

Make Them Smile

Safeguarding Policy (Children & Vulnerable Adults)

Charity Number: 1150013

Approved by Trustees: 1st March 2026

Review Date: Annually

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Tony Stirk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Crystal Eggleston

1. Policy Statement

Make Them Smile is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the charity.

We recognise our duty of care and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that individuals are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Trustees
- Volunteers
- Contractors or representatives acting on behalf of the charity
- Anyone involved in charity activities, events or services
- It applies to:
 - Grant application processes
 - Equipment delivery and home visits
 - Holiday and respite provision
 - SEN days and organised activities
 - Online communication and social media interactions

3. Definitions

Child: Anyone under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Adult: A person aged 18 or over who may be unable to protect themselves due to disability, illness or other circumstances.

Abuse may include:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Online exploitation

4. Responsibilities

Trustees

Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Reviewing safeguarding practice annually
- Reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission where required

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- Act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Keep secure records of concerns and actions
- Liaise with statutory agencies where necessary
- Provide guidance to trustees and volunteers

Volunteers and Representatives

- All individuals acting on behalf of the charity must:
- Remain alert to signs of abuse or neglect
- Report concerns immediately
- Never investigate concerns themselves
- Maintain confidentiality

5. Recognising Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise through:

- Disclosure from a child or adult
- Observed behaviour or physical signs
- Information received from a third party
- Online interactions
- If a child or adult discloses abuse:
- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not ask leading questions
- Record facts as soon as possible
- Report immediately to the DSL

6. Reporting Procedure

- Immediate danger – Call 999.
- Report concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay.
- The DSL will assess the concern and decide whether referral to:
- Local Authority Children's Services
- Adult Social Care
- Police
- Other statutory bodies is required.
- All actions will be documented.
- Where a concern involves the DSL, the matter must be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

7. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

Data protection legislation does not prevent the sharing of information where there is a safeguarding concern.

Records will be stored securely in line with the Data Protection Policy.

8. DBS Checks

Where roles involve regulated activity or regular contact with children or vulnerable adults, appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be obtained. Trustees will assess which roles require DBS clearance.

9. Online Safety

The charity will:

- Monitor official social media accounts
- Avoid private messaging with children
- Ensure parental consent for online engagement
- Remove inappropriate or concerning content promptly

10. Allegations Against Trustees or Volunteers

If an allegation is made against a trustee or volunteer:

- The concern must be reported immediately to the Chair (or another trustee if the Chair is implicated).
- Appropriate authorities will be contacted where required.
- The individual may be suspended from duties pending investigation.

11. Serious Incident Reporting

Where safeguarding incidents meet the Charity Commission's serious incident criteria, trustees will report promptly.

12. Training and Awareness

Trustees and volunteers will:

- Be provided with access to this policy
- Be encouraged to undertake safeguarding awareness training
- Review safeguarding responsibilities annually

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or operational requirements change.