Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

Policy & Procedures

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Rebecca Tunley **Designated Safeguarding Lead**	Email: rebeccatunley@soundabout.org.uk Mobile: 07737051135 Emergency Contact Number: 01235797474
Holly Radford-James **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead**	Email: holly.radford-james@soundabout.org.uk Mobile: 07930593550 Emergency Contact: 01235797474

If you are concerned about a child or adult at risk, you must contact a DSL, or the Deputy DSL.

Should neither of the designated contacts be available, the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Team should be contacted without delay (see contacts below).

Contacts for safeguarding concerns around children and adults at risk

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB): The OSAB offer a contact number to the Safeguarding Triage Team. They can be reached on **01865 328232.** This is to raise any new safeguarding queries not to follow up existing cases.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): The MASH is a first port of call for any Safeguarding concerns raised through Soundabout's contact with children. MASH can be contacted on **0345 050 7666.** The online reporting process can be initiated here.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): The Oxfordshire LADO must be contacted with any concerns over professionals working with children. The team can be contacted on: 01865 810603 or emailed at: lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

If a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger call the police on 999.

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1. Safeguarding Policy Statement

This document states Soundabout's policy on preventing and reducing harm to child or adult at risk that we work and volunteer with. Soundabout engage with some of the most children and adults at risk in our society and we have a duty of care to ensure that people we are in contact with are kept safe from any kind of harm, this includes suspected harm outside the period of contact with Soundabout. Soundabout as an organisation fully recognises the responsibilities and duty placed upon them to have arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all participants. We recognise that all staff and freelance practitioners including volunteers, have a full and active part to play in protecting participants from harm.

This policy aims to:

- Define what we mean by Safeguarding.
- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk.
- To demonstrate how we as an organisation will manage risks to keep children and adults at risk safe including our recruitment procedure.
- To demonstrate the steps Soundabout will take to inform all staff and volunteers of Safeguarding procedures.
- To outline our protocols for reporting any incidents or suspicions regarding harm to children or adults at risk.

This policy is for all Soundabout staff, Freelance Practitioners and Volunteers including our Trustees, Patrons, Ambassadors and Founders. For the purposes of this document, 'staff' refers to employees, freelancers and volunteers. This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are any legislation changes that demand it.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding: This a term we use to describe how we protect child or adult at risk from abuse / neglect within or outside the home, including online.

Child: The use of the term child/children in this document refers to people under 18 years old.

Adult at Risk: A person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs), and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect (The Care Act 2014)

Abuse: Abuse is any single act or repeated behaviour, or omission to act, which causes harm or has the potential to cause harm to a child or adult at risk. It encompasses physical, sexual, psychological or emotional harm; financial or material exploitation; neglect or failure to meet

basic needs; discriminatory treatment; controlling or coercive behaviour; domestic abuse; modern slavery; organisational abuse; and self-neglect. Abuse often occurs in relationships where there is a power imbalance or trust (e.g. carers, family, professionals), and it may happen in any setting, including online or through other media. Children are considered to be victims of abuse if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse, including domestic abuse.

Child-on-child abuse refers to abuse by one child or young person against another. It involves harmful behaviour (single or repeated), whether physical, sexual, emotional, or financial, including forms of bullying, harassment, violence, or exploitation, in relationships among peers (same or similar age/stage of development). It may occur in intimate or non-intimate contexts, on- or offline, and can include coercive or controlling behaviour. Importantly, it is harmful to *both* the child harmed (victim) and the child causing harm (perpetrator).

Please see glossary of terms (Appendix F) for comprehensive definitions of terminology.

3. Key Principles of this policy are:

- A person-centered and coordinated approach to safeguarding (e.g. keeping the person in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them). The child's and/or adult at risk's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration in any situation. This is everyone's responsibility.
- All children and adults at risk have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual identity.
- All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to efficiently and appropriately.
- All humans have the right to communication - to enable them to receive information, to ask questions, to make choices, and to make decisions. Communication with a child or adult at risk with a disability should take into account their particular communication style and needs.
- Staff and volunteers are central to the process of safeguarding children and adults at risk.
- Soundabout is committed to ensuring that all staff are carefully recruited, appropriately trained and adequately supported and supervised.
- Working with other involved parties is important to Soundabout - parents, carers and other professional agencies have vital roles to play in the protection of children and adults at risk. To ensure that staff, parents and other adults who come in contact with children and adults at risk provide good role models of behaviour.

4. Application of this Policy

This policy applies to all Soundabout staff (both contracted and freelance) and to all Soundabout volunteers (short-term and long-term). It covers every aspect of our work and will be implemented in the following ways:

a. Risk assessment

- Incorporated into Soundabout's risk assessment process.
- Considered in the recruitment of new staff and volunteers.
- Used to identify and address training needs within the existing team.
- Applied when planning any activity that involves direct or indirect engagement with children or adults at risk.
- Reviewed when making changes to any activity that engages children or adults at risk.

b. Safer recruitment and screening

- All staff and volunteers with direct or indirect engagement with children or adults at risk must undergo an appropriate **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check**.
- DBS checks for the existing team will be renewed every three years, in line with Soundabout's safer recruitment procedures.
- These processes reflect the principles of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025)** and the **Care Act 2014** safeguarding duties for adults at risk.

c. Reporting concerns and allegations

- Applies to all Soundabout staff, volunteers, participants, and their parents or carers.
- Sets out a clear pathway for reporting any safeguarding concerns, suspicions, or allegations experienced, observed, or disclosed within Soundabout activities.
- This aligns with statutory guidance in **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), Care Act 2014** and **KCSIE 2025**, which emphasise the importance of early reporting, information sharing, and multi-agency working.

5. Policy Communication & Review

This policy will be communicated to all Soundabout staff, volunteers, and trustees by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The policy will be reviewed annually by Soundabout's Trustees and senior management. Where updates are made, the DSL will ensure that all team members are informed clearly and promptly. The policy is publicly available on Soundabout's website: **www.soundabout.org.uk** and can be provided in hard copy on request.

Policy history:

First written: May 2018. Updated: September 2025. Next review due: September 2026

Organisation details:
Soundabout

John Eccles House, Robert Robinson Avenue
Oxford Science Park, Oxford, OX4 4GP
Phone: 01235 797474
Charity number: 1103002
Company limited by guarantee: 5023

Appendix A: Procedures for Safeguarding in Soundabout

Soundabout is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all participants. We will take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of abuse taking place or going unreported in any of our activities.

All Soundabout participants, their families and carers, staff, freelancers, and volunteers have the right to be treated with dignity, respect, and care within the scope of our organisation.

This safeguarding policy should be read alongside the following Soundabout policy documents:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Disciplinary, Grievances and Appeals Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Anti-slavery and Human Trafficking Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Code of Ethics
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Personal Relationships at Work Policy
- Photography, Video and Audio Use Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Social Media Policy

1. All staff and volunteers should be able to recognise signs of abuse and neglect

Soundabout is committed to ensuring that all staff, trustees, and volunteers undertake training to develop a clear awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. In line with statutory guidance, the types of abuse our team must be able to recognise include (but are not limited to):

- **Neglect and acts of omission** – e.g. withholding necessities such as food, warmth, or medication; ignoring medical or physical care needs.
- **Physical abuse** – e.g. hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, or inappropriate restraint. This may also include online behaviours that threaten or encourage physical violence.

