



## FINDHORN NAIRN AND LOSSIE RIVERS TRUST

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. FNLRT is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all vulnerable beneficiaries in its care. It recognises the responsibility to promote safe practice and to protect vulnerable beneficiaries from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- 1.2. This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding and adult safeguarding.
- 1.3. FNLRT commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, using the following guiding principles:
  - The welfare of vulnerable beneficiaries is the primary concern.
  - All vulnerable beneficiaries, whatever their age, culture, disability, sex, gender identity, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religion or belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from all forms of harm and abuse.
  - Protecting vulnerable beneficiaries is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers.
  - Vulnerable beneficiaries have the right to express views on all matters which affect them, should they wish to do so.
  - FNLRT shall work in collaboration with all relevant agencies to promote the welfare, health and development of vulnerable beneficiaries.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1. In this policy we consider the safeguarding of ‘vulnerable beneficiaries’, by which we mean children and adult at risk. For the purposes of this policy:
  - A child is anyone under 18 years of age.
  - An adult at risk is anyone over 16 years of age who is at risk of harm, is vulnerable and is unable to safeguard themselves, their property and their rights
- 2.2. This could include people with learning difficulties, mental health problems, older people and people with a physical disability or impairment. It may also include victims of domestic abuse, hate crime and anti-social abuse behaviour.
- 2.3. Abuse can include physical, sexual or emotional harm, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment, radicalisation or exploitation. Abuse can take place in person or online, by any person (which could include by other children or adults at risk or by people in positions of trust). It can also include self harm or neglect.
- 2.4. This policy does not cover:
  - Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under FNLRT-02-5 Bullying and Harassment Policy

## 3. FNLRT Responsibilities

- 3.1. FNLRT will promote the health and welfare of vulnerable beneficiaries by providing opportunities for them to take part in outdoor education and volunteering activities safely.
- 3.2. FNLRT will respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of vulnerable beneficiaries whom we may interact with.
- 3.3. FNLRT will promote and implement appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of vulnerable beneficiaries and protect them from abuse whilst involved in our activities and outline clear safeguarding procedures for reporting concerns. This includes requiring all

employees and volunteers to undertake a Basic Disclosure check. All employees and volunteers who work with school children or other young people are required to apply for membership of the Protecting Vulnerable Groups scheme.

- 3.4. FNLRT will train, support and supervise employees and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard vulnerable beneficiaries from abuse and to reduce risk to themselves.
- 3.5. FNLRT will require staff and volunteers to adopt and abide by this policy.
- 3.6. FNLRT will respond to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of vulnerable beneficiaries in line with this policy as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- 3.7. FNLRT will adhere to the Scottish Government's National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and to the Moray Child Protection Committee Procedure.
- 3.8. FNLRT will regularly monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy.

#### **4. FNLRT Board Responsibilities**

- 4.1. Trustees on the Board of FNLRT have duties to manage risk and protect FNLRT's reputation. This includes acting in the interests of children and adults at risk that FNLRT meets in its work, and support its members in taking steps to keep children and adults at risk safe and protect them from harm.
- 4.2. FNLRT Trustee will undertake available training relevant to enable them to develop and enforce this policy.
- 4.3. The FNLRT Board will appoint a designated Safeguarding Lead from among the staff whose role is outlined in paragraph 5.

#### **5. Designated Safeguarding Lead**

- 5.1. The role of the Safeguarding Lead will be:
  - To ensure all FNLRT's representatives who are likely to come into contact with children are made aware of this policy as part of their induction.
  - To act as the first point of contact for staff, trustees, volunteers and members concerned about the safety and welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk.
  - To be responsible for contacting the appropriate agency in cases where a vulnerable beneficiary is at risk of harm (e.g. social work, police or the referral agency).
  - To ensure that all staff/volunteers know where they can find the Safeguarding policy and procedures.
  - To liaise with appropriate local agencies for support and advice and know where to find local contacts.
  - To organise training of staff on responding to safeguarding concerns and advise of training needs.
  - To collect monitoring data on all safeguarding activities across the organisation.
  - To support staff reporting concerns and advise as appropriate and make appropriate decisions about the actions needed.

