



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS' POLICY

April 2025

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Purpose and Scope of this policy	<p>The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of young people and vulnerable adults engaged in The Air League’s programmes, events, and activities. It outlines our commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment where individuals are protected from harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.</p> <p>This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, and partners who work with or come into contact with young people and vulnerable adults through The Air League’s initiatives. It establishes clear procedures for safeguarding, reporting concerns, and promoting a culture of accountability and vigilance in all interactions.</p>	
Regulator(s) / external source	Disclosure and Barring Service Care Quality Commission Office of the Public Guardian Care Inspectorate Wales National Crime Agency NSPCC Gov.uk	
Relevant legislation, links and useful resources	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Working together to safeguard children 2023: summary of changes Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory framework Child protection system in England - NSPCC Children Act 2004	
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Version	Date	Amendment
All prev.	Pre-03/22	Required replacement
SG1V1.0	March 2022	Reviewed by NSPCC & Caroline Smith
SG1V1.1	June 2022	Full revision & rewrite, addition of version control & contents
SG1V1.2	August 2022	Update of DSO information & addition of Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding policy
SG1V1.3	October 2022	Restructure and update of processes
SG1V1.31	February 2024	Update DSO and Designated Trustee(s)
SG1V1.31	December 2024	Reviewed by Amy Greatorex C2 (RAFAC-HQ-Safeguarding-SnrOff F)
SG1V1.4	April 2025	Full revision & rewrite, addition of version control & contents

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Context

Definitions

Air League Staff - Anyone working on behalf of the Air League, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, and former scholars/members.

Child - As defined in the Children's Acts 1989 and 2004, a child is anyone 'who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.' Staff may prefer to use the words 'Young person' or 'Young people' to describe teenagers, although this definition does not exist in law. Therefore, it is important to be clear that any young person up to their 18th birthday is legally regarded as a child.

Vulnerable Adult - A vulnerable adult, is defined as a person aged 18 and over who is or who may need community care services because of age, illness, physical, mental health or other disability, or someone who is or may be unable to take care of or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation (including those who have difficulty in communication and may need additional help).

The Air League runs several programmes that vulnerable adults participate in. They may also offer volunteering opportunities to vulnerable adults. It is very important in terms of disabled and older people's equality and rights not to assume someone is vulnerable just because of who they are.

DSO/Designated Safeguarding Officer - As part of our safeguarding commitment, the Air League has allocated responsibilities to trained Designated Safeguarding Officer(s). Their role is to act as a point of contact for everyone working at the Air League who may have safeguarding concerns and to support, advise and provide guidance on safeguarding matters.

Participating body - Any external organisation including but not restricted to schools, alternative provisions, and colleges.

Delivery Provider - Any external organisation that works with the Air League to provide training or activities.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; this policy applies to all Air League Staff.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England and Wales. In addition to statutory legislation, this policy draws further guidance from and draws guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

This policy should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance, and other related documents.

About The Air League

Our Vision:	Changing lives through aviation.
Our Mission:	Inspiring young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue careers in aviation, aerospace and space by awarding scholarships, work experience opportunities, educational workshops, online learning and industry experience days.
What We Stand For:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensuring opportunities in aviation, aerospace, and space are accessible to everyone• Inspiring the next generation of aviation, aerospace, and space professionals across the full spectrum of disciplines available• Supporting the UK's aviation, aerospace, and space industries through enhanced awareness of the crucial industry skills and training the next generation requires

The Air League achieves these aims through a variety of events and activities provided by us or through delivery providers. Beneficiaries may engage with the Air League directly through membership activities or a third party such as a school or college, one of our industry partners or through another charitable organisation.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children 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 who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

Safeguarding Commitment

The Air League sets out a safeguarding commitment to:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where children and vulnerable adults feel safe, are encouraged to talk about their concerns, and are listened to.
- Ensure that children and vulnerable adults know that there are staff whom they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- Foster a culture where abusive, neglectful, or inappropriate behaviour displayed by staff, adults and children is challenged and not tolerated.
- Ensure that all staff and trustees receive regular training to be knowledgeable about the safeguarding concerns the children and vulnerable adults may face, including being aware of signs and indicators of abuse and how to respond to a concern.
- Have a skilled safeguarding team who are accessible and able to guide staff with any concerns or queries.
- Ensure every effort is made to establish effective working relationships with colleagues from other agencies.
- Operate safer recruitment procedures and make sure that all appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers who will work with children and vulnerable adults, including identity, DBS criminal record, and barred list (where available), and references.

