



Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QEST)
Children and Adults at Risk
Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

Contents

Safeguarding Policy Statement	1
Role Descriptions	3
Safer Recruitment and Code of Conduct	5
Recognising and Reporting Concerns	7
Images and Online Safety	10
Appendix A: Safeguarding Reporting Form	13

Safeguarding Policy Statement

Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QEST) supports the training and development of talented and aspiring makers across the UK, we are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in our organisation and the work we do. We believe that everyone, especially children, young people, and anyone in vulnerable circumstances, has the right to be kept safe from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

Our safeguarding policy and procedures outline how we will fulfil our duty of care to safeguard those we work with and those that work on our behalf including staff, volunteers, trustees, and partner agencies.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect all those who engage with QEST's work from harm, particularly those who may be most vulnerable, including children, young people, and adults at risk.
- to provide staff, volunteers, and project partners, as well as external participants and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach safeguarding.

Scope:

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of QEST, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, and agency staff.

For the purposes of our policies and procedures, a child is anyone under the age of 18 and an adult at risk who may need additional services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; or they may be unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Our commitment to safeguarding:

We believe that:

- we have a responsibility to promote the general safety and well-being of all.
- we have a responsibility to protect children, young people and adults at risk from abuse or neglect of any kind.
- we have a responsibility to keep all children, young people and adults at risk safe and to practise in a way that protects them.
- we have a responsibility to only partner with organisations that share our commitment to safeguarding.

We recognise that:

- everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- some children and adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs, or other issues.
- extra safeguards may be needed to keep children and adults who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.
- working in partnership is essential in promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

We will:

- develop trusting and respectful relationships with those we work with, treating all with dignity to provide a safe and supporting environment.
- appoint a designated safeguarding officer and a lead trustee for safeguarding.

- adopt child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- develop and implement an effective online safety policy and related procedures.
- provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and training, so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- recruit and select staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- record, store, and use information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- make sure that everyone in contact with our organisation knows where to go for help if they have a concern.
- use our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know.
- use our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- create and maintain an anti-bullying environment and ensure that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- ensure that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- ensure that we provide a safe physical environment by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- build a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and our partners, as well as the children, young people and adults we work with, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Legal statement:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy, and guidance in England, with reference to legislation and guidance in the other nations of the UK. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Contact details:

If you have a safeguarding concern relating to QEST or one of our representatives please contact our safeguarding leads:

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Name: Deborah Pocock LVO
Phone: 020 7798 1535
Email: deborah.pocock@qest.org.uk

Designated Safeguarding Trustee

Name: Ian Maclean
Email: ianmaclean.home@gmail.com

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.
This policy was last reviewed on: 13 February 2026



Signed:

Deborah Pocock, CEO

Role Descriptions

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone should understand that safeguarding affects all aspects of the organisation and they must be aware of this policy and the procedures to follow.

However, in order to ensure all concerns or allegations are handled appropriately, QEST has a number of designated positions and specific job roles. These are outlined below:

Trustees

The Charity Commission expects that safeguarding should be a key governance priority for trustees. It is part of their duty of care to ensure that QEST:

- acts in the best interests of the children, young people and adults at risk, and takes all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them.
- assesses and manages risk.
- puts safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- undertakes ongoing monitoring and reviewing to ensure that safeguards are being implemented and are effective.
- responds appropriately to allegations of abuse and whistleblowing cases.

In addition, at least one Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DTS) is identified who will:

- meet with the Safeguarding Manager quarterly to maintain an overview of all safeguarding measures across the organisation.
- be informed of, and contribute to, decisions on high-risk cases and maintain oversight of any follow-up to help ensure that all risks are appropriately managed.
- in conjunction with the Safeguarding Manager, ensure that Trustees are fully informed of safeguarding issues across the organisation and contribute to maintaining safe practice across all operations.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is the Safeguarding Manager. The DSO is responsible for:

- ensuring staff have access to appropriate safeguarding advice and support.
- checking that safeguarding referrals, incident reports and actions taken are recorded, fully reviewed and logged in a restricted file.
- alerting the CEO and DTS of any significant safeguarding concern, contributing to decision-making and ensuring appropriate follow-up to manage and reduce risk.
- giving feedback to the trustees about safeguarding trends, concerns and emerging issues.
- keeping up to date with relevant law, guidance and case examples.
- proactively engaging with other agencies and external experts to ensure that QEST's approach is informed by, and contributes to, best practice within the sector.
- ensuring that policies and procedures are accessible and up-to-date.
- assessing that the partner organisations working with QEST have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.
- appraising the training needs of all teams on a regular basis.
- developing guidance and delivering training to increase the level of understanding and expertise on safeguarding across all teams, including safer recruitment training.
- supporting recruiting managers to identify the appropriate level of DBS check for vacancies.

