dangers posed to children on the largest social media platforms are more transparent, including by publishing risk assessments
- Provide parents and children with clear and accessible ways to report problems online when they do arise.

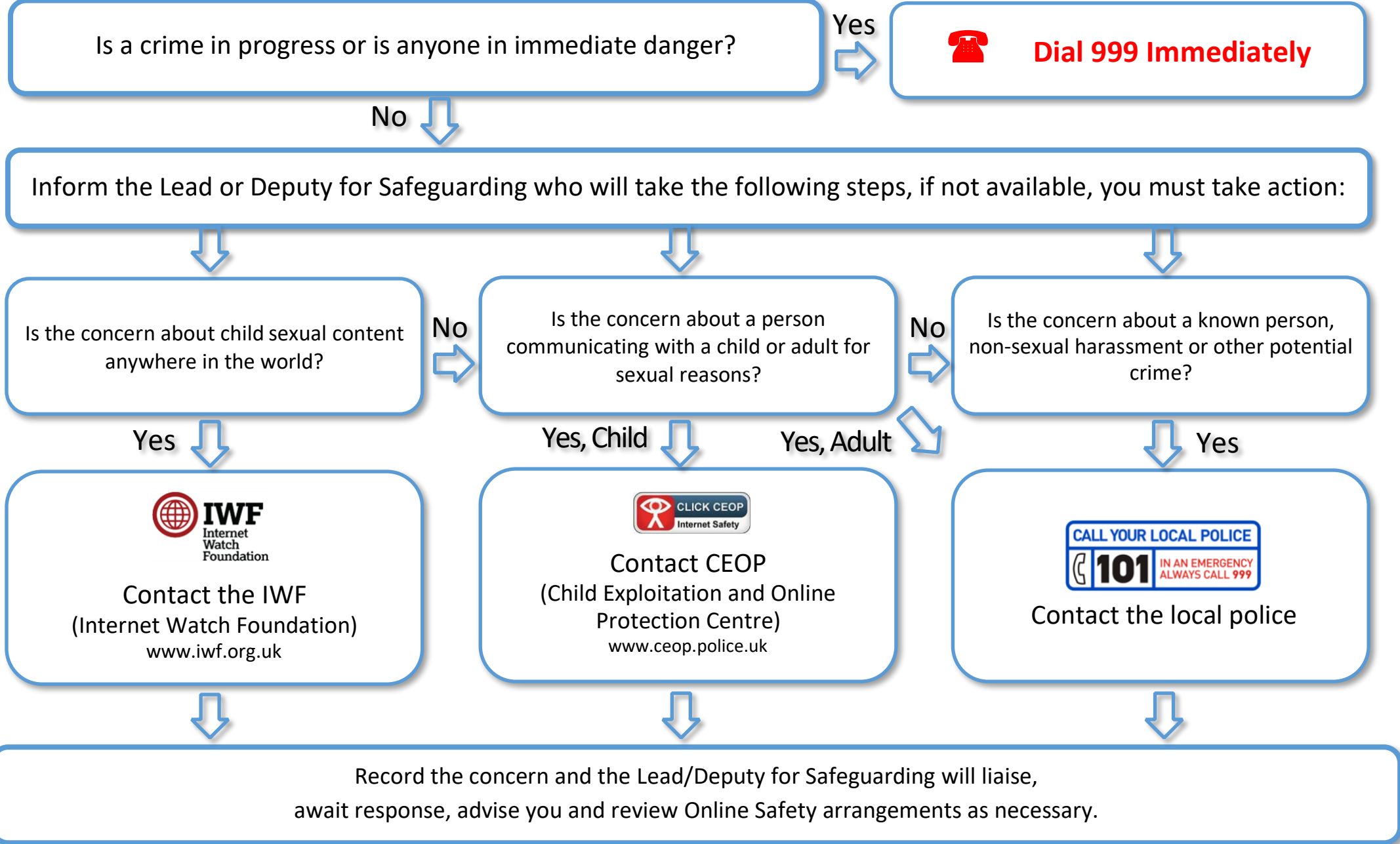
Such content should be reported to the service provider and if they do not respond appropriately the matter can be reported to [Ofcom](#).

What do I do if I am concerned?

If you have any concerns, speak to the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding. Remember:

- Do not delay.
- Do not investigate.
- Seek advice from the Lead or Deputy
- Make careful recording of anything you observe or are told

Online Safety Referral Flowchart – Child and Adult



Safeguarding Practical Guidance

Photography & Filming Guidance

We do not take photos of children, young people or adults at risk.

Transport

We do not provide or organise transport.

Activities, Events and Visiting Speakers/Activity Leaders

We will always ensure visitors and activities undertaken are risk assessed and we are committed to:

- Ensuring that those who run activities have the expertise, knowledge and skills to do so properly
- Completing a risk assessment which involves identifying risks and the means of reducing or eliminating those risks for all activities or events
- Risk assessing any changes being made to activities or events
- Having a written plan in place if the event or activity has to be cancelled
- Having a written plan in place in case of emergency including contact numbers
- Implementing the required actions identified by the risk assessment process and reviewing the effectiveness of these on a regular basis

Adult goes Missing

If an adult at risk goes missing from the group or organisation it should be reported to the police. Use 999 where there is a concern that they cannot be found or are vulnerable.

