



Lichfield Foodbank
Together with Trussell
Safeguarding Children Policy

Policy Owner: Lichfield Foodbank

Policy approved by: Lichfield Foodbank – Board of Trustee’s

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Lichfield Foodbank
February 2026

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Section 1: Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

Lichfield Foodbank is committed to Safeguarding Children in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

We will safeguard children by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all children safe.

Lichfield Foodbank is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to children which necessitates: the recognition of children who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how child abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our Foodbank activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, and in the community.

Lichfield Foodbank is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all children to live a life free of harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

Policy Statement

Lichfield Foodbank is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people who come into contact with our work. We recognise that children may be present at our foodbank centres, outreach activities, and events, and that some children may be particularly vulnerable due to poverty, adversity, or family circumstances.

This policy aligns with:

- **The Trussell Trust Safeguarding Standards and Policies**
- UK legislation including the **Children Act 1989 & 2004**
- Statutory guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- Best practice guidance from the **NSPCC**

Lichfield Foodbank adopts a **zero-tolerance approach to abuse** and is committed to acting in the best interests of the child at all times.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of Lichfield Foodbank to safeguarding children and to ensure that everyone involved in Lichfield Foodbank is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding children.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding children.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of a child within the organisation.

Scope

This safeguarding children policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in Lichfield Foodbank including Volunteer Board trustee members, Volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of Lichfield Foodbank. All activities delivered under the name of Lichfield Foodbank, including Foodbank distribution centres, voucher referral agencies, community engagement and events and fundraising activities.

Commitments

In order to implement this policy Lichfield Foodbank will ensure that:

- Everyone involved with Lichfield Foodbank is aware of the safeguarding children procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of a child.
- Any concern that a child is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with Lichfield Foodbank's safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures.
- Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Lichfield Foodbank acts in accordance with best practice advice, for example, from Trussell Trust, National Governing Bodies, NSPCC, Ann Craft Trust.

- Lichfield Foodbank will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard a child, where necessary.
- All Board members, volunteers and partner agencies understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding children and will have to complete and/or are up to date with safeguarding training and learning opportunities appropriate for their role.
- Lichfield Foodbank uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation and within the Foodbank community.
- Lichfield Foodbank shares information about anyone found to be a risk to children with the appropriate bodies. For example: Disclosure and Barring Service, Services, Police, Local Authority/Social Services.
- When planning activities and events Lichfield Foodbank includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all children from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the Board and operations team on an annual basis.
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Children Procedures are reviewed no less than on a two yearly basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board, Trussell Trust and/or National Governing Bodies and/or as a result of any other significant change or event.

Lichfield Foodbank is guided by the following principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Children have the right to be heard and taken seriously
- Concerns will be acted upon promptly and appropriately
- We work in partnership with statutory agencies and the Trussell Trust when required

Partnership Working

If working with other organisations in partnership to deliver activities, both organisations must be able to readily access their respective safeguarding policy and procedures. Reporting of concerns must take place as they occur where there is a specific risk to either partner's employees, volunteers, clients, or service provision. Other

management information should be shared as part of regular reporting schedules but focus on the issues and the organisation's response to an incident not the specific details of the case, such as number of concerns and number reported to statutory agencies. Meetings should be scheduled at least quarterly between partners to discuss.

Implementation

Lichfield Foodbank is committed to developing and maintaining its capability to implement this policy and procedures.

In order to do so the following will be in place:

- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all children.
- Access to relevant legal and professional advice.
- Regular management reports to the Board detailing how risks to child safeguarding are being addressed.
- Safeguarding children procedures that deal effectively with any concerns of abuse or neglect, including those caused through poor practice.
- A Safeguarding Lead responsible for Safeguarding policies and procedures.
- A Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for each Foodbank distribution centre/warehouse in Lichfield.
- Arrangements to work effectively with other relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, including arrangements for sharing information.
- Codes of conduct for Board members, Volunteers and Partner Agencies and other relevant individuals that specify zero tolerance of abuse in any form.
- Policies and procedures that address the following areas and which are consistent with this Safeguarding Children policy.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✓ Safeguarding Adults | ✓ Whistleblowing |
| ✓ Bullying and Harassment | ✓ Safe recruitment and selection (staff and volunteers) |
| ✓ Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management | ✓ Information policy, data protection and information sharing |
| ✓ Concerns, Complaints and Compliments | |

Section 2: Supporting Information

Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

- Lichfield Foodbank volunteers and associated agencies should be alert to indicators of abuse or neglect and understand that children experiencing food poverty may face additional risks.

A **child** is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

Safeguarding refers to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm, abuse, or neglect.

Safeguarding legislation lists categories of abuse differently however, they all include the following types of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Neglect

The NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) outlines four main types of child abuse: **physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect**. These categories cover various forms of maltreatment, including witnessing domestic abuse, that cause harm to a child's health or development.

- **Physical Abuse:** Occurs when a child is intentionally physically harmed (e.g., hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning).
- **Sexual Abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment that causes severe adverse effects on a child's emotional development and self-worth.
- **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development.

These forms of abuse can occur in combination or isolation.

If a child:

- Makes a disclosure
- Appears at risk of harm
- Raises a safeguarding concern

You must:

1. Listen calmly and reassure the child
2. Take the concern seriously
3. Avoid asking leading questions or investigating
4. Report the concern immediately in line with this policy

Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

- A child may confide to a volunteer or another agency that they are experiencing abuse inside or outside of the Foodbank's setting. Similarly, others may suspect that this is the case.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest a child is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored. The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present. Bitemarks, burns/scalding
- Overt sexualised behaviour/language/knowledge
- A school aged child attending the foodbank during school hours.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a child. For example, a child might be fearful, cowering, tearful when with their adult.
- Excessive fear of being offered help or support in front of their carer.
- Poor physical hygiene/weight or growth issues
- Inadequate clothing for the weather
- Self-harm.
- Disclosing they are left alone for long periods of time
- A carer always speaks for the child or doesn't want anybody left alone with the child for fear of disclosure.
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All safeguarding concerns relating to a child must be reported without delay to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.

If the DSL is unavailable and a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact:

- **Staffordshire Children’s Social Care**, or
- **The Police (999)** in an emergency

Concerns about the DSL must be reported to the **Chair of Trustees** or directly to the Trussell Trust Safeguarding Team.

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis
- Safeguarding concerns will be recorded factually and securely
- Confidentiality will not prevent information being shared where a child is at risk
- Records will be kept in line with GDPR and Trussell Trust guidance

Roles and responsibilities

NAME	ROLE/RESPONSIBILITIES	CONTACT DETAILS
Kate Coplestone	Designated Safeguarding Lead	Trustee2@Lichfield.foodbank.org.uk
Ania Kluk	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead	Manager@curborough.community
Wendy Dee	Citizens Advice South East Staffordshire – Safeguarding Lead	wendyd@casesstaffs.org.uk
Verity Ashley	Chair of Trustees	Chair@Lichfield.foodbank.org.uk

- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will never be related to each other.
- The Designated Safeguarding Leads will both hold a personal copy of this Policy.

For completion each time the policy is reviewed / edited:

Safeguarding Trustee	Kate Coplestone
Monitoring of the procedures	Trustee for Safeguarding
Reporting To	Trustee Board
Next Review Date	14/02/2027

This policy was approved by the Trustees:

Name: Verity Ashley	Signed: <i>Verity Ashley</i>
Position: Chair of Trustees	Date: <i>28/02/2026</i>