

# Safeguarding Protocol

Issued by the Central Committee of the  
Young Communist League of Britain:  
February 2023





## **Safeguarding Protocol**

**The following document outlines the Young Communist League's approach to safeguarding children and adults who engage with our activities.**

All members, staff and volunteers must uphold this policy.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually by the leadership of the YCL.

Last review and update: **26 February 2023**.

### **Purpose and introduction to safeguarding**

The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach and commitment to protecting children and adults who engage with the YCL's activities from abuse and harm.

All children and adults have a right to protection from abuse and harm in concordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognises the entitlement of children to special care and assistance.

Many of the principles of safeguarding are the same throughout Britain, but there are different governance and procedural arrangements in different constituencies.

Any voluntary organisation that works with or comes into contact with children (under the age of 18) or vulnerable adults (adults considered to be at greater risk) is required to carry out these safeguarding duties.

What is safeguarding in general?

It is about protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and maltreatment, preventing harm to their health and development, ensuring that they grow up with safe and effective care, and enabling all children and young people to have the best outcomes in life.

Our approach to safeguarding is child-centred and contextual, which means that safeguarding should consider individuals' experiences of home life, peer groups, schools, communities and other factors.

Negative experiences could take place outside of the League and its activities. They could include things like bullying, drug abuse, neglect from parents or carers, or abusive behaviour towards women and girls.



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This policy provides some overarching principles that guide the organisation's approach to safeguarding. It also explains some of the practical steps that should be taken in order to tackle issues.

All members must have access to this policy and be aware of it so that they can act when and where required.

All branches should elect a safeguarding officer whose responsibility is to ensure the implementation of this policy at the branch level and manage any concerns, working with the branch secretary and national officers responsible for conduct and discipline.

The leadership of the YCL should review this policy and hold a safeguarding and violence against women and girls training workshop each year.

All members should be invited to attend this training, but it should be attended by secretaries and membership, safeguarding and women's officers who should ensure that what they learn is carried out at different levels of the organisation.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation and guidance that seek to protect children in England, Scotland and Wales. A summary of the key legislation is available from [www.nspcc.org.uk/learning](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning).

This policy should be implemented in conjunction with the Violence Against Women and Girls Protocol.

### **Adults considered to be at greater risk**

An adult considered to be at greater risk is anyone aged 18 or over who:

- Needs additional care or support, which might be provided by the local authority,
- Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect,
- Or is unable due to their additional needs to protect themselves from either the risk or the experience of abuse or neglect.

An adult considered to be at greater risk of abuse may have an illness affecting their mental or physical health, a learning disability, suffer from alcohol or drug problems, or otherwise be more vulnerable due to particular circumstances, such as moving home.



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### **Engagement in our activities**

Our approach to safeguarding should bear in mind that members and non-members may engage with our activities and members in circumstances such as:

- Branch meetings and activities,
- Protest marches and street work,
- Interactions on social media,
- Activities in trade unions and other campaigns,
- And education and work settings, where members might not be interacting explicitly with other members of the public as YCL members.

We should consider the different implications and risks for different age groups in these circumstances. In some cases, we should make Risk Assessments.

Our approach to safeguarding should be proactive, not reactive and develop a culture centred on promoting children and young people's safety and wellbeing.

### **Principles of safeguarding**

Children and young people should be safe from physical and emotional harm. The objective of safeguarding is to promote and protect their best interests and ensure they develop to their full potential in life.

Regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, all children and young people have an equal right to protection from harm. Some children and young people may be at additional risk because of the impact of their background or previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Safeguarding of children and young people should be promoted in society and should be considered alongside all of the work that we do and decisions that we take. We should maintain an organisation-wide culture where members are respectful and comfortable with sharing concerns. This culture should be maintained in accordance with our Constitution and the Code of Conduct.



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Practical steps should be taken to ensure the safety of children and young people who participate in our activities. We should mitigate against the potential impact of activities, eg online bullying or harassment as a result of social media use.

Partnership with children, young people, their parents and carers, and other agencies in order to promote the welfare of children and young people. We should listen to and respect children and young people. When safeguarding adults, respecting their right to make decisions for themselves.

Acknowledgement of the right of children to express their views and have them considered and taken seriously, practise their beliefs (as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights), privacy, access to information and media (as long as it is not illegal or harmful), expression of their identity, education including on respect for human rights, and relaxation and culture.

