

Chapter One: Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedure - 2026-2027

Please note that this policy largely relates to the English context. A Scottish version of this Policy is available on request

1. Chapter One Programmes

Chapter One delivers a range of programmes designed to improve children's reading and literacy skills:

- **Online Reading Volunteers Programme** – Corporate volunteers support young readers remotely via Chapter One's secure online platform for 30 minutes once a week. Interaction takes place through a shared screen and voice connection only. No visual connection is established between the volunteer and child, and unsupervised physical meetings between volunteers/staff and pupils do not take place. All sessions are recorded
- **Early Literacy Intervention (ELI)** – Chapter One staff, known as Early Literacy Interventionists, work directly with children in schools to provide targeted one-to-one phonics support. These staff members are in schools and work in close partnership with teachers and school staff.
- **Book Club Programme** – A blended model combining Reading Facilitators and online volunteers to engage reluctant readers in Years 4 and 5. Children take part in weekly group sessions that promote reading for pleasure and confidence-building. Chapter One staff facilitate in person, while trained online volunteers join via video call (cameras on) to support and interact with pupils. All sessions are supervised and take place within the school setting.

All Chapter One programmes are delivered within a robust safeguarding framework, ensuring that children are supported in safe, supervised and appropriate environments.

Chapter One recognises that it has a clear responsibility to its staff, volunteers and beneficiaries to ensure that conduct and training complies with best practice in relation to Safeguarding. Chapter One therefore undertakes:

- To ensure all Chapter One staff and volunteers are aware of what Safeguarding is
- To ensure Chapter One staff and volunteers understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in their interaction with children
- To train all Chapter One staff and volunteers in the appropriate procedure to follow should they become concerned that a child is experiencing abuse, or is at risk of abuse
- To ensure that Chapter One has a Designated Safeguarding Officer and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer at all times.
- To ensure safeguarding provision throughout the year, including school holidays with the support of the ADSO team.
- To ensure Chapter One follows an appropriate procedure if an allegation is made against staff or volunteers
- To ensure that all volunteers and Chapter One staff pass a criminal record or Enhanced DBS/ Scottish PVG check before they begin to volunteer or work
- To provide schools with a Letter of Assurance for their assigned Chapter One staff and Volunteers, updated during the year
- To ensure that all volunteers and Chapter One staff read KCSIE Part 1 and Annexe A
- To provide schools with a risk assessment for Online Reading, Meet and Greets and End of Year Celebrations
- To ensure that all reading calls are recorded and recordings can be reviewed on demand
- To ensure Chapter One's Senior Leadership team and Board of Trustees regularly reviews data on Safeguarding reports, including the Safeguarding Annual Report
- To engage with an external safeguarding audit from time to time

Why is Safeguarding important?

All children have an absolute right to a childhood free from abuse, neglect or exploitation. Chapter One believes that in all matters concerning child protection and safeguarding, the welfare and protection of the young people we work with is of paramount consideration. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families or carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. People involved in primary schools are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children and prevent concerns from escalating.

2. What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse happens when a person – adult or child – harms a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can also involve a lack of love, care and attention. Neglect can be just as damaging to a child as physical or sexual abuse. Children may be abused by family members, friends, people working or volunteering in organisational or community settings, people they know or, much less commonly, by strangers. Children suffering abuse often experience more than one type of abuse. The abuse usually happens over a period of time, rather than being a single, isolated incident. Increasingly, abuse can happen online.

For definitions and signs of abuse please refer to this NSPCC [guide](#)

3. What is the purpose of Safeguarding?

Safeguarding is:

- Protecting children from maltreatment with appropriate measures
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

4. Criminal Record/Enhanced DBS/Enhanced Disclosure Scotland PVG checks

Chapter One will perform an Enhanced DBS every two years for all volunteers supporting children in English schools through a qualified third-party supplier. PVG checks for volunteers supporting Scottish children will be conducted when they join Chapter One using the services provided by Volunteer and Disclosure Scotland.

Further detail on how Chapter One administers this process and risk assesses situations where a volunteer has a criminal record can be found in the organisation's Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy, available on request.

All Chapter One staff are recruited in line with the organisation's Safer Recruitment Policy, a copy of which is available on request.

