

# The SNP Safeguarding Policy

The Scottish National Party acknowledges the duty of care it holds to safeguard and protect children who are involved in the SNP or affected by the activities of the party.

This Safeguarding Policy outlines the behaviour expected of:

1. Staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives of the SNP and;
2. Staff, members and volunteers of other organisations who engage with children and adults at risk through the SNP and its activities.

This policy covers those under 16 years of age, and adults deemed at risk by their local authority.

The underpinning principles of the policy are:

- **Empowerment:** Those in contact with children are supported and educated in protection from harm
- **Prevention:** Being aware - it is better to take action before harm occurs
- **Protection:** Protecting those most vulnerable from harm
- **Accountability:** accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, members and elected representatives to behave with integrity, maturity and good judgement

## **The purpose of the Policy**

The Safeguarding Policy is intended to provide a minimum framework for safer working practice for staff, members, volunteers and elected representatives who work with, or come into contact with, children and adults at risk at all levels of party engagement and activity.

It serves to help to protect children and adults at risk from abuse and/or inappropriate behaviour from other individuals and to clarify the standard of behaviour required of staff, members, volunteers and elected representatives.

## **Upholding the Safeguarding Policy**

It is the responsibility of all staff, members, volunteers and elected representatives to ensure that their behaviour meets the standards of this policy at all times. Any breaches of the policy must be reported.

Staff and members who are found to have breached this policy may be subject to the SNP disciplinary procedures. Any breach of the code involving a volunteer or member of staff from

another organisation will result in them being reported to the appropriate safeguarding officer within that organisation.

The SNP will work with local authorities, community agencies and Named Persons where it is felt behaviour that has breached the policy constitutes a safeguarding allegation.

## **Acting in a position of trust**

Staff, members and volunteers, including elected representatives and senior officials, should be aware that they may be seen as role models by children, young people and adults at risk and therefore they must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

Elected representatives and others in positions of authority must take particular care that their status and power is not used, or may seem to be used, inappropriately to influence children or adults at risk or to cause them harm.

**If you have, or receive, any information that a child or an adult at risk has been harmed, or is at risk of being harmed by their own or someone else's behaviour, you must report it immediately. Do not wait to report.**

When engaging with children and adults at risk on behalf of the SNP, staff, volunteers and elected representatives are considered to be acting in a position of trust.

- A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity.
- It is vital for any person working on behalf of the Party in a position of trust to understand the power this can give them and the responsibility they must exercise.
- Any behaviour which could allow a sexual relationship to develop between a person in a position of trust and a child or young person must always be avoided.

## **Working with children and adults at risk**

Staff members, volunteers, members and elected representatives must adhere to the below at all times:

### **Positive relationships:**

- Treat children and adults at risk fairly, without prejudice or discrimination and avoid favouritism
- Ensure that all contact, interactions and communications (face-to-face and online) with children and adults at risk are appropriate and **relevant to the work of the SNP**
- Use language which is appropriate and be mindful of the Party's equality policy.
- Ensure that the focus of any relationship with a child or an adult at risk that they have met through the SNP remains professional at all times

- The content should relate solely to SNP activity
- All bulk text messages sent to children and young people should also be sent through approved channels and recorded for external moderation if required

## Safeguarding reporting principles

**Recognise** – that a child, young person or adult at risk is being harmed or might be at risk of harm

**Respond** – appropriately if a child, young person or adult at risk tells you about what is happening to them or somebody else

**Report** – your concern. Don't keep it to yourself or try to deal with it on your own

**Record** – your concern and who it has been reported to

## Reporting a safeguarding concern

It is important that safeguarding concerns are reported promptly so that the report can be assessed and action taken to protect the people involved. Members of staff, volunteers, members or elected representatives of the SNP must report safeguarding concerns no later than the next working day that the concern is raised or received.

The contact email is [safeguarding@snp.org](mailto:safeguarding@snp.org)

Guidance can be sought from the SNP at any time on 0800 633 5432.

If any person is at immediate risk of harm or requires medical attention the emergency services should be contacted immediately by telephoning 999. Once the safety and welfare needs of the individual have been addressed, the National Secretary must be contacted as soon as practical.