- planning and undertaking an annual internal audit of safeguarding practice and supporting staff to respond to recommendations.

Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for:

- supporting and encouraging their teams to follow all appropriate safeguarding procedures.
- providing additional support and advice for a member of staff with any safeguarding concern.
- taking ownership of concerns raised by volunteers and raising them with the Safeguarding Manager.
- ensuring that all new staff and volunteers are fully inducted/trained to the appropriate level in safeguarding practices.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- ensuring they know and adhere to the safeguarding procedures as outlined in QEST's policies and procedures, including when working with external partners.
- completing the safeguarding training required for their role.
- raising with the Safeguarding Manager immediately any safeguarding concerns they identify.
- contacting appropriate services immediately in an emergency.

Volunteers

Volunteers are responsible for:

- raising any concerns immediately with their supervisor or the Safeguarding Manager.
- completing training appropriate to their role.
- contacting appropriate services immediately in an emergency.
- ensuring they know and adhere to the safeguarding procedures as outlined in QEST's policies and procedures and/or their volunteer agreement.

Safer Recruitment and Code of Conduct

Safer recruitment

Safer recruitment is vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to safeguarding. We are committed to high standards of recruitment of staff (whether paid or unpaid) in line with government and Charity Commission guidance. We will do this by:

- recruiting all posts with a detailed job description, including our commitment to safeguarding.
- obtaining full personal details for candidates invited to interview and requesting completion of the relevant criminal declaration form, as set out in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- taking up at least two written references and interviewing every candidate either in person or virtually.
- ensuring that the Safeguarding Manager has undertaken Safer Recruitment training and is consulted before and during the recruitment process.

All appointments will be subject to:

- a satisfactory criminal records and or DBS check at the appropriate level.
- a check of essential qualifications.
- confirmation of the Right to Work in the UK (for paid staff).

Induction and training

As part of the induction process, new staff will undergo training in safeguarding policies, procedures and the code of conduct with the DSO. They will be asked to sign to agree they have:

- received and understood the policies and procedures.
- been given any additional resources and the opportunity to ask questions.
- understood QUESTs commitment to safeguarding.

All staff will receive refresher training in safeguarding policies and procedures annually.

Additionally, the DSO and DTS will receive regular training from external providers appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.

Code of conduct

We aim to provide a safe environment that promotes equity, diversity and inclusion. We expect all staff and volunteers to contribute to a safe and respectful environment by:

- acting professionally and not accepting bullying, swearing or disruptive behaviour from others.
- ensuring the welfare and safety of children, young people and adults at risk is of paramount importance.
- maintaining professional boundaries both face to face and using technology.
- avoiding personal relationships and the sharing of personal contact information with children, young people or adults at risk.
- listening to and acting upon any allegations or concerns of abuse or neglect.
- treating everyone with respect and dignity, avoiding favouritism or discrimination, and listening to individuals wishes and feelings.
- avoiding being alone with children, young people or adults at risk - never take them to your home, car or other location not related to a specific activity or event.

- only using physical contact where absolutely necessary and when another adult is present, unless a delay would be harmful.
- maintaining confidentiality about sensitive information where appropriate.
- participating in any relevant training.
- following QEST's safeguarding policies at all times.

Recognising and Reporting Concerns

Everybody working at, or with, QEST has a responsibility to protect the welfare of children, young people, adults at risk, or others who may be vulnerable. It is important that all staff and volunteers understand how to appropriately respond to and report any concerns, and that staff working with children and adults at risk are able to recognise the signs of abuse and neglect.

This document sets out QEST's procedures and best practice approaches to recognising and reporting concerns.

Principles of safe practice (the six Rs)

- recognise concerns of harm or risk of harm.
- respond appropriately to anyone who is telling you what is happening to them.
- report the concerns according to QEST's safeguarding procedures (to the Safeguarding Manager, social care or police).
- record the concerns appropriately and any subsequent action taken; ensure there is no delay in passing on concerns.
- resolve – take responsibility to ensure that reports and referrals made are followed up in a timely way and take further action if not satisfied with the response.
- reflect on your learnings from the safeguarding process and on how to support the wellbeing of yourself and others involved.

Recognising abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect can take many forms, we recommend that anyone working with children and young people familiarise themselves with the latest advice from the NSPCC on defining and recognising abuse: [Definitions and signs of child abuse \(nspcc.org.uk\)](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

The Ann Craft Trust advises on the types of harm most commonly experienced by adults: [Categories of harm \(anncrafttrust.org\)](https://www.anncrafttrust.org)

Responding to a disclosure or concern

Abuse may be disclosed in a variety of ways, including:

- directly – making specific verbal statements about what's happened to them.
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong.
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate).
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

You should never wait until a vulnerable person tells you directly that they are being abused before taking action. Instead, ask if everything is OK or discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Manager.

