

Charity number 1030281

Date revised	Date adopted by committee	Date of next review	Person responsible for scheduling review
August 2025	Sept 2025	Sept 2026	Safeguarding Officers

1. Introduction

South Lakes u3a recognises its responsibility in relation to the welfare of all those involved in our activities. This policy sets out what South Lakes u3a will do to help meet these responsibilities.

South Lakes u3a aims to provide equality of opportunity to all members and potential members, regardless of social standing, language, ethnicity, gender, orientation and educational background. All reasonable efforts will be made to facilitate membership for vulnerable people who wish to become members. If required, honorary membership will be extended to carers not meeting Third Age criteria.

We will protect the right of children and vulnerable adults to live in safety, free from abuse or neglect.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the support guidance that sets out further technical details. Appendix 1 & 2

2. Safeguarding Roles

Our Safeguarding Officers take a lead in ensuring our policy and practice remains effective and up to date, support training for committee members and group coordinators and other members, and act as points of contact for other agencies and members with safeguarding queries or concerns.

Our Safeguarding Officers are Chris Brooksbank and Angela Lovett.

All members of the SL u3a, as citizens, have a responsibility to raise safeguarding concerns about children or vulnerable adults, and can liaise with the above officers, or contact the local authorities as appropriate.

If urgent action may be needed, members should:

If concern relates to a child contact:

- Westmorland and Furness Safeguarding Hub 0300 3732724

If concern relates to an adult contact:

- Local Safeguarding Adults helpline (Westmorland and Furness) 0300 373 3301

If concern relates to a serious criminal act:

- ❖ Telephone 999 and tell the police of your suspicions.

3. Good practice – Group Leaders and Members should avoid:

- Working alone with a vulnerable adult or child.
- Alcohol whilst responsible for others.
- Behaviour that might be perceived as bullying or humiliating.
- Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact.
- Making sexually explicit comments.
- Sharing sexually explicit material.

Action Plan – 2025-26

Action	Responsible	Completion Date	Review
Review safeguarding Policy	Committee	Sept 2025	Complete
Insert safeguarding guidance box to website and link to facebook page	Safeguarding Officers - CB / AL & Judith Wallen	Sept 2025	Link complete
Insert safeguarding guidance in coordinator packs	CB / AL	August 2025	
Develop committee and coordinator training plan	CB / AL	Sept 2025	
Provide training to Committee and Coordinators		By February 2025	
Provide feedback on safeguarding in SLu3a committee		Nov 2025 May 2026	

Appendix 1

Safeguarding definitions, aims and guiding principles

○ Definitions

A **child** is defined as a person who is aged under 18, or under 26 if disabled.

As a provider of activities for people no longer in full time employment, children are not normally involved in our activities. However, they may occasionally be present accompanying one of our members.

In such cases, the member must be with the child at all times and is responsible for the child's welfare. mm

A **vulnerable adult** is a person over the age of 18 who may need extra support or protection because they are unable to care for themselves or protect themselves from harm. This could be due to a number of factors including: age, physical illness, mental illness, disability, sensory impairment, addiction to alcohol or drugs, reduction in physical or mental capacity, dependency on others.

Safeguarding means protecting the right of people in these groups to live in safety, free from abuse or neglect.

○ Safeguarding aims

Our policy aims to enable us to:

- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible;
- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect;
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect;
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of a child or a vulnerable adult;
- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

- **Guiding principles**

- The welfare of the vulnerable person takes precedence over any other considerations
- All participants, regardless of age, gender, disability, race, faith, culture, language or sexual identity have the right to our support to challenge abuse or minimise harm.
- All allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.

- **Implementation**

South Lakes u3a recognizes that there is a need to avoid abusive behaviour and a duty to look for and recognize signs of abuse that may be perpetrated by others. It is vital that all members are vigilant on behalf of those unable to protect themselves.

This includes knowing about different types of abuse and neglect and their signs. These include:

Physical abuse which may result in bruises, burns, bite marks or unexplained injuries;

Sexual abuse;

Financial abuse which may result in theft, fraud, coercive control of finances or the misappropriation of possessions;

Psychological or emotional abuse which can involve intimidation, threats of harm, verbal abuse or a restriction of freedom

Domestic abuse which includes behaviour which is controlling, coercive, threatening or violent by a partner or ex-partner or a family member.

Any of these may lead to mental health and /or behavioural disturbance

Neglect includes aspects of hygiene, health or surroundings, stemming from the self or others

What to do:

Supporting children and adults to keep safe by reporting suspected abuse, or any allegations immediately to either one of the safeguarding officers. Current names and contact details can be found on the u3a South Lakes website by following links

<https://south-lakes.u3asite.uk/member-information/>

Appendix 2

Safeguarding Risk Assessment and further support

South Lakes u3a does not hold any statutory authority with regards to safeguarding.

In accordance with TAT (Third Age Trust) guidance when a safeguarding concern is raised a Safeguarding Officer will make written notes on behalf of the Committee.

We will NOT take a lead role in any Safeguarding enquiry

Further support is available from:

Hourglass (previously Action on Elder Abuse) <https://www.wearehourglass.org> is a confidential support and advice for older people who have been abused or people who know an older person who may be suffering abuse. Available weekdays 9am - 5pm on freephone 0808 808 8141.