### **8 steps for effective safeguarding**

1. Check the ages of members in your branch. Listen to and respect the children and young people. Build a culture where members are respectful and comfortable with discussing issues, and use language that is appropriate for children and not offensive or discriminatory. Treat them fairly and without favouritism.
2. Put the safeguarding policy on the agenda of your next branch meeting. Discuss one or both of the case studies to see what issues come up and who might be a capable safeguarding officer. Do some more reading (suggestions below) to develop your knowledge of safeguarding.
3. Elect a safeguarding officer in your YCL branch and inform [conduct@ycl.org.uk](mailto:conduct@ycl.org.uk) about the election of this person so that they can receive further information and guidance. This person can hold another position at the same time. Encourage and provide time for this person to undergo training and learn more about safeguarding.
4. Make sure that branch secretaries and membership, safeguarding and women's officers are familiar with and promote the safeguarding policy to other members. It should be clearly signposted to all members. Encourage members, especially members under 18 years of age, to share this information with their parents and carers.



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5. Ensure that there is more than one trusted adult present (within sight or hearing) during activities in which children are present, including both a man and woman for mixed groups. Minimise opportunities including on social media whereby there could be unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults.
6. Do not delay, and be safe rather than sorry. As soon as possible, share any concerns and information with the national Conduct and Discipline Officer and the Central Committee. You could also contact the local Communist Party branch for help and advice from members with relevant experience. For any young person in imminent danger, call the police immediately.
7. During a disclosure of abuse or other information, inform children and young people that we have their best interests at heart and while we will respect their right to privacy, we cannot keep information in confidence if this information might be linked to potential harm. Share this information with families and other agencies as and when appropriate. Minimise the sharing of this information in the League.
8. Provide a safe physical environment for children and young people by applying the relevant health and safety regulations. Record, store and use information professionally and securely, in line with data protection regulations. Carry out Risk Assessments where appropriate and adhere to the Security Protocol.

### **Reporting a safeguarding concern**

If you have a safeguarding concern, please inform your branch's safeguarding officer and contact the national Conduct and Discipline Officer and the Central Committee as soon as possible. You could also contact the local Communist Party for help and advice.

Please clearly label your email/text "SAFEGUARDING" and follow up.

Below is an example of how your safeguarding concern should be reported. It should be completed as fully as possible, describing facts and not opinions or assumptions.

All of the information must be treated as confidential.



## **Safeguarding Protocol**

### **Your details (the person submitting this report)**

*Name / Telephone / Email / Position*

### **Details of the person affected (if known)**

*Name / Address / Telephone / Email / Any other information*

### **Details of the incident (please describe in detail using only the facts)**

### **Other people present / Potential witnesses**

*Name / Address / Telephone / Email / Any other information*

### **Any other information (please detail anything else that you believe to be helpful or important to this concern)**

Once your report has been received, the national Conduct and Discipline Officer will assess your concern, respond to you and take appropriate action, consulting with the Central Committee. An investigation and disciplinary action will be carried out in concordance with the Constitution of the Young Communist League.

If you believe that a young person is in immediate danger, call the police on 999. If there is not an imminent danger but you wish to contact the police, call 101.

For help and advice regarding concerns: Contact Childline at [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) or call free on 0800 1111. Contact the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Contact your local authority's safeguarding team. A directory is available [here](#).

**FOR ANY SAFEGUARDING CONCERN, DO NOT DELAY**

**INFORM YOUR BRANCH SAFEGUARDING OFFICER AND  
[CONDUCT@YCL.ORG.UK](mailto:CONDUCT@YCL.ORG.UK)**

**FOR ANY YOUNG PERSON IN DANGER NOW, CALL THE POLICE NOW**



## **Safeguarding Protocol**

### **Links for more information and training**

Safeguarding checklist, NSPCC (webpage) provides checklists for ensuring child protection.

Safeguarding and child protection for voluntary and community groups, NSPCC (webpage) provides general advice and links to training for organisations that work with young people.

Protecting children from bullying and cyberbullying, NSPCC (webpage) describes what bullying and cyberbullying are, how it affects children and how it can be addressed.

Sexual and sexist bullying, Anti-Bullying Alliance (PDF and webpage) provides an overview of sexualised bullying, what it is and how to prevent it and a free online training course.

Blogs, podcast and spotlight features, Contextual Safeguarding programme (webpage) provides various publications about the experiences and different issues faced by practitioners and researchers of contextual safeguarding in the UK.

Please note that external links are for reference to useful information only, and do not necessarily indicate endorsement.

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