A disclosure may come from someone telling you:

- they have been or are being abused.
- they have concerns about someone else.
- they are themselves abusing or likely to abuse someone else.

If someone tells you they are experiencing abuse, it's important to reassure them that they've done the right thing in telling you.

Make sure they know that abuse is never their fault.

When a disclosure is made it is important to remember to:

- take what you are being told seriously.
- stay calm and reassure.
- do not investigate.
- do not delay.
- seek advice from the DSO.
- never talk to the alleged perpetrator about the disclosure.

It's important to keep accurate and detailed notes on any concerns you have. You will need to share these with your DSO. Include:

- personal details (name, age, address).
- what they said or did that gave you cause for concern (if a verbal disclosure, write down their exact words).
- any information about the alleged abuser.
- your signature and date.

QEST staff and volunteers should complete Sections 1-3 of the Safeguarding Reporting Form (Appendix A) as soon as possible and share this with the DSO.

Reporting

If a child, young person, or adult is in immediate danger you should call 999.

If anyone has a concern, they should contact the DSO as soon as possible, the DSO will record any information about the concerns and, where appropriate, refer the concern to the relevant adult or children's social care service and/or the Police and follow up the referral in writing within 24 hours.

The DSO will also record incidents and concerns in a secure way, according to the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures. They will also report to the QEST trustees about safeguarding issues.

In the absence of the DSO, or if they are implicated in the case, concerns should be reported to the Designated Trustee for Safeguarding (DTS).

Where an incident or concern relates to one of our partner organisations or sites, you should refer to the QEST DSO in the first instance, who will refer to the relevant safeguarding officer at the partner organisation.

Confidentiality

It is important to discuss consent with the person making the report and, if possible, obtain their agreement to share their information, however, you should never promise that you will keep the things you have been told a secret. Explain that you need to share what they've told you with someone who will be able to help. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a "need to know" basis.

If a child or young person needs confidential help and advice direct them to Childline: 0800 1111 Supportline can offer confidential support to adults and children/young people: 01708 765200

Information sharing and data protection

It is important that records are shared at the appropriate time when necessary, the decision to share written information, and with whom, will be undertaken by the DSO or DTS.

We will treat any personal identifying information 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.

Whistleblowing

You can contact the Charity Commission or NSPCC whistleblowing advice line if:

- concerns aren't dealt with properly or may be covered up.
- a concern that was raised hasn't been acted upon.
- you are worried that repercussions are likely to arise if you raise a concern.
- an organisation doesn't have clear safeguarding procedures to follow.

whistleblowing@charitycommission.gov.uk; 0800 028 0285 or help@nspcc.org.uk

Staff can also refer to the QEST Whistleblowing Policy in the Staff Handbook for further advice.

Images and Online Safety

Photography and Filming

It's important that our participants are able to celebrate and capture their achievements through photographs and films. Friends and family may also want to share special events and activities. However, it is vital to remember that imagery can be used and distributed inappropriately, including on the internet. The abuse or misuse of images should be reported as set out in our safeguarding procedures.

We will seek to keep everyone safe by:

- always asking for consent from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image, adults at risk will be asked for their consent in line with our other procedures on photography and data sharing.
- always explaining what images will be used for and how they will be stored.
- making it clear that if consent for an image to be shared is withdrawn, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published.
- only using the first names, or limited information, of children in our images.
- never publishing personal information about individual children and disguising any identifying information.
- making sure children and their parents/carers understand how images of children will be securely stored and for how long (including how we will control access to the images and their associated information).
- reducing the risk of images being copied and used inappropriately by:
 - only using images of children in appropriate clothing (including safety wear if necessary).
 - avoiding full face and body shots of children taking part in activities such as swimming where there may be a heightened risk of images being misused.
 - using images that positively reflect young people's involvement in the activity.

Where a partner or other organisation is responsible for an event, photographer or providing images to QEST we will abide by their safeguarding policies. We expect partners to have obtained relevant consent and have made parents/carers and children aware that images may be used by both organisations.

External photography

If people such as local journalists or professional photographers (not hired by QEST or one of our partners) wish to record one of our events and share the images professionally or in the wider world, they should seek permission in advance. They should provide:

- the name and address of the person using the camera.
- the names of those they wish to take images of (if possible).
- the reason for taking the images and/or what the images will be used for.
- a signed declaration that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given.

QEST will verify these details and decide whether to grant permission for photographs/films to be taken. We will seek consent from those who are the intended subjects of the images (and, if under 18, their parents) and inform the photographer of anyone who does not give consent. At the event we will inform attendees that an external photographer is present and ensure the photographer is easily identifiable, for example by issuing them with a coloured identification badge.

