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DEFINITIONS

Key terms used:

Safeguarding means putting measures in place to protect the health, well-being and human rights of vulnerable persons, to enable them to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

The terms ‘**Vulnerable Persons**’ and ‘**Vulnerable People**’ are defined as:

- All children and young people under the age of 18 years
- Adults with care and support needs who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be adults who are usually able to protect themselves from harm but may be unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect vulnerable persons who receive or come into contact with The Donkey Sanctuary’s services and those of its implementing partner organisations, which it funds
- to provide members of the public, board trustees, staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding vulnerable persons.

This policy is in line with The Donkey Sanctuary’s core values of compassion, collaboration and creativity. It supersedes any previous policies safeguarding children or adults. It applies to The Donkey Sanctuary trustees, staff and volunteers, including those of implementing partners whom we fund, and who we expect to work according to our principles as a condition of their involvement with The Donkey Sanctuary. The exception to this is in countries where the policy contravenes local legislation. In these cases, local legislation should be followed with guidance from the Global Safeguarding Manager and the Lead Executive Officer for Safeguarding. This document will apply if The Donkey Sanctuary’s policy is more stringent than local legislation.

LEGAL AND OTHER FRAMEWORKS

As an international organisation, The Donkey Sanctuary, and its implementing partners whom we fund, endorse:

- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and in particular, article 19, which accords equal rights to protection from abuse for children;
- the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- [the Core Humanitarian Standards](#)
- [the Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment \(CAPSEAH\)](#)

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy, and guidance that seek to protect vulnerable persons in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In countries where this contravenes or is not as stringent as local legislation, guidance will be provided by the Global Safeguarding Manager and the Lead Executive Officer for Safeguarding. The key international, European and UK legislation is detailed in Appendix 1.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

This policy should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

- [Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Procedures](#)
- [Safeguarding Risk Assessment Procedures](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Recruitment Guidelines](#)
- [E Safety Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Grievance Policy](#)
- [Disciplinary Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [UK & NI Whistleblowing Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Travel Policy](#)
- [Fundraising and Responding to Vulnerable People Policy & Procedures](#)
- [Guidance for Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons in the International Context](#)
- [DBS and Other Criminal Records Checks Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Safeguarding Vulnerable People Standards](#)
- [Safeguarding Risk Assessment Procedures](#)
- [Anti-Bullying Policy](#) (under review)
- Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination Policy (in development)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

The Donkey Sanctuary acknowledges that some areas of its work present a higher level of safeguarding risk than others. These include our Donkey Assisted Activities; our international work with sometimes marginalised and vulnerable communities; our donkey welfare activities and our fundraising with donors, who are sometimes vulnerable. The Donkey Sanctuary is committed to actively safeguarding vulnerable people who come into contact with our services and those provided by our implementing partners. The Donkey Sanctuary will not tolerate the abuse of vulnerable persons. Staff and volunteers will ensure that their work reflects the principles below. The Donkey Sanctuary will be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

The Donkey Sanctuary recognises that:

- the welfare of a vulnerable person is paramount
- all vulnerable persons, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse

- some vulnerable persons are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs, or other issues
- working in partnership with vulnerable persons, their families, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

The Donkey Sanctuary will not tolerate sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, harassment, discrimination or bullying.

We endorse the Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation Abuse and Harassment (CAPSEAH) and will abide by the following principles regarding sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment conduct:

- Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (SEAH) is prohibited by our staff, volunteers and trustees.
- Sexual Exploitation and Abuse constitutes gross misconduct and grounds for termination of contract, and potential prosecution under criminal, civil, or military law.
- Sexual Harassment is misconduct and can constitute gross misconduct depending on its severity.

We will seek to keep vulnerable persons safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), deputy DSOs (DDSO), Lead Executive Officer for Safeguarding, and Lead Trustee for Safeguarding
- ensuring concerns or allegations of abuse and/or neglect are always taken seriously, investigated and acted on, if appropriate, and prioritising the safety and dignity of the victim/survivor
- ensuring all board trustees, staff, volunteers and vulnerable persons themselves have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of abuse
- adopting child/adult protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and the [Code of Conduct](#)
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing information professionally and securely following our [Data Protection Policy](#)
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with vulnerable persons, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- using our [Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Procedures](#) to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving vulnerable persons, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an environment where bullying, harassment, and discrimination are not tolerated, and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any incidents that do arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place

- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for vulnerable persons, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- seeking to always work in ways which are culturally sensitive and that respect the diverse nature of the people with whom we work. We recognise that there are many different ways of taking care of vulnerable persons and making sure they are protected. It is acknowledged that protecting these groups of individuals and being culturally sensitive can be a difficult balancing act, especially given the situation in many of the countries where we work. As an international organisation, we endorse the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and article 19, which accords equal rights to protection from abuse for children. We also endorse the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, [the Core Humanitarian Standards](#), and the [Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment](#). Culture must not be used as an excuse to abuse children, young people, or adults with care and support needs
- working with our implementing partner organisations who we fund to ensure they have policies and procedures in place for safeguarding vulnerable persons, and that they are implemented effectively.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding vulnerable persons is everyone's responsibility, and failure to act on concerns relating to children or adults with care and support needs is not an option.

The Donkey Sanctuary managers, and ultimately directors, hold overall accountability for this policy and its implementation.

The Donkey Sanctuary's Board of Trustees are responsible for reviewing and updating this policy annually in line with legislative and organisational developments, and hold overall responsibility for The Donkey Sanctuary's safeguarding of vulnerable persons.

All staff, volunteers and other representatives of The Donkey Sanctuary are required to adhere to this policy at all times, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Procedures, and the Code of Conduct.

All The Donkey Sanctuary's staff, volunteers and other representatives are obliged to report any suspicions of abuse or neglect of vulnerable persons to the Designated Safeguarding Officer following The Donkey Sanctuary Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Procedures. Failure to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect relating to a vulnerable person to the Designated Safeguarding Officer is a breach of The Donkey Sanctuary's Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy and could lead to disciplinary action being taken. There is no obligation placed on any individual to report any incident that has happened to themselves.

The Donkey Sanctuary's Designated Safeguarding Officer, who is the Global Safeguarding Manager, (see contact details) can offer further support to staff, volunteers and other representatives on implementing this policy.

CONTACT DETAILS

Global Safeguarding Manager & Designated Safeguarding Officer

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Lead Trustee for Safeguarding

Name: Natalie Cook | Email care of: safeguarding@thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk

APPENDIX 1 – LEGISLATION

International & European Legislation & Convention

[Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

[Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)

[The European Social Charter](#)

[Convention on the International Protection of Adults \(2000\)](#)

[International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#)

[International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#)

[Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#)

[Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#)

[Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#)

[Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse \(2007\)](#)

[Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons With Disabilities](#)

[African Charter of Human and People's Rights](#)

[The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child](#)

[The Core Humanitarian Standards](#)

[The Common Approach to Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment](#)

England

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)

[Care Act 2014](#)

[Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2018](#)

Wales

[Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)

[All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008](#)

[Social Services and Well-being \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)

Northern Ireland

[The Children \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1995](#)

[Children and Young People's Strategy 2017-2027](#)

[Revised Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures for Northern Ireland 2018](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007](#)

Scotland

[Children Act \(Scotland\) 1995](#)

[Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)

[National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014](#)

[Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)