



# Safeguarding Policy

Lucy's Lights is committed to safeguarding the wellbeing, dignity, and rights of everyone who takes part in our activities. We recognise that autistic adults and people with additional support needs may be at increased risk of harm, abuse, or exploitation, and we take our responsibility to safeguard seriously. We aim to create a safe, welcoming, inclusive environment where people are respected, listened to, and supported.

## Who this policy applies to

- All volunteers, trustees and session leaders
- Anyone working on behalf of the charity
- All activities run by the charity

It covers safeguarding for autistic adults aged 16 years and over.

## Key Safeguarding Principles

Our safeguarding approach is:

- Person-centred – respecting choice, consent, and communication needs
- Autism-informed – recognising sensory needs, masking, burnout, and trauma
- Respectful and strengths-based – supporting independence, not control
- Proportionate – responding appropriately without over-reacting

## Understanding Risk and Harm

An adult at risk (under Scottish law) is someone aged 16+ who:

- Is unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, rights, or interests
- Is at risk of harm
- Is affected by disability, illness, or mental disorder

Harm can include:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Financial abuse or exploitation
- Neglect or self-neglect
- Discriminatory or institutional abuse

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Trustees

- Hold overall responsibility for safeguarding
- Ensure this policy is followed and reviewed
- Support volunteers to raise concerns safely

### Safeguarding Lead

Because we are a small charity, the Safeguarding Lead may also be a trustee or lead volunteer.

The Safeguarding Lead:

- Is the main contact for safeguarding concerns
- Keeps simple, confidential records
- Decides when concerns need to be shared with external services

Safeguarding Lead Name:

[Millie Nicoll / Lead Volunteer + Chair of trustees]

### Volunteers

All volunteers must:

- Read and follow this policy
- Treat participants with respect and dignity
- Report concerns promptly
- Receive basic safeguarding training

## Safer Working Practices

Volunteers should:

- Be kind, respectful, and inclusive
- Communicate clearly and check understanding
- Respect personal space and sensory needs
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact
- Maintain appropriate boundaries
- Avoid being alone with a participant where possible

## Recruitment

As a small volunteer-led charity, we aim to keep recruitment safe but realistic:

- Volunteers receive a clear role description
- Informal references may be used where appropriate
- PVG checks are carried out
- All volunteers receive safeguarding training as part of induction

## Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Concerns may arise through:

- Changes in behaviour, mood, or communication
- Increased distress, anxiety, or withdrawal
- Disclosure (direct or indirect)
- Something you observe or are told

You do not need proof to report a concern.

## **What To Do If You Have a Concern**

If Someone Is in Immediate Danger

Call 999.

If There Is a Safeguarding Concern

1. Listen calmly and respectfully
2. Reassure the person they have been heard
3. Do not promise confidentiality
4. Report the concern as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead will decide whether:

- The concern can be managed internally
- It needs to be referred to local Adult Support and Protection services
- Police or emergency services should be contacted

Consent will be sought where possible, unless doing so would increase risk.

## **Confidentiality and Records**

- Safeguarding information is shared only on a need-to-know basis
- Records are kept simple, factual, and secure
- Confidentiality may be broken if necessary to keep someone safe

## **Online communication**

For online communication, we will:

- Use trusted platforms
- Set clear expectations for behaviour
- Avoid private messaging between volunteers and participants
- Act quickly if inappropriate behaviour occurs

## **Raising Concerns About the Charity**

Anyone can raise concerns about:

- Unsafe practice
- Poor conduct
- Failure to follow this policy

Concerns can be raised without fear of being treated unfairly.

## **Review of This Policy**

This policy will be:

- Reviewed once a year
- Updated if guidance or legislation changes
- Discussed by trustees when safeguarding issues arise

Approved by: Trustees of Lucy's Lights

Date: 26/02/2026

Next Review: 26/02/2027