- To renew DBS certificates every three years.
- Share information as needed with involved professionals as part of protection practices.

Application of Policy

It is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has taken place and Air League staff are not expected to be experts at such recognition. However, each person has a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about someone's behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult. It is important that the recipient of any complaint or accusation that a person has been or is being abused listens carefully without making or implying any judgment as to the truth of the complaint or accusation.

Examples of Air League activities involving children or vulnerable adults

- Flying scholarships
- Hands-on workshops and activities
- School visits and talks
- Behind the scenes tours of organisations
- Trial Fights
- eLearning
- Work experience placements with the Air League or partner organisations
- Engagement at STEM events and air shows

Events and activities may be provided by:

- staff or representatives of the Air League or
- through delivery providers.

Beneficiaries may engage with the Air League:

- directly through membership activities, or
- through a third party such as a school or college, or
- through another charitable organisation.

Events and activities delivered by the Air League

The Air League will ensure that there is a minimum of 2 Air League staff at each activity and ensure that [NSPCC recommended adult-to-child ratio](#) is satisfied depending on the age range of the children (**4 - 8 years** - one adult to six children, **9 - 12 years** - one adult to eight children, **13 - 18 years** - one adult to ten children). Depending on the needs and abilities of the children, and the nature of the activity, we may have more adults than the minimum to ensure the safety of those involved. All Air League staff will have up-to-date safeguarding training and will be able to report any safeguarding concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

Events and activities delivered by providers

Where in-person services or activities are supported separately by a delivery provider, The Air League may hire/access external providers to facilitate workshops, talks or deliver career enrichment activities such as flight experiences or career talks. In order to be satisfied they are competent and safe to deliver this, the DSO, must verify in advance of an activity taking place that the provider has:

- Instructors with the appropriate qualifications
- Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificates for instructors, or equivalent in Scotland or Northern Ireland, dated within the last three years
- Full comprehensive insurance
- A comprehensive risk assessment
- Appropriate health & safety and safeguarding policies

Photocopy proof of their qualifications, DBS clearances and insurance cover is accepted and said

information would be handled and dealt with in accordance with The Air League's Data Protection and Privacy policy.

Activities delivered in partnership with schools, colleges and universities

The Air League recognise that where students engage through participating bodies (particularly, but not limited to, schools and colleges), the participating body is likely to be the most appropriate channel for raising concerns, informing parents, referral to appropriate services, or multi-agency working due to an ongoing duty of care, pre-existing relationships, background knowledge, local placement/frequency of contact etc.

Where this is the case, the Air League will support the participating body in following its own safeguarding policy and procedure in the best interest of the child or vulnerable adult. In all other circumstances, the Air League will follow the procedures herein.

Where the Air League has concerns about a participating body it will follow the appropriate escalation process for the circumstances.

It is important to note that the responsibility for participants from the beginning of an authorised Air League activity lies with the participating body and the responsible adults that accompany children on the activity, as set out in the individual Service Level Agreements. As such, it is a participating body's responsibility to ensure that any travel arrangements are considered safe and that the proposed journey is within the abilities of the vulnerable people involved, even in the event of the Air League supporting the travel arrangements financially.

Note also, in exceptional circumstances when participants are permitted to attend an activity via other means e.g., rail travel, and written consent has been given from a parent/carer (if applicable), the duty of care and responsibility for the vulnerable person remains with the parent/carer until they arrive at the activity, where the responsibility then lies with the participating body.

eLearning Platform

The Air League's Flight Path online learning platform is designed to provide a safe and secure digital learning environment for all users, including young people and vulnerable adults. The platform is built and hosted on a system that adheres to the highest safeguarding, cyber security, and data privacy standards, including ISO 27001, ISO 9001, Cyber Essentials Plus, and G-Cloud approval. These certifications ensure that the platform is secure, resilient, and compliant with best practices for online safety.

All learner data will be collected, processed, and stored in line with The Air League's Data Protection and Privacy Policy, ensuring compliance with UK GDPR and other relevant regulations. The platform incorporates robust security measures to protect users from online risks, inappropriate content, and unauthorised access.

The Air League is committed to safeguarding all users of its digital services. Any concerns related to online safety, inappropriate behaviour, or safeguarding issues on the platform should be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding officer via the appropriate reporting channels.

Managing Safeguarding Risks

Risk Assessment Process

The Air League is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all young people and vulnerable adults who engage with its programmes, events, and activities. In line with health and safety legislation, including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, we will assess and mitigate any safeguarding risks to prevent harm.