- **Sexual abuse** – e.g. rape, sexual assault, inappropriate touching, sexual exploitation, or exposure to pornography. Abuse may also occur online (e.g. grooming, sharing of sexual images).
- **Psychological or emotional abuse** – e.g. belittling, name-calling, threats, intimidation, humiliation, or isolation.
- **Financial or material abuse** – e.g. theft, fraud, exploitation, misuse of property, possessions, or benefits.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – e.g. harassment, slurs, or unfair treatment based on race, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.
- **Exploitation** – using a child or adult at risk for financial gain, labour, sexual gratification, or personal advantage.
- **Institutional or organisational abuse** – e.g. rigid routines, unsafe practices, lack of dignity, or absence of person-centred care.
- **Domestic abuse** – controlling, coercive, threatening, violent, or abusive behaviour between individuals in intimate or family relationships (as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021).
- **Self-neglect** – neglecting one's own basic needs, including personal hygiene, health, or environment, which may pose risk of harm.
- **Other forms of abuse** – including child-on-child abuse, mate crime, and any other form of maltreatment. Abuse may be inflicted directly or through failure to act, and may include witnessing harm (e.g. domestic abuse). It can occur in families, institutions, communities, or online, and may be carried out by those known to the person or, more rarely, by strangers.

See more comprehensive list and definitions in glossary (Appendix F)

Other safeguarding issues that staff should be aware of, which may put children or adults at risk, or indicate that abuse is taking place, include:

- **Drug or alcohol misuse** – substance misuse can increase vulnerability and may be linked to exploitation or neglect.
- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** – children being manipulated or forced into criminal activity, such as transporting drugs or money, shoplifting, vehicle crime, or working in county lines operations.
- **'Honour'-based abuse** – including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices carried out to protect perceived family or community honour.
- **Mental health concerns** – poor mental health may be an indicator that a child or adult at risk is experiencing abuse or neglect, and abuse itself can contribute to mental ill health.
- **Harmful Sexual Behaviour (HSB)** – when children or young people display developmentally inappropriate, problematic, abusive, or violent sexual behaviour. This may occur face-to-face and/or online.
- **Modern slavery** – including human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, or exploitation in criminal activities (e.g. cannabis cultivation, sexual exploitation, or exploitative work in farms, construction, shops, bars, nail bars, or car washes).

Indicators of Abuse

Some participants may not be able to verbally disclose if they are experiencing abuse. Staff and volunteers must therefore remain alert to patterns of behaviour which may indicate harm. While these behaviours may have other explanations, they should always be explored with Soundabout's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Staff and volunteers are expected to adopt a stance of professional curiosity — noticing and questioning changes in behaviour, and never dismissing concerns (*Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023; Care and Support Statutory Guidance, updated 2022*).

Possible indicators may include (*Working Together, 2023*; *Care and Support Statutory Guidance, 2022*):

- Unwillingness to be in the same room with certain people.
- Unwillingness to attend certain places (e.g. a specific session or to go home).
- Withdrawn or isolated behaviour.
- Becoming easily distressed.
- Changes in usual behaviour or demeanour.
- Unexplained illnesses.
- Unexplained marks, bruises, or abrasions.
- Flinching at being touched.
- Torn, unwashed, or inappropriate clothing.
- Appearing unkempt or neglected.

Possible Signs of Radicalisation

Under the *Prevent duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, statutory guidance updated 2023)*, staff should be alert to indicators of radicalisation, which may include:

- Views becoming increasingly extreme regarding another section of society or government policy.
- Intolerance of alternative or more moderate views.
- Expressing a desire or intent to take part in, or support, extremist activity.
- Downloading, viewing, or sharing extremist propaganda online.
- Becoming withdrawn and focused on one ideology.
- Changes in appearance, deteriorating health (including mental health), or social isolation from family, friends, or peers.

Indicators of Poor Mental Health and Wellbeing

Poor mental health can both result from and indicate abuse or neglect. Staff should be alert to the following possible indicators (*NHS Safeguarding Guidance, 2022; Working Together, 2023*):

- Becoming disconnected, withdrawn, or distant as a change of behaviour.
- Seeming sad or more upset than usual.
- Losing interest in activities that were previously engaging.
- Displaying new or increased anxiety.

- Lacking energy or motivation.
- Evidence of self-harm.
- Sudden changes in eating or sleeping patterns.
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness or worthlessness.

2. Early information sharing & Low-level concerns:

Early Concerns
Soundabout encourages staff, trustees, and volunteers to report any concern — even if it does not clearly meet the signs of abuse or neglect. Low-level concerns may indicate a need for support and allow staff to intervene before issues escalate.

No one should assume that a colleague or another professional will take action. Early information sharing is vital for the effective identification and assessment of safeguarding concerns. Exercising professional curiosity — noticing changes in behaviour and questioning what might lie behind them — is key to identifying children and adults at risk who may need help or protection.

Children and adults at risk may not feel ready, or know how, to tell someone they are being abused. This should not prevent staff from raising concerns. If there is no immediate risk of harm, you must still share your concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as soon as possible, using the safeguarding concern form (Appendix C). If required, a referral should be made to the local safeguarding board (see contacts on front page).

Everyone who comes into contact with children, families, or adults at risk has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action to ensure the right help is provided at the right time. No single practitioner can have a full picture of someone's needs and circumstances.

The Seven Golden Rules of Information Sharing
The following principles are drawn from the Department for Education's statutory advice (*Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers*, 2018):

- **Necessary** – Share only the information required for the purpose at hand.
- **Proportionate** – Share no more than is needed.
- **Relevant** – Information must be relevant to the concerns.
- **Accurate** – Ensure information shared is accurate and up-to-date.
- **Timely** – Share information without delay.
- **Secure** – Share information in a secure way.
- **Consent** – Seek consent wherever possible, unless doing so would place someone at risk of harm.

Practitioners must also be open and honest, seek advice where needed, consider the safety and wellbeing of others, keep a record of decisions, and document the rationale for information sharing. Sharing information early helps ensure that children and adults at risk receive the right support at the right time.

3. All staff and volunteers should be able to recognize signs of child-on-child abuse

Staff and volunteers must raise any concerns of child-on-child abuse with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the same way as other safeguarding concerns.

All participants are required to adhere to Soundabout's Code of Conduct during sessions. Breaches of the Code may give rise to safeguarding concerns, including possible child-on-child abuse.

Key indicators of child-on-child abuse include (*Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2025*):

- Bullying (including cyberbullying).
- Abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- Physical abuse (e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking, hair-pulling).
- Sexual violence (e.g. rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault).
- Sexual harassment (e.g. sexual comments, remarks, jokes, or unwanted physical conduct).
- Harmful sexual behaviour, including upskirting and non-consensual sharing of sexual images.

Where there is a report of sexual violence, the DSL must ensure that an immediate risk assessment is undertaken. This will consider the level of risk to the victim and other service users, and ensure appropriate protective measures are put in place. The DSL will liaise promptly with Oxfordshire's safeguarding team to seek advice and agree the most appropriate course of action.

All staff — and especially the DSL and deputies — must also remain alert to the possibility of abuse or exploitation taking place outside the family context (for example, within peer groups, online environments, or the wider community).

4. Health and Safety Procedures

This safeguarding policy should be read alongside Soundabout's Health and Safety Policy and Practice Guide, as safeguarding and health and safety are closely linked. In summary, Soundabout will:

- Maintain acceptable standards of health and safety in all activities carried out at venues we use.
- Provide appropriate information, instruction, training, and supervision for all staff and volunteers.
- Consult with staff and volunteers on matters of health and safety where appropriate.
- Provide and maintain safe premises and safe equipment within our area of control.
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions, as far as it is within our control.
- Provide risk assessments of Soundabout activities to organisations contracting our services.

- Review and revise this policy as necessary to reflect changes in our operations or activities.

Copies of Soundabout's Health and Safety Policy and related procedures are available on request from the office or through the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Online Safety and Digital Safeguarding

Why Online Safety Matters
This safeguarding policy should be read alongside **Soundabout's Online Safety Policy**, which provides detailed guidance on managing digital risks. Because our services take place both in person and online (via platforms such as Zoom, Facebook Live, and YouTube), online safety is a vital part of our safeguarding approach.