#### **6. Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities**

- 6.1. FNLRT employees and volunteers must read, understand and fully comply with this policy, including understanding their role in its implementation
- 6.2. FNLRT employees and volunteers must follow all other relevant policies.
- 6.3. FNLRT Employees and volunteers should attend appropriate training about safeguarding
- 6.4. FNLRT employees and volunteers should recognise and be alert to signs of a safeguarding concern and promptly report concerns to the Safeguarding Lead

- 6.5. Employees and volunteers should take appropriate action and maintain accurate records of any incidents
- 6.6. Employees and volunteers should respect the rights, wishes and feelings of children and adults at risk
- 6.7. Employees and volunteers should adhere strictly to professional standards and boundaries
- 6.8. Additionally, FNLRT staff and volunteers are obliged to:
  - Follow and abide by this policy at all times when working with vulnerable beneficiaries
  - Act appropriately around young people and vulnerable adults and use appropriate language at all times.
  - Make physical contact that is in line with the outdoor education activity only.
  - Never spend time alone with a young person or vulnerable adult.
  - Ensure children are never left on their own, or in the company of an unknown adult.
  - Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
  - Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an FNLRT staff member or volunteer by following the reporting procedure in this document.
- 6.9. Note that failure to adhere to this policy is a serious issue and may result in the disciplinary process.

### 7. Safeguarding Report Procedure

- 7.1 You may be concerned that someone is at risk of harm because of something you have seen or heard, information you have been told by others, or because someone has confided in you about things that are happening or have happened to them.
- 7.2 You should not keep these concerns to yourself. You must contact the nominated safeguarding lead as soon as possible. If you think the safeguarding lead is implicated or has a conflict of interest, then contact the Chair of the Board.
- 7.3 If you are concerned about harm being caused to someone, please follow the guidance below:
  - Remember it is not your responsibility to prove or decide whether someone has been harmed. It is, however, your responsibility to share your concerns.
  - If someone is in immediate danger or a serious crime is in progress call the police 999.
  - If someone needs immediate medical attention call an ambulance 999.
  - Contact the nominated safeguarding lead as soon as possible and explain that you have safeguarding concerns you need to share.
- 7.4 Should a young person or vulnerable adult tell you about a matter that concerns them you will:
  - Listen patiently and calmly to the vulnerable beneficiary.
  - Never promise to keep it a secret – tell them you must let the safeguarding lead know
  - Reassure the vulnerable beneficiary they are doing the right thing by telling you.
  - Ask them what they would like to happen next
  - Make an arrangement as to how you and/or the nominated safeguarding lead can contact them safely

- Report the conversation to the safeguarding lead FNLRT Director and/or the Board Chair.
- Write a factual account of anything seen or heard that concerned you immediately and make available to the FNLRT Director and/or Board Chair.

7.5 The nominated safeguarding lead, where appropriate and in conjunction with colleagues as required, will take the following actions:

- Ensure any actions necessary to safeguard anyone at immediate risk of harm have been taken
- Inform, reassure and advise the person making the report. Explain what will happen next. Reinforce the need for confidentiality.
- Consider what is known about the situation, what the possible risks are, and what is known about the views of the person thought to be at risk of harm.
- Decide whether you need to contact the person making the report and/or the person thought to be at risk, to get more information, determine their wishes or explain what actions you need to take. Only make contact if you have a known safe way of contacting them.
- Where necessary share essential information and work together with the relevant authorities to enable appropriate further protective action to be taken. Police, local authority safeguarding and protection teams, and NHS protection advisors can all be contacted for advice and to share essential information.
- Where the risk of harm is thought to be caused by a person working on behalf of FNLRT, use the relevant organisational procedures e.g. breach of code of conduct, disciplinary or grievance procedures to prevent further harm and to protect the person/people thought to be at risk.

7.6 Due to the sensitive nature of safeguarding concerns, confidentiality must be maintained during all stages of the reporting process, and information shared on a limited 'need to know' basis only.

7.7 All information relating to the case will be stored confidentially, and in accordance with FNLRT policy and local data protection law.

## 8 Policy Review

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the FNLRT Board of Trustees

8.2 This policy will also be reviewed as part of any change to FNLRT's activities to ensure that it remains robust

8.3 This policy may be amended at any time in response to changes to relevant legislation