When a Risk Assessment is Required

A safeguarding risk assessment will be conducted under the following circumstances:

- New Roles & Recruitment – When hiring for a new or existing role that involves working with young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- New Activities or Events – Prior to the launch of any new programme, event, or initiative that may involve young people or vulnerable adults.
- Apprentices & Under-18 Participants – When hosting apprentices or students who have not yet turned 18, particularly in training and work experience settings.
- Changes to Existing Activities – If modifications are made to ongoing activities that impact the involvement of young people or vulnerable adults.

Risk Assessment Criteria

Each safeguarding risk assessment must consider:

1. Nature, Length & Frequency of Contact
 - Will contact be direct or indirect?
 - Will interactions be supervised or unsupervised?
2. Presence of Children & Vulnerable Adults
 - How many individuals under 18 or vulnerable adults will be involved?
 - Are they part of a structured programme or an open event?
3. Health & Well-being Considerations
 - Do any participants have allergies, medical conditions, disabilities, or behavioural needs that require adjustments?
 - Are there any additional safeguarding considerations, such as language barriers or additional support needs?
4. Potential Areas of Risk
 - Identifying scenarios where harm or risk could arise, including physical safety, emotional well-being, and online security.
 - Reviewing the level of supervision and whether additional safeguarding measures are required.

Control Measures & Risk Mitigation

- Implement appropriate supervision levels, including DBS-checked staff where necessary.
- Ensure clear safeguarding procedures are in place and communicated to all staff, volunteers, and external partners.
- Establish reporting procedures for safeguarding concerns.
- Regularly review and update risk assessments to reflect new developments or concerns.

Please note that where there are multiple activities or events of a similar nature, it is unnecessary to complete an individual risk assessment for each of them. Instead, it is possible to complete an overarching assessment for a particular type of activity or event and ensure that it manages the relevant risks appropriately.

Once it has been identified that the risk assessment process should be initiated, it is vital that the person responsible for the relevant activity or event includes completion of this within their planning process

and ensures that it is completed. A risk assessment must be completed in advance of the relevant activity or event by a competent person (where there are no current, adequate and documented risk management procedures already in place).

Safer Recruitment

The Air League is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults. As part of this commitment, we follow a robust safer recruitment process to ensure that all individuals working with or representing the organisation meet the highest standards of safety and integrity.

All staff, trustees, and volunteers who engage in regulated activity with young people are required to undergo an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before commencing their roles. Where appropriate, additional checks may be conducted, including overseas criminal record checks for individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK.

All staff and trustees will receive both online and face-to-face safeguarding training as part of their induction and ongoing involvement with the Air League. The training will be refreshed annually, along with regular updates from the safeguarding team to highlight new legislation or risks. All staff have the responsibility to read and sign this policy during their induction. Certain staff may need additional training based on their role such as those in the safeguarding team with additional responsibilities or those working in a role that places them in regular direct contact with children or vulnerable adults. It is expected that staff will take responsibility for maintaining their own training records to ensure all mandatory training remains up to date. Failure to comply with statutory and mandatory training can lead to serious consequences including potential harm to vulnerable people, disciplinary action and even criminal charges. The Air League will record evidence of all completed mandatory staff training including expiry dates on its HR portal.

The Air League will review this policy and training materials annually, following any changes in legislation, or after any reported incident (to determine if there are any practices or behaviours which could be improved to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident happening in the future, and to ensure that the procedures are as robust as possible).

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will:

- receive refresher training from an approved provider of safeguarding training every 2 years.
- always be available when the Air League is active. This includes activities delivered outside of normal hours, online, and they will arrange cover if they are unavailable.
- provide the CEO and trustees with an annual safeguarding report.
- keep accurate and up-to-date records about any safeguarding concerns.

Contractors and visiting professionals.

Contractors – When contractors are visiting activities while children or vulnerable adults are also on-site, ID will be checked before, or upon arrival. All contractors must be chaperoned, as per the Visitors Policy. If needed, additional safeguarding requirements will be set out within the Service Level Agreement between the contractor and the Air League.

Visiting Professionals (including visiting speakers) – Before, or upon arrival, ID will be checked. Visiting speakers include individuals who have been invited to the Air League to talk about a specific topic, for example talking about their place of employment as part of a careers event.

Photography and handheld devices

The welfare and protection of children and vulnerable adults are paramount, and consideration should always be given to whether the use of photography will place them at risk. Images may be used to harm children, for example as a preliminary to 'grooming' or by displaying them inappropriately on the internet, particularly social networking sites.