Soundabout also uses Facebook and Instagram as its main social media platforms for communication and publicity. In addition, we host two private Facebook groups:

- a **Family Membership Group**, and
- a **Community Group**.

Both groups are private, and membership requests must be approved by a moderator (a member of the Soundabout team). To maintain appropriate boundaries, all Soundabout staff and practitioners are expected to engage with families within these groups **only** through their Soundabout-specific Facebook profiles, and **not** via personal accounts.

Soundabout recognises that online risks can affect both children and adults at risk, particularly as digital tools and content become more sophisticated. Risks may include:

- Exposure to harmful or inappropriate content.
- Grooming or online exploitation.
- Bullying, including cyberbullying.
- Misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories.
- AI-generated or manipulated media, such as deepfakes.

Responsibility and Oversight

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) holds overall responsibility for online safety, supported by a named staff member with technical oversight.
- Filtering and monitoring arrangements will be maintained on Soundabout devices and platforms. These will be proportionate, effective, and reviewed regularly.
- All staff, volunteers, and freelance practitioners must remain vigilant to online risks and report any concerns immediately to the DSL.

Alignment with Statutory Guidance

Soundabout acknowledges the updates in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025*, which highlight the importance of recognising online risks, including those linked to

generative AI. In line with this and wider statutory expectations (*Working Together 2023*; *Online Safety Act 2023*; *Age-Appropriate Design Code*), Soundabout will ensure that:

- All staff receive regular safeguarding and online safety training, including awareness of AI-related risks.
- Online safety measures address the four areas of risk (content, contact, conduct, contract) and remain responsive to new and emerging threats.
- Online safety practice is aligned with Ofcom's developing codes of practice under the *Online Safety Act 2023*, even though Soundabout is not a regulated provider.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Soundabout recognises both the potential benefits and safeguarding risks of emerging technologies, including AI. To safeguard children and adults at risk:

- Staff, volunteers, and freelance practitioners must not upload or share any personal data, recordings, or images of participants with public or consumer AI tools.
- Only approved AI tools that have been risk-assessed, meet data protection standards, and are explicitly authorised by Soundabout leadership may be used.
- AI must never replace professional safeguarding judgement or supervision.
- All use of AI in Soundabout's work must be supervised, transparent, and aligned with our safeguarding principles and commitment to dignity.

6. Health and Safety Procedures

This safeguarding policy should be read alongside Soundabout's **Health and Safety Policy and Practice Guide**. Soundabout is committed to maintaining safe environments for participants, staff, and volunteers by:

- Upholding high standards of health and safety in all activities and venues;
- Providing appropriate training, supervision, and consultation for staff and volunteers;
- Ensuring safe premises, equipment, and working conditions within our control;
- Completing and sharing risk assessments for Soundabout activities;
- Reviewing policies and procedures regularly in line with changes to our work.

Copies of the Health and Safety Policy and related procedures are available on request.

7. Safer Recruitment

Soundabout is committed to recruiting staff, volunteers, and freelance practitioners who are safe to work with children and adults at risk. Our safer recruitment process is designed to prevent harm, ensure suitability, and maintain trust.

Key Principles

- Our recruitment practices are fair, transparent, and consistent.
- We will reject applicants unsuited to roles involving children or adults at risk.
- Suitability and safeguarding responsibilities are clearly defined in the role description and person specification.
- All new staff and volunteers undergo induction, including training on safeguarding, before working with children or adults at risk.
- We provide ongoing supervision, performance review, and refresher training.

Recruitment Process

1. **Defining the Role**
    - Role description includes safeguarding responsibilities.
    - Person specification highlights required attitudes, behaviours, and any qualifications related to working with children and adults at risk.
2. **Advertising the Role**
    - Adverts state Soundabout's commitment to safeguarding.
    - If a role requires a criminal record or barred list check, that is made clear in the advert.
3. **Application & References**
    - Applicants are required to submit a CV and a cover letter that explains how they meet the person specification and their suitability to work with children and adults at risk.
    - A self-disclosure form is used to allow applicants to share relevant criminal history or investigations.
    - References are sought and verified, with specific questions about safeguarding, reliability, and behaviour. Discrepancies or vague answers are followed up.
4. **Interviews & Selection**
    - Interviews include safeguarding questions.
    - All candidates are asked consistent questions linked to the person specification.
    - Any concerns raised are discussed with the candidate; decision-making includes risk assessment of disclosed information.
5. **Pre-appointment Checks**
    - Verification of identity, qualifications, and entitlement to work in the UK.
    - **DBS checks** (Disclosure and Barring Service) appropriate to the role (basic, standard, enhanced, or enhanced with barred list checks).
    - Check against children's and adults' barred lists if the role involves regulated activity.
    - Overseas criminal record checks when candidates have lived or worked abroad.
    - Where eligible, use of the **DBS Update Service** to check whether an existing DBS certificate remains current.
6. **Appointment, Induction & Probation**
    - Offer is conditional on completion of all pre-appointment checks.
    - Induction includes safeguarding, code of conduct, online safety, and policies relevant to the role.

- Probationary or trial period during which performance, behaviour, safeguarding alignment are reviewed.

7. **Retention & Ongoing Monitoring**
    - Regular supervision and performance reviews with line manager including safeguarding practices.
    - Update DBS / risk assessments if concerns arise or new information emerges.
    - Ensure staff/volunteers are kept up to date with policy changes, training, and online safety practice.

DBS & Barred Lists – Specific Considerations

Levels & Eligibility: Understand which roles require which checks (standard/enhanced etc.), including whether barred list checks are needed.

DBS eligibility is determined by the duties of the role and whether those duties meet the statutory definition of regulated activity.

Regulated activity with children applies where a role involves teaching, training, instructing, supervising or caring for children frequently and there is a realistic possibility of unsupervised contact (e.g. school or home visit settings).

Regulated activity with adults applies only where a role involves regulated care services (personal care, healthcare, social work, assistance with finances due to disability, transport for care purposes, or managing those services).

The organisation does not provide regulated care services. Therefore, adult-facing roles are unregulated activity. For unregulated roles, there is no legal requirement to obtain a DBS check. Any DBS obtained is an organisational safeguarding decision based on risk assessment.

Role-Based DBS Summary

Role	Typical Duties	Regulated?	DBS Outcome
Practitioner	Delivers sessions in community, school & home visits; may be left alone inadvertently in school/home settings; no regulated care services.	Regulated with children in school/home visits; unregulated in community & with adults.	Enhanced DBS + Children's Barred List (legally required for school/home visits; applied across role).
Volunteer	Assists in sessions under supervision; no safeguarding authority; no regulated care services.	Unregulated	No legal requirement. Basic or Enhanced (no barred list) determined via

			individual risk assessment.
Office Team	Administrative duties; may visit sessions; never unsupervised; no regulated care services.	Unregulated	No legal requirement. Basic or Enhanced (no barred list) as governance decision.
Trustee	Governance oversight; may visit sessions; never unsupervised; no regulated care services.	Unregulated	No legal requirement. Basic or Enhanced (no barred list) as governance decision.
Work Experience	Supports/observes sessions under supervision; mixed ages; no regulated care services.	Unregulated	No legal requirement. DBS level determined via individual risk assessment.
Graduate Emerging Leader Placement	Leads/assists session segments; supervised; no safeguarding authority; no regulated care services.	Unregulated	No legal requirement. DBS level determined via individual risk assessment.

Equality & Consistency
DBS decisions are made based on the duties of the role and the safeguarding context. They are not based on protected characteristics or whether a role is paid or voluntary. Roles with similar duties are treated consistently.

Use of Update Service: If a person is registered with the Update Service, employers can carry out instant status checks rather than redoing full DBS checks every time, provided the original certificate is presented. A new check is needed only if the status check indicates change.