A missing person may be assessed as 'at risk' if they fit one or more of the following categories.

- is under 16
- has expressed feelings of suicide
- has dementia
- has been acting totally out of character
- has mental health issues
- is under increased stress
- has an illness or a physical disability
- has a learning disability
- is in need of regular medication/care

The Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding should be informed as soon as possible, and all details and actions recorded, signed, timed and dated.

First Aid

The venues we hire have their own first aid arrangements.

Buildings and Venues

Safeguarding risk assessments will be carried out on all building and venues used by our organisation.

The safeguarding risk assessment should cover:

- Access especially how people enter and leave the building
- Signing in protocol
- Use of keys
- Toilets and changing rooms
- Any outside space
- Car parks
- First Aid arrangements
- Any other relevant issues

SAFEcic Recommendations



In order to attain the highest standards of safeguarding practice, everybody needs to be vigilant in adhering to this policy and also assessing the risks of their own work and activities. These risk assessments will be carried out annually by the Lead and/or Deputy. However, it is the responsibility of everyone to draw attention to practices and procedures that they are unhappy or uncomfortable with.

It is only through adopting SAFEcic policies and practices that we can all be confident we have done everything we can to safeguard the children, young people and adults at risk in our care.

Policy Date

This policy was agreed and uploaded onto our website on 17th January 2024 and will be reviewed annually or when there are substantial organisational changes.

Policy Review Date: 17th January 2024

<p>Signed:</p> 	<p>Signed:</p> 
<p>Catherine Matlock Lead for Safeguarding</p>	<p>Rachel Sharpe Deputy for Safeguarding</p>
<p>Date: 5th April 2024 (This policy was signed by the previous DSL, Neil Gillespie, on 17th Jan 2024)</p>	<p>Date: 17th January 2024</p>

Date of next review: 16th January 2025

Annex 1 – Participant Code of Conduct

The School of Contemplative Life (SoCL) requires anyone participating in any activity we offer to agree to conduct themselves in a safe and appropriate manner, to help provide a positive experience for all, that is free from discrimination and upholds and promotes equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Code of Conduct applies to events held in person and online and for the whole duration of an event that a participant is attending.

All event participants (including members of the public, staff, volunteers and teachers) must read and adhere to the Code of Conduct. By attending an event, a participant automatically agrees to follow this Code of Conduct.

As a participant, you must:

- Treat everyone with respect, dignity and consideration. All forms of harassment, bullying, victimisation are prohibited;
- Maintain appropriate boundaries in digital and in-person settings;
- Communicate in a manner appropriate to the event, in a polite and non-disruptive manner, only making comments that will not hurt or upset anybody and are relevant to the discussion. This includes the appropriate use of digital forms of communication including any online chat function;
- Not physically, verbally, sexually, mentally or otherwise abuse anyone. Abuse of any type will not be tolerated and will be considered cause for immediate exit from the event and, if appropriate, a report will be made to the relevant authority;
- Not record (including video, audio or photograph) any part of the activity or any fellow participant;
- Recognise that our activities are intended to offer a safe space in which participants can ask questions and discuss challenges with their meditation practice. Confidentiality will be observed at all times except in the very rare circumstances when we are concerned about a participant's welfare, in which case we will discuss our concerns with the participant in the first instance;
- Recognise that any 'one-to-one spiritual counsel offered during an event is an opportunity to discuss any aspect of meditation practice and/or the talks given. It is not a time to raise personal issues which should be directed to a medical professional;
- Report any practice or situation that endangers the health, safety, or well-being of you or anyone else:
 - If you are attending an in-person event, inform a representative of the SoCL who will, in turn, contact our Safeguarding Lead or Deputy especially if concerns relate to any vulnerable individuals (children, young people or adults at risk);
 - If you are attending an online event, contact Rachel Sharpe on 07834 626426;
- Not be under the influence of any substance that impairs your ability to participate in activities;
- Not use tobacco products of any type, including e-cigarettes, in the facilities being used for the event;
- Not use or be in direct possession of alcohol;
- In relation to in-person events, please:
 - Keep personal effects including valuables and medications secured. SoCL or the owners of venues we hire are not responsible for the safekeeping or loss of any personal effects;
 - Play your part to keep the venue neat and clean and be respectful of other people's property;
- Remember that failure to comply with the expectations and requirements set out in this Code of Conduct may result in you being asked to leave an in-person event or removed from an online event. All costs associated with being sent home from an in-person event (such as travel costs) will be the participant's responsibility.

The contact details for SoCL's safeguarding leads are Catherine Matlock (07443 475554) or Rachel Sharpe (07834 626426).