If we hire a photographer for one of our events, we will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- providing the photographer with a clear brief about appropriate content and behaviour.
- ensuring the photographer wears identification at all times.
- informing children and their parents/carers (and other attendees) that a photographer will be at the event and ensuring they give consent to images which feature their child being taken and shared.
- not allowing the photographer to have unsupervised access to children.
- not allowing the photographer to carry out sessions outside the event.
- reporting concerns regarding inappropriate or intrusive photography following our safeguarding procedures.

Personal photography

When children themselves, parents/carers or spectators are taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, we will publish guidance about image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of our photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:

- asking for photos taken during the event not to be shared on social media and/or asking people to gain permission from children and parents/carers before sharing photographs and videos that include them.
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share.
- reminding children and parents/carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

If QEST is concerned that someone unknown to us is using our activities for photography or filming purposes, we will ask them to leave and (depending on the nature of the concerns) follow our safeguarding procedures.

Consent

If anyone attending our activities (or their parents/carers) do not consent to photographs being taken, we will respect their wishes. We will agree in advance how they would like to be identified so the photographer knows not to take pictures of them and ensure this is done in a way that does not make them feel isolated. We will never exclude someone from an activity because we do not have consent to take their photograph.

Storage

We will store photographs and videos of children securely, in accordance with our safeguarding policy and data protection law.

Images will be stored for a maximum period of 5 years, unless consent has been obtained for a longer time period or specific use. Images shared by a partner or event organisation, where they obtained consent, will be stored inline with their policies.

QEST does not permit staff and volunteers to use any personal equipment to take photos and recordings of children. Only cameras or devices belonging to QEST should be used.

Online Activity

We recognise that the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges, and we have a duty to ensure that everyone, but

particularly children and young people, involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.

We will seek to keep everyone safe by:

- appointing an online safety coordinator.
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our code of conduct and code of conduct for online engagement.
- supporting and encouraging people to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly.
- ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts, and passwords are used effectively.
- ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate.
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.
- providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety.
- examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by following our safeguarding procedures.

Code of conduct for online engagement

While online activity can be an important way to reach young people and external audiences, it is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the risks of harm in online activity and abide by best practice at all times by:

- only using accounts that have been authorised by QEST to communicate with children and young people (never using personal accounts).
- enabling privacy settings on accounts that are used to interact with children and young people.
- using an organisational device to communicate with young people (if this isn't possible consult the online safety coordinator or DSO about using a personal device on a case-by-case basis – a record of this authorisation and who can see the communication should be kept).
- ensuring all communications are relevant to the work of the project and organisation.
- only using professional and age-appropriate language and/or content.
- not accepting friend requests on their personal accounts from children, young people, adults at risk, or families they work with.
- completing a risk assessment before any online events or before using a new platform or technology.
- be aware of their location for video calls, ideally a work environment should be used, if this is not possible consider blurring the background of private residences.
- not recording online events including children and young people, unless agreed by the online safety coordinator/DSO with appropriate risk assessment and consent in place.
- reporting inappropriate or harmful content on a phone, computer or other device to the DSO immediately.

Appendix A: Safeguarding Reporting Form

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Child/Person at risk:

Name:

Date of birth:

Contact details:

Who has parental/carer responsibility?:

Any disabilities or additional needs?:

Relationship/involvement with QEST (eg. volunteer, workshop participant, partner):

Person reporting incident:

Name:

Position:

Contact details:

Safeguarding person concern reported to:

Name:

Position:

Contact details:

2. CONCERN/INCIDENT DETAILS

Date & Time:

Location:

Nature of concern/ allegation:

Observations:

Describe what you have seen/heard or what the person reporting the incident has seen/heard.

What was said:

Record exactly what was said to you and what you said. Do not ask leading questions.

3. ACTION TAKEN

Initial Action:

Record what has happened prior to this form being completed.

Views of Child/Person at risk:

Include if consent to share information has been requested/given.

4. CASE DISCUSSION WITH LEAD SAFEGUARDING PERSON

Date & Time Reported:

Case route decision (eg. reported out to statutory agencies/to be managed internally) and reasons:

5. PARENT/CARER INFORMED

Date & Time:

Name(s):

Contact details:

Details of discussion:

OTHER STAFF INFORMED

Date & Time:

Name(s):

Position:

Contact details:

Details of discussion:

EXTERNAL AGENCIES INFORMED

Date & Time:

Name(s):

Position:

Contact details:

Details of discussion:

FORM COMPLETED BY

Name:

Signed:

Date:

If the incident or concern has been reported to one of the statutory agencies then, a copy of this form must be sent to them within 24 hours of the telephone report.

Remember to maintain confidentiality, do not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who need to know.