Overseas Checks: Where candidates have lived or worked outside the UK, additional checks (or criminal history equivalent) should be sought. If unavailable, a risk assessment should consider this in deciding suitability.

What's New or Important in Recent Guidance

- The **NSPCC's safer recruitment guidance** (last updated September 2025) emphasises the recruiting body's responsibility throughout: planning, advertising, self-disclosure, reference checks, interviews, and post-appointment monitoring.

- Latest of “safe recruitment, selection and retention” documents stress the importance of:
    - Using the DBS Update Service to reduce unnecessary repeated checks.
    - Ensuring safer recruitment policies cover volunteers as well as paid staff.
    - Including individuals with responsibility for hiring and HR in safer recruitment training.

8. On-going Safeguarding Support and Training for the Soundabout Team

All new staff, volunteers, and freelancers complete safeguarding induction training before starting work with Soundabout. Safeguarding knowledge is updated at least annually through refresher sessions or updates, with full safeguarding training renewed every three years. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies update their training every two years, in line with statutory guidance (KCSIE 2025).

Regular supervision and reflective practice sessions are offered to staff, practitioners and volunteers via the DSL and/or line managers, providing space to raise safeguarding concerns, discuss dilemmas, and identify further training needs. Concerns raised in supervision are referred to the DSL to ensure Soundabout’s safeguarding protocol is followed.

The DSL will attend specialised safeguarding training on topical and emerging issues and will share key learning with the wider team. The DSL will also connect with the trustee board at least annually to provide safeguarding updates and highlight initiatives that strengthen practice and governance. Trustees receive annual safeguarding refresher and retain overall accountability for safeguarding within Soundabout (Charity Commission CC3).

9. Management of Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Soundabout has an appointed individual who is responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding concerns. In their absence, a deputy will be available to consult with.

The designated lead for Safeguarding in Soundabout is:

Rebecca Tunley
Email: rebeccatunley@soundabout.org.uk
Office Number: 01235 797474
Mobile Number: 07737051135
Emergency Contact Number: 01235 797474

The designated deputy lead for Safeguarding in Soundabout is:
Holly Radford-James
Email: holly.radford-james@soundabout.org.uk
Mobile Number: 07930593550

Emergency Contact Number: 01235 797474

Should neither of the designated contacts be available, the appropriate Local Authority Safeguarding Team should be contacted without delay (see contacts on front page).

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Roles and Responsibilities

The DSL has lead responsibility for safeguarding and child/adult-at-risk protection. This includes day-to-day management of cases, oversight of practice, and strategic reporting to trustees. A trained Deputy DSL provides cover when the DSL is unavailable.

Core functions
Lead on concerns and referrals
Assess and triage concerns; **make referrals without delay** to the appropriate local authority team (children's social care / adult safeguarding) and/or the police where a crime may have been committed.

Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day for all allegations against staff, volunteers or freelancers working with children.
For adults at risk, liaise with the local authority safeguarding team and, where relevant, the police.
Where criteria are met, ensure referrals to the **DBS** are made by the employer if a person is dismissed or removed from regulated activity (or would have been) due to harm/risk of harm.

Case follow-up and escalation
Track outcomes of referrals; escalate if responses are delayed or inadequate; advocate for the child/adult at risk.

Recording and information sharing
Maintain accurate, contemporaneous, and confidential records of concerns, decisions and actions, stored securely and retained in line with UK GDPR and organisational retention schedules.
Share information lawfully, proportionately and without undue delay where it will help protect a child or adult at risk (consent where appropriate; may share without consent if there is risk of significant harm).

Advice and support
Provide timely advice to staff, volunteers and freelancers; debrief and support colleagues involved in incidents.
Promote a culture of professional curiosity and safe challenge.

Training, induction and awareness
Ensure all new recruits receive safeguarding induction before they start activity.
Coordinate at least annual updates for staff/volunteers and ensure DSL/Deputy DSL training is refreshed at least every two years. Attend specialised, topical safeguarding training and

sector reflection days; disseminate key learning and reminders to the team (including online-safety and emerging risks such as AI/deepfakes).

Policy, practice and online safety oversight
Keep policies/procedures current; update and disseminate relevant guidance and learning.
Oversee online-safety practice (filtering/monitoring expectations, safe platform use, 4Cs risk management) in conjunction with the named technical lead.

Safer recruitment & allegations management
Advise on role risk assessments and pre-appointment checks (identity, right to work, qualifications, DBS/barred-list where eligible, overseas checks).
Ensure allegations/concerns about staff/volunteers are managed per procedure, including LADO consultation and internal risk measures.

Prevent & contextual risks
Consider risks beyond the family setting (peer groups, online, community) and liaise with Prevent/Channel where radicalisation concerns arise.

Reporting to trustees and regulators
Provide brief summary safeguarding reports to the trustee board for quarterly board reports (themes, incidents, near-misses, training, improvements).
Support trustees/CEO with serious incident reporting to the Charity Commission where required.

Trustees: Roles and Responsibilities
Trustees have ultimate accountability for safeguarding and must assure themselves that Soundabout meets its legal and ethical duties.

Appoint a suitably trained DSL and Deputy DSL and a Safeguarding Lead Trustee.

Approve and annually review safeguarding policies and ensure resources for training and implementation.

Receive regular safeguarding reports (incidents, near misses, training compliance, audits, improvements) and ensure learning is acted on.

Oversee safer recruitment and whistleblowing arrangements; ensure concerns about leaders are handled independently.

Ensure serious incidents are reported to the Charity Commission in line with guidance and that statutory notifications (e.g., LADO, DBS) are made when required.

Champion an inclusive, safe culture across the organisation and its programmes.

10. Disclosure and Response.

Soundabout recognises its duty of care to act promptly on reports, suspicions, or evidence of abuse or neglect. There are clear procedures for responding depending on where Soundabout is delivering work.

When a child or adult at risk discloses that they are experiencing, or have experienced, abuse (including exploitation and neglect), they may feel frightened, ashamed, or worried about the consequences of speaking out. They may have been threatened, believe they are to blame, or not fully understand that what is happening is abusive.

All staff and volunteers must:

- reassure the individual that they are being taken seriously, will be supported, and will be kept safe;
- never give the impression that reporting is a problem, or make the person feel ashamed for disclosing;
- never promise confidentiality, but explain that information may need to be shared with those who can help keep them safe.

During conversations with the child or adult at risk, staff should:

- allow them to speak freely and at their own pace;
- remain calm and allow silences;
- avoid leading or investigative questions;
- explain clearly what will happen next;
- inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL as soon as possible;
- make a clear, factual record of the disclosure at the earliest opportunity;
- seek support themselves if they feel distressed.

Staff are in a unique position to identify concerns early, provide support, and prevent issues from escalating.

If abuse is witnessed or has just taken place, staff must prioritise:

- calling 999 for an ambulance if urgent medical assistance is required;
- calling 999 for police if a crime is in progress or has just been committed;
- preserving evidence where possible without putting themselves or others at risk;
- ensuring their own safety, and that of colleagues and participants;
- informing the DSL/Deputy DSL immediately;
- recording and dating what happened, using Soundabout's safeguarding concern form.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will:

- treat all allegations and reports seriously and respond without delay;

- determine whether to contact the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or the relevant local authority safeguarding team (according to the participant's place of residence);
- consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for any allegation against staff, volunteers, or freelancers working with children;
- make referrals to the DBS where necessary if a person is removed from regulated activity due to harm or risk of harm;
- liaise with the police where a criminal offence may have been committed;
- ensure all reports and records are stored securely in a password-protected system;
- keep the victim and, where appropriate, their parents/carers or support networks informed of the next steps, in a manner that is safe and appropriate.

If the DSL is unavailable, staff must contact the Deputy DSL or, if necessary, make a direct referral to the local safeguarding team.