For this reason, both written and/or verbal consent is always sought from schools or parents/guardians when photographing children using any means including iPads, smartphones or cameras and additional consideration is given to photographing vulnerable children, particularly Looked After Children or those known to be fleeing domestic violence. Consent must be sought, in line with the Data Protection Policy, with those with parental responsibility informed in case the student is unaware of issues which might affect their consent. This may include the Local Authority in the case of Looked After Children. Written permission must also be sought before images are shared for marketing and promotional purposes or with any third parties.

Many children own or have access to handheld devices and parents are encouraged to consider measures to keep their children safe when using the internet and social media at home and in the community. All participants must be briefed about the use of photography during activities, particularly in live aircraft environments in line with the rules and regulations of the host organisation. Further information can be found in our Online Safety policy.

Handling, recording and sharing information for disclosures and concerns

Concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults could arise in a variety of ways and in a range of situations. For example, a child or vulnerable adult may report or show signs of abuse, someone may hint that a child or vulnerable adult is or has been subject to harm, or that a colleague is an abuser, or someone may witness abuse.

Where an individual suspects or is informed that a child or vulnerable adult has been, is being, or could be harmed as a result of taking place in an air League activity/event or through contact with Air League staff, it is not the responsibility of that person to decide whether abuse has taken place. Instead, the individual aware of these suspicions or allegations must take the following steps:

1. **In emergency circumstances** (i.e. where there is certain, immediate and/or significant danger to an individual, an individual has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, or a criminal act has been witnessed), referrals must be made to the Police, social services or other appropriate authorities. This should always be prior to consulting with the designated safeguarding lead, or their deputy and/or the CEO. Where this is necessary, the designated safeguarding lead, or their deputy, should be informed immediately afterwards. In such cases, a criminal investigation may follow.
2. **Where the situation is not an emergency**, referrals should be channeled through The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or their deputy. In the case where the DSL or their deputy is unavailable, referrals should be channeled through the CEO.
3. (Optional) Where there are concerns about abuse, further advice and guidance can be sought from the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111. However, this should not take precedence over the two-stage process, as above.

Where a complaint of abuse is reported, the designated safeguarding lead, or their deputy, will carefully consider the information available and decide on the appropriate course of action. Such situations may require contact with the relevant external agencies (including social services and the police) for them to investigate the matter and determine any necessary action.

Recording allegations and concerns

For all allegations raised, the following information must be recorded and retained in a confidential manner:

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, including who made it and who it was against;
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken, decisions reached, and the outcome as categorised above;
- a copy provided to the person concerned, where agreed by children's social care or the police (if applicable); and,
- a declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.

The record should be retained for 6 years after the end of the employment of the person the allegation was made against (in line with the retention period for most standard personnel records). The Air League has a legal duty to refer an individual to the DBS if they have been removed from working in regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults because they caused harm to children/vulnerable adults or posed a risk of causing harm. The duty to refer is absolute and overrides any concerns about data protection. All cases for possible referral to the DBS must be made in line with the [DBS barring referral guidance](#). The Air League must not knowingly allow a barred person to work in 'Regulated Activity'.

It is impossible to promise complete confidentiality when a concern is raised or an allegation made. This is because the Air League must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults. However, as part of this policy, only people who need to be informed about an incident or concern, whether internal or external to the Air League, should be informed.

When dealing with safeguarding concerns the Air League will always aspire to involve the victim of abuse and/or harassment in the investigation and inform the DSL from their school (if applicable), their parents/carers and the Local Authority. Depending on the type of concern reported, cases may also be referred to the relevant Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the police.

Retention, storage and sharing of records

Well-kept records are essential to good protection practices. All staff are clear about the need to record and report concerns about a child, children or vulnerable adults within the Air League. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for maintaining such records and for deciding at what point these records should be passed over to other agencies. All protection records are stored securely in a password protected folder in our internal database, with access confined to the safeguarding team named in this policy.

Sharing of safeguarding reports will be done directly by a Designated Safeguarding Officer, including any necessary discussion or explanation. The DSO is to send copied files to other agencies (e.g., Police) and the Air League is to retain the originals. The DSO is to obtain a signed and dated record of the transfer. In the event of a physical handover not being possible then the most secure method should be found to send the confidential records to a named recipient and a photocopy kept.

Please note that the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information to keep vulnerable people safe. Please also note that all safeguarding records are kept at the Air League for six years, at which time the records will be securely destroyed.

Named People with Safeguarding Responsibilities

Within The Air League the following staff members have specific roles related to safeguarding:

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):	Michelle Tooke
Nominated Safeguarding Trustee(s):	Al Lewis