Please refer to the front page of this policy for essential safeguarding contacts and external agency details.

11. Managing Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers or Freelancers

Soundabout will ensure that any allegation made against a staff member, volunteer or freelancer is managed promptly, fairly and transparently, in line with statutory guidance. Safeguarding concerns always take precedence over organisational or reputational considerations.

Levels of Allegation or Concern

1. **Allegations that meet the harm threshold**
   An allegation meets the harm threshold if it indicates that an individual may pose a risk of harm to a child or adult at risk if they continue in their role. This includes situations where the individual has:
   - behaved in a way that harmed, or may have harmed, a child or adult at risk;
   - behaved in a way that could pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk;
   - committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk;
   - behaved in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with children or adults at risk.
2. **Allegations or concerns that do not meet the harm threshold ("low-level concerns")**
   These may include breaches of the Code of Conduct, situations that could be misinterpreted, or behaviour falling short of professional expectations. Although they may not meet the statutory threshold, they must still be reported, recorded, and addressed.

Immediate Actions

- If urgent medical assistance is required, staff must call 999 for an ambulance.
- If a crime is in progress or has just been committed, staff must call 999 for the police.

- All allegations must be reported without delay to the **Chief Executive Officer** and the **DSL/Deputy DSL**.
- A **risk assessment** will be carried out immediately to assess whether the individual can continue in their role while enquiries are ongoing.

Reporting and Referral

- **Children**: Allegations that meet the harm threshold must be referred to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** within one working day. The DSL/CEO will liaise with the LADO and follow their advice.
- **Adults at risk**: Allegations that meet the harm threshold must be referred to the **local authority safeguarding adults team/board**.
- **Police**: If a criminal offence is suspected, the police must be notified.
- **DBS**: Where an allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed, resigns, or ceases to work with Soundabout, a referral will be made to the **Disclosure and Barring Service** to consider barring.

Outcomes of Investigations

Following statutory processes, outcomes will be defined as:

- **Substantiated** – sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- **Malicious** – sufficient evidence to disprove and deliberate harm intended;
- **False** – sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- **Unsubstantiated** – insufficient evidence either way;
- **Unfounded** – no evidence or basis for the allegation.

Low-Level Concerns

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold must still be reported to the DSL/CEO. These will be recorded, assessed, and where necessary a risk assessment and action plan put in place (e.g. training, supervision, or formal reminder). Patterns of low-level concerns will be monitored in case they indicate a wider issue.

Self-Referral

Staff, freelancers and volunteers are encouraged to self-refer where they believe their behaviour may have fallen below professional standards or could be misinterpreted. Soundabout will support individuals who raise such concerns in good faith.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- All allegations will be handled sensitively and confidentially, with information shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- Safeguarding concerns always override data protection considerations. Where there is a risk of harm, information will be shared lawfully with statutory agencies, even without consent, in line with *Working Together 2023* and *Data Protection Act 2018*.

- Records will be kept securely and retained in line with Soundabout's data protection and safeguarding protocols.

Whistleblowing

Soundabout has a Whistleblowing Policy. Staff and volunteers who raise concerns in the public interest will be supported and protected under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998*.

12. Recording and Managing Confidential Information

Soundabout is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible. Information relating to safeguarding concerns will only be shared with those who need to know in order to protect a child or adult at risk. This approach follows *Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023)*, *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)*, the *Care and Support Statutory Guidance (DHSC, 2022)*, and the *Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (DfE, 2018)*. For further details on data protection, see Soundabout's Privacy Policy.

- All allegations or concerns must be recorded promptly by the person raising the concern using the **Concern Form**.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will support staff or volunteers with completing reports and will ensure that records are **stored securely**, with access restricted to the DSL and Deputy DSL.
- Records will be factual, accurate, and contemporaneous, kept in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Staff must not assume another colleague or professional will take action. *Early information sharing* is vital for safeguarding. Serious Case Reviews repeatedly highlight failures where information was not shared or delayed.
- If in doubt, staff should consult the DSL/Deputy DSL immediately. Concerns about sharing information must never prevent staff from acting to protect a child or adult at risk. (*KCSIE 2025*, para. 110).
- Any member of staff may make a direct referral to social care if they believe a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger, but they should inform the DSL as soon as possible that they have done so.

13. Consent, Images and Recordings

Soundabout acknowledges that images and recordings of participants must be managed with care, dignity, and transparency.

- Consent for photography, video or audio recordings will be obtained in line with the Privacy Policy and must be renewed every three years.
- Consent covers only the purposes agreed at the time it is given. If Soundabout wishes to use images or recordings for a new purpose (e.g. training materials, research, AI-assisted accessibility tools), fresh consent must be obtained.

- Consent for photography, video or audio does not extend to uploading or processing through AI systems or public platforms. Staff and volunteers must not upload participant images or recordings to consumer AI tools, or to cloud services not specifically approved by Soundabout.
- Only images and videos with full consent will be used, and these will not include personal identifiers such as names.
- Consent and the photo/video policy will be reiterated verbally at Soundabout events, so participants and families remain fully aware of how their media is being used.
- Due diligence will be used when commissioning external photographers and videographers.

14. Working with Schools and Partner Organisations

Soundabout works in a range of settings, including schools, colleges, and community organisations, to deliver projects with children and adults at risk. As an unregulated organisation (see definitions list in Appendix F), additional safeguarding measures are in place to ensure participants' safety.

Supervision and Responsibility

- Soundabout staff, volunteers, and freelance practitioners must not have sole caring responsibility for children or adults at risk at any time. During all Soundabout sessions, either the participant's parent/carer or school/organisation staff must be present.
- While host organisations hold statutory safeguarding duties for their pupils or service users, Soundabout recognises that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Soundabout practitioners remain vigilant during delivery, applying safe practices at all times, and are trained to recognise and report concerns.
- Any safeguarding concern identified must be reported both to the host organisation's DSL and to Soundabout's DSL, to ensure joint accountability and action.

DBS and Safer Recruitment

- All Soundabout staff, volunteers, and freelancers working in schools or colleges must hold an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, in line with Soundabout's Safer Recruitment Policy and the host organisation's requirements.
- Where host organisations require additional induction (e.g. safeguarding briefings), Soundabout will ensure staff comply.

Liaison with School or Partner Safeguarding Leads

- On arrival at a school, college or partner organisation, Soundabout staff will identify and liaise with their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (or Deputy DSL). **schedule of work?**

- All safeguarding concerns identified by Soundabout staff in schools must be reported immediately to the school's DSL, and also to Soundabout's DSL, to ensure joint awareness and coordinated action.

Risk Assessments and Policies

- A project-specific risk assessment will be completed before delivery in any school or partner organisation, covering safeguarding and health and safety.
- Schools and host organisation risk assessments ***
- Soundabout staff and volunteers must comply with the host organisation's safeguarding and child/adult protection policies in addition to Soundabout's own policy.

Information Sharing

- Safeguarding information will be shared lawfully and proportionately between Soundabout and partner organisations, in line with the *Information Sharing Advice for Practitioners (DfE, 2018)*, the *Data Protection Act 2018* and *UK GDPR*.

Alignment with Statutory Guidance

- While Soundabout is not regulated under *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)*, it will align with relevant expectations, including safer recruitment, managing allegations, handling low-level concerns, and online safety, when working in schools and colleges.

Child Performance Licensing

Soundabout complies with the Children and Young Persons Acts 1933 and 1963 and the Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014, which safeguard the welfare of children involved in performances.

If arranging a performance or activity involving children of compulsory school age, Soundabout will work with the relevant local authority to determine whether a child performance licence is required. This will depend on the nature, frequency, and payment arrangements of the activity.

15. Key Safeguarding Action Points for Staff

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If in doubt, **always speak to the DSL or Deputy DSL**. The welfare of the child or adult at risk must come first, and staff should always maintain an attitude of *"it could happen here."*

Key points to remember:

- Share any safeguarding concern immediately with the DSL (or Deputy if DSL unavailable). If there is immediate risk of harm, contact 999 and inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- Record the concern carefully and factually using the Incident Report Form (Appendix C).
- Do not investigate or take photographs of injuries/concerns.
- Share information only on a need-to-know basis.
- Confidential records are stored securely and accessed only by the DSL and Deputy DSL.
- Seek support from the DSL or line manager if you are distressed following a disclosure or incident.

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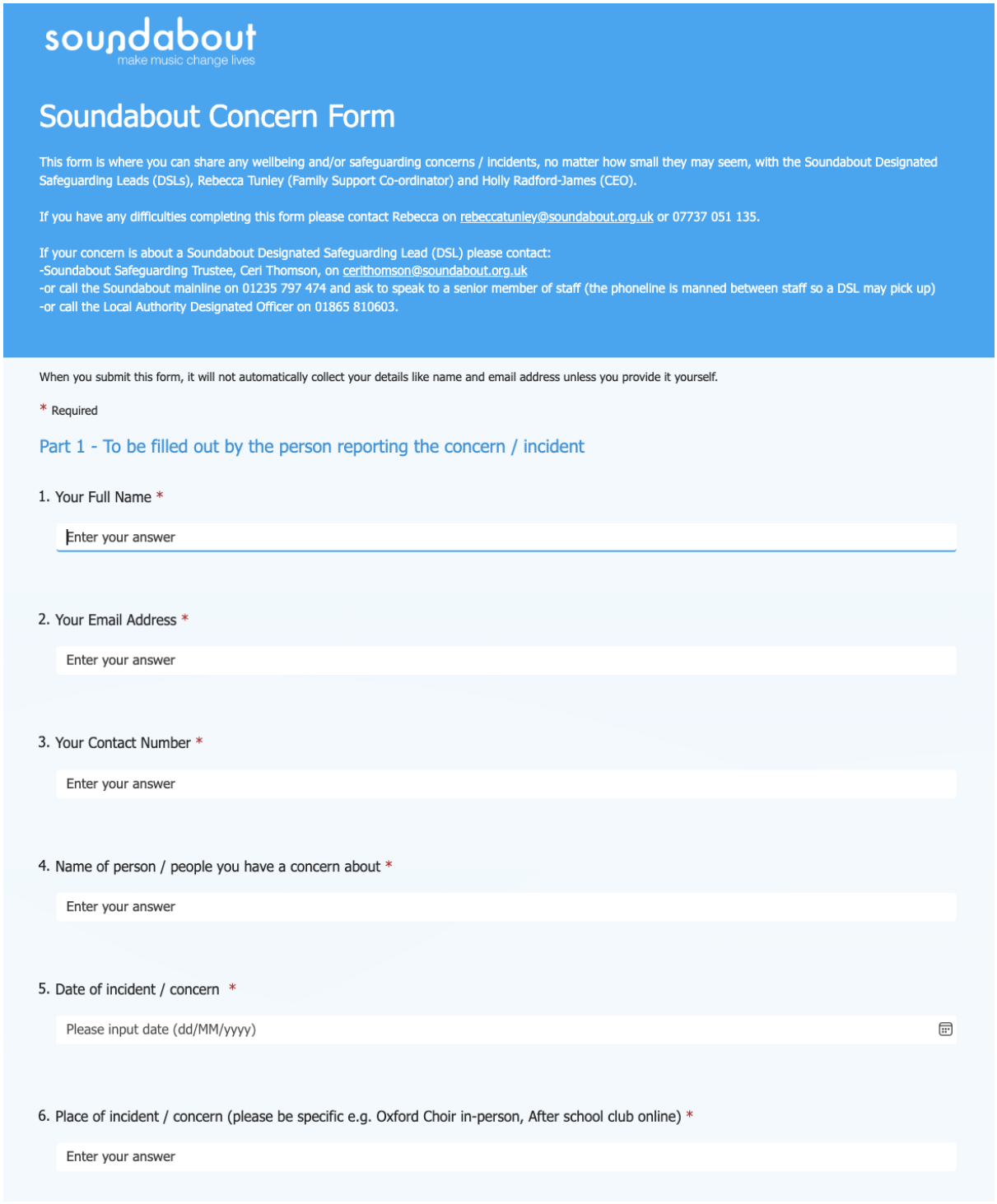
Appendix B: Soundabout Incident Report Form & Body Map

Fill in a form here: https://forms.office.com/e/eBR7NeQVvv



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Soundabout Concern Form

This form is where you can share any wellbeing and/or safeguarding concerns / incidents, no matter how small they may seem, with the Soundabout Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), Rebecca Tunley (Family Support Co-ordinator) and Holly Radford-James (CEO).

If you have any difficulties completing this form please contact Rebecca on rebeccatunley@soundabout.org.uk or 07737 051 135.

If your concern is about a Soundabout Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) please contact:
-Soundabout Safeguarding Trustee, Ceri Thomson, on cerithomson@soundabout.org.uk
-or call the Soundabout mainline on 01235 797 474 and ask to speak to a senior member of staff (the phoneline is manned between staff so a DSL may pick up)
-or call the Local Authority Designated Officer on 01865 810603.

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

* Required

Part 1 - To be filled out by the person reporting the concern / incident

1. Your Full Name *

Enter your answer

2. Your Email Address *

Enter your answer

3. Your Contact Number *

Enter your answer

4. Name of person / people you have a concern about *

Enter your answer

5. Date of incident / concern *

Please input date (dd/MM/yyyy)

6. Place of incident / concern (please be specific e.g. Oxford Choir in-person, After school club online) *

Enter your answer

Part 2 - What happened?

To be filled out by the person reporting the concern / incident

7. Are you reporting your own concerns? *

- ◯ Yes (they are my own concerns)
- ◯ No (they are someone else's concerns)

8. Who's concerns are they? Please provide full name/s if possible. *

Enter your answer

9. Please describe the safeguarding concern / incident. Provide as much factual detail as possible. E.g. injuries / behaviours seen, comments made, names of people involved etc. *

Enter your answer

10. Please list any witnesses to this concern / incident. *

Enter your answer

Part 3 - Actions

11. What actions were taken at the time of the concern / incident and by whom? *

Enter your answer

12. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Enter your answer

Section 4 ...

Next steps

Thank you for reporting your concerns - every concern, no matter how small it may seem, is important and will be reviewed respectfully.

Soundabout's DSLs, Rebecca and Holly, will confirm receipt of your completed form immediately. They will then update you with anything you need to know following this.

If you remember any additional details about your concern after submitting this report, please contact Rebecca on rebec-cathomas@soundabout.org.uk or Holly on holly.radford-james@soundabout.org.uk

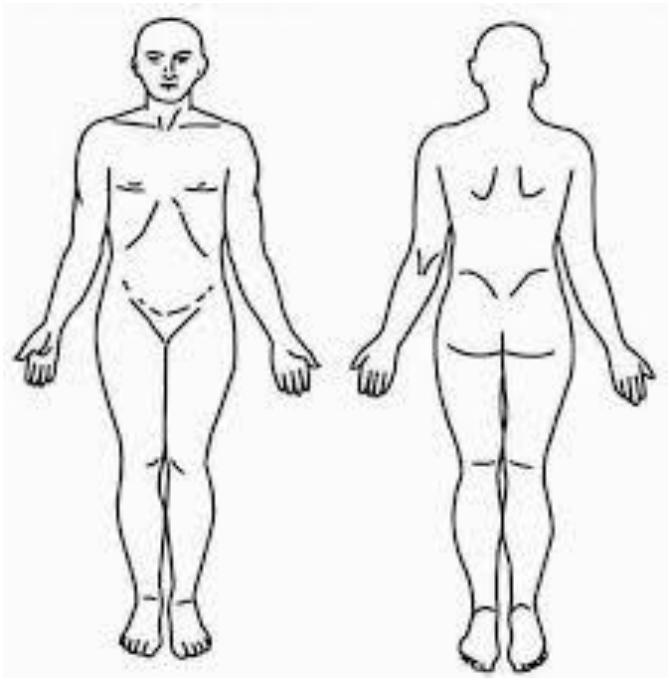
As DSLs we are always here to support you. If you would like to talk over anything please call Rebecca on 07737 051 135 or Holly on 07930 593 550.

13. Any other comments

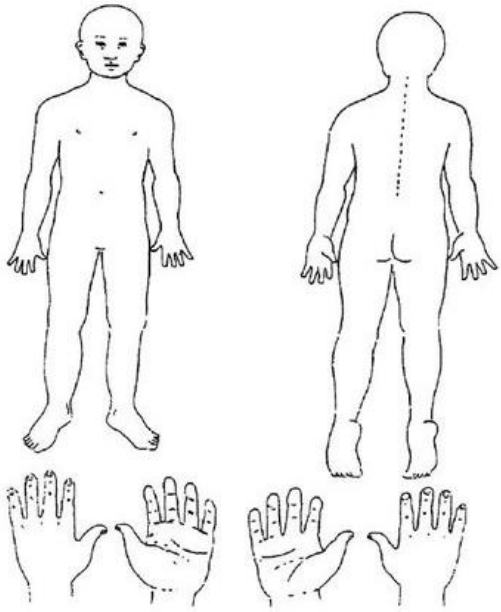
Enter your answer

Body map:

Adults



Children



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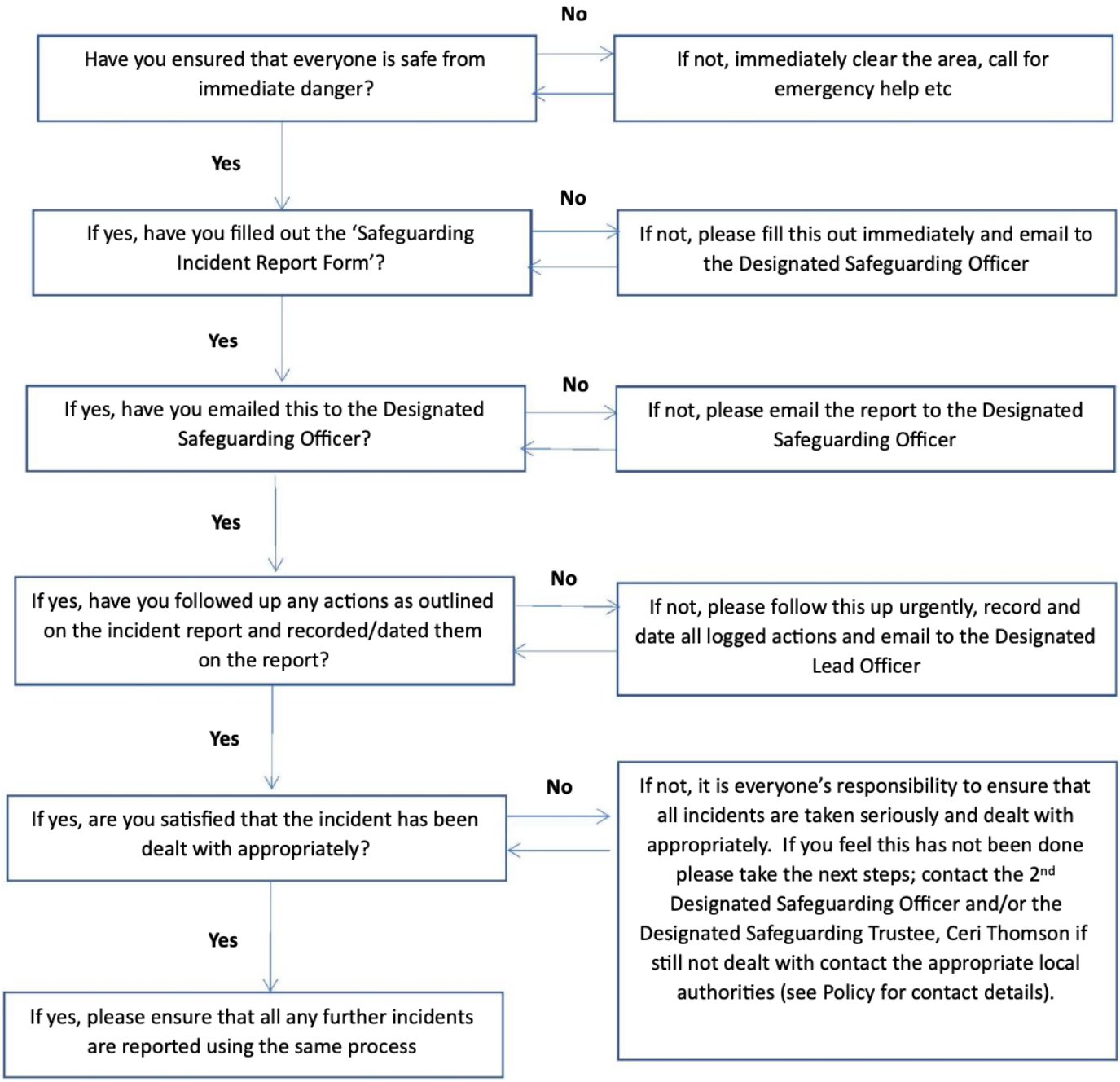
Appendix C: Safeguarding Incident Flow Chart



Appendix D: Further Information & Guidance on Safeguarding

Soundabout's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually against the most recent legislation and statutory guidance. Key reference points include:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2023 update)** – multi-agency statutory guidance.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)** – statutory guidance for schools; while Soundabout is unregulated, relevant sections (e.g. safer recruitment, managing allegations, low-level concerns, online safety) are followed when working in schools and colleges.
- **Care and Support Statutory Guidance (DHSC, updated 2022)** – implementing the Care Act 2014, including safeguarding duties for adults at risk.
- **Prevent Duty Guidance (Home Office, refreshed 2023/24)** – duties to prevent radicalisation and respond to extremism concerns.
- **Online Safety Act 2023 and Ofcom Codes of Practice (rolling implementation 2024–25)** – Soundabout aligns practice with Ofcom's codes and the Age-Appropriate Design Code principles, even though it is not a regulated provider.
- **Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR / Data (Use and Access) Act 2025** – Soundabout will review safeguarding data policies against forthcoming ICO guidance.

National Guidance and Support

- **NSPCC** – Resources for voluntary and community sector organisations, training and updates. <www.nspcc.org.uk>
- **Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)** – Multi-agency partnership promoting safeguarding across Oxfordshire. <www.oscb.org.uk>
- **Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB)** – Multi-agency partnership promoting adult safeguarding across Oxfordshire. <www.osab.co.uk>
- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)** – Guidance on safeguarding in care settings, learning disabilities, and health risks. <www.nice.org.uk>
- **Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)** – Resources and guidance for safeguarding adults. <www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults>
- **UK Safer Internet Centre – Professional Online Safety Helpline** – Support for professionals dealing with online safety issues. Tel: 0344 381 4772 | Email: helpline@saferinternet.org.uk | https://saferinternet.org.uk/professionals-online-safety-helpline

Appendix E: Safeguarding Glossary of Terms

Note: The term *"Vulnerable Adult"* is no longer used. The *Care Act 2014* introduced the term *"Adult at Risk"*, which is used throughout this policy.

Safeguarding

Protecting children from abuse and neglect; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring safe and effective care; and taking action to give all children the best outcomes. For adults at risk, safeguarding means enabling choice, protecting rights, preventing abuse or neglect, and taking proportionate action where there is risk of harm, lack of capacity, or a crime has been committed.

Abuse and Neglect (Children and Adults)

- **Physical abuse** – hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, fabricating illness.
- **Sexual abuse** – forcing or enticing into sexual activity (contact or non-contact, including online), grooming, exploitation; can be perpetrated by adults or peers.
- **Emotional abuse / Psychological abuse** – persistent maltreatment causing adverse emotional effects, intimidation, humiliation, threats, isolation, bullying or cyberbullying.
- **Neglect** – persistent failure to meet basic needs (food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional needs). Includes neglect during pregnancy due to substance misuse.
- **Financial or material abuse** – theft, fraud, misuse of money or possessions, undue pressure.
- **Discriminatory abuse** – harassment, slurs, or unfair treatment based on protected characteristics (age, disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.).
- **Domestic abuse** – physical, emotional, sexual or financial abuse within intimate/family relationships, including forced marriage, FGM, and so-called "honour-based" abuse.
- **Organisational abuse** – unsafe practices or cultures within services that compromise dignity or safety.
- **Self-neglect** – behaviour threatening an adult's own health or safety (lack of food, hygiene, medication, shelter).
- **Exploitation** – abuse for personal gain, including labour, sexual exploitation, or criminal exploitation (e.g. county lines).
- **Modern slavery / trafficking** – forced labour, servitude, sexual exploitation, trafficking within or across borders.

Specific Risks and Terms

- **County Lines** – criminal networks exploiting children/adults to transport and sell drugs.
- **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)** – sexual abuse involving exchange of money, power, or status.

- **Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)** – forcing children to commit crimes (shoplifting, drug running, etc.).
- **Mate crime / Hate crime** – exploitation, abuse or targeting of people with learning disabilities or complex needs by those posing as friends or through targeted hostility.
- **Grooming** – deliberate process of building trust to enable abuse, including online.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** – a form of abuse causing serious harm and recognised as child abuse in UK law.
- **Child trafficking** – movement of children for exploitation; a form of abuse and often linked with other exploitation.

Misinformation, Disinformation and Conspiracy Theories

- **Misinformation** – false or misleading information shared without intent to cause harm (e.g. someone unknowingly sharing an inaccurate story online).
- **Disinformation** – false or manipulated information created and deliberately shared to cause harm, mislead, or manipulate others (e.g. fabricated videos, "deepfakes").
- **Conspiracy Theories** – beliefs or narratives suggesting that important events are secretly controlled or manipulated by powerful groups. Online conspiracy theories can be used to exploit, groom or radicalise children or adults at risk.

Other Safeguarding Considerations

- **Accessible communication and disclosure** – barriers to communication can prevent abuse from being recognised. Soundabout ensures accessible methods (interpreters, alternative communication, adapted approaches) are available so participants can disclose safely.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging** – safeguarding risks may be heightened for children and adults who experience intersecting vulnerabilities (e.g. minority ethnic groups, LGBTQ+, non-verbal participants, disabled people). Staff must remain alert to these overlapping risks and adapt safeguarding responses.

Unregulated Activity

- An activity, service or setting that is not registered with or overseen by a statutory regulator such as Ofsted, the CQC (Care Quality Commission), or other official bodies.
- Examples include after-school clubs, music groups, sports coaching, tutoring, faith groups, holiday schemes, and community activities provided by charities or individuals, where there is no statutory requirement for registration or inspection.
- Unlike regulated activities (which fall under statutory oversight), unregulated activities still carry safeguarding duties. Providers must have robust policies, safer recruitment, safeguarding training, and reporting processes, even though they are not formally regulated.
- Important: "Unregulated activity" should not be confused with "illegal activity." Many valuable charitable and community services are unregulated but entirely lawful. The safeguarding risk comes from the lack of external inspection or monitoring.

Appendix F: Children and Adults at Greater Risk of Harm

(Quick Reference for Soundabout Staff & Volunteers)

Some children and adults at risk face **additional vulnerabilities** that may increase their likelihood of harm, abuse, or exploitation. Staff must be **particularly alert** to these risks.

Key Groups to Be Aware Of

- Disabled children or those with long-term health conditions
- Children/young people with SEND (with or without an EHCP)
- Children or adults known to a Social Worker
- Those with mental health needs
- Young carers
- Children frequently missing from care/home
- Children or adults experiencing homelessness
- Children returning home from care
- Privately fostered children

Specific Safeguarding Risks

- At risk of **honour-based abuse**, FGM, or forced marriage
- At risk of **radicalisation or extremism**
- Drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour (gang involvement, county lines)
- At risk of **modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation**
- Family circumstances with challenges such as:
    - parental drug or alcohol misuse
    - adult mental health needs
    - domestic abuse
- Children or adults misusing drugs or alcohol themselves

Appendix G: How We Work

Soundabout (Registered charity number 1103002) is a charity that uses music, sound and silence to support Learning Disabled people with complex support needs. Our multi-sensory music-making techniques help to stimulate communication and self-expression, enabling people who may be unable to hold an instrument or use their voice to communicate in ways that are accessible to them.

Our Values and Person-Centred Approach

Our work is guided by our core values. We are:

- **Kind** – friendly, supportive and empathetic
- **Person-Centred** – celebrating each individual and creating sound and music together
- **Inclusive** – creating accessible and welcoming spaces for all
- **Aspirational** – aiming high, staying curious, creative and joyful in our practice

We believe everyone deserves a voice and meaningful participation. Our sessions are designed around each person's strengths, responses and choices. Practitioners follow the individual's lead, responding to verbal and non-verbal communication and adapting their approach in real time.

How We Work

- Music, sound and silence is the starting point
- Our practice is based on intensive interaction
- We model and teach a culture of musical communication
- We use resonance boards, Soundbeams, musical instruments, sound, silence, voice, music and storytelling
- We facilitate playfulness to release inhibition around music-making
- We use a range of approaches suitable for children, young people, adults, parent/carers and professionals
- We exemplify developing relationships – noticing what unfolds, what opens up and what changes from this interaction

Physical Contact

Many of the people we work alongside are Learning Disabled people with complex support needs. As part of our multi-sensory approach to music-making, there may be occasions where appropriate, non-invasive physical contact supports communication, regulation or musical engagement.

This may include, for example:

- Touching hands to say hello or goodbye
- Hand-under-hand support to access an instrument
- Rhythmic patting on an arm or shoulder as part of a musical interaction
- Supporting shared use of resonance boards or instruments

All physical contact is purposeful, non-invasive and directly related to the musical experience. Practitioners are trained to recognise and respond to verbal and non-verbal communication indicating comfort, consent or refusal. Physical contact will always be responsive and immediately withdrawn if discomfort or resistance is indicated.

Practitioners will first model or demonstrate physical interaction on themselves, using their own body to illustrate the musical gesture. Physical contact with a participant will only occur where necessary, appropriate and in line with individual preferences and care guidance, with parent/carers or familiar professionals providing the touch wherever possible.

If the child, young person or adult prefers not to be touched, or if there is specific guidance within a care plan relating to physical contact, this must be shared with the Soundabout Practitioner at the beginning of the session. Individual preferences and dignity will always be respected.

Safeguarding

Soundabout upholds the highest safeguarding standards. Our Safeguarding Policy is available on request or via our website.

We believe that everyone has a responsibility for keeping children and adults at risk safe. All practitioners are appropriately trained in safeguarding and work within clear professional and ethical boundaries at all times.

If you have any safeguarding questions or concerns, please contact:

Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Rebecca Tunley – rebeccatunley@soundabout.org.uk
Mobile: 07951289970

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Holly Radford-James – holly.radford-james@soundabout.org.uk
Mobile: 07930593550

Emergency Contact: 01235797474