5. Training for Chapter One Staff and Volunteers

Chapter One's Safeguarding Personnel

Name	Role	Main Contact	Additional Contact
Emma Bell	DSO	safeguarding@chapterone.org	emma@chapterone.org
Anna Blain	Deputy DSO		anna.blain@chapterone.org
Stephanie Lockwood	Safeguarding Operational Lead		stephanie.lockwood@chapterone.org
Aalishia Fearon Becky Hewitt	Safeguarding Administrators (ADSO)		aalisha.fearon@chapterone.org rebecca.hewitt@chapterone.org
Teresa Kiely	Board of Trustees Safeguarding	safeguardingtrustee@chapterone.org	

All Chapter One **Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs)** undertake **Level 3 safeguarding training**, which equips them to manage safeguarding concerns and provide advice and guidance to staff and volunteers. This training is refreshed every two years to ensure DSOs remain fully up to date with current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice.

Safeguarding training for staff is led by the Operational Safeguarding Lead. **All Chapter One staff receive annual Level 1 safeguarding training**, which is specifically adapted to reflect the nature of Chapter One's work. The training ensures staff fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities in the context of our different programmes and roles across the charity. All staff agree to comply with Chapter One's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

All Chapter One staff are required to maintain up-to-date safeguarding training and have knowledge of the Prevent duty. Staff who join mid-academic year receive safeguarding training as part of their induction to ensure they are confident in applying Chapter One's safeguarding procedures from the outset. Attendance at all safeguarding training is logged on Breathe HR.

In addition, all Chapter One staff receive training on how to respond appropriately if a volunteer or colleague raises a safeguarding question or concern. This process is set out clearly in Chapter One's internal Safeguarding Procedure Process Guide.

In addition to formal safeguarding training, Chapter One ensures that safeguarding remains a continuous focus throughout the year. Safeguarding is a standing item on the agenda for all monthly staff meetings, providing regular opportunities to revisit key themes, share learning, and reflect on practice. Staff are also updated on any changes to safeguarding legislation or statutory guidance as and when they occur, ensuring that knowledge remains current and embedded across the organisation.

All Chapter One Online Reading Volunteers are required to have safeguarding training, agree to comply with Chapter One's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, read and adhere to KCSIE Part 1 and Annex A, as well as a Volunteer Code of Conduct (see Section 10). The training provides guidance on how to spot signs of abuse, how to respond appropriately to disclosures, and how to report concerns to Chapter One. It reinforces a simple, clear message: "if in doubt, report it." In addition, throughout the year Chapter One delivers five 'Boost your Impact' safeguarding sessions specifically targeted at volunteers, offering opportunities to deepen knowledge, reflect on practice, and stay up to date with key safeguarding issues.

6. Procedure for dealing with a Disclosure or Concern of Abuse in the Online Reading Volunteers programme

In the event that a child discloses a concern or abuse to a volunteer of staff member, they will follow this procedure:

- Be welcoming and allow the child to speak openly but be clear that nothing can be kept confidential and that you will need to tell someone that can help them
- Try to make a note of the child's exact words for use in the report to Chapter One
- Try to react in a calm and reassuring manner (controlling any shock) and show concern "I am so sorry that this has happened and I will make sure we deal with this."
- Do not ask any leading questions e.g what was your mother doing at this point? This is the job of the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the relevant School.
- Continue with the reading session (if relevant, and they believe it to be in the best interests of the child at that particular moment)
- As soon as the session has ended report the concern immediately to safeguarding@chapterone.org using the Rapid Reporting Form (appendix 1) and the child's own words as far as possible

Once Chapter One have received a Safeguarding disclosure, the team will follow this procedure:

- On receipt of a Rapid Reporting Form (RRF) the staff member picking up the concern at safeguarding@chapterone.org will make a 'new incident' log on CPOMs
- Email confirmation that the RRF has been received and is being actioned is sent to the volunteer/staff member
- We will review the report and act in accordance with Chapter One's internal Safeguarding Procedure Process Guide. The report will be shared with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead by email the same school day or within 24 hours. The referral email will clearly indicate that a safeguarding concern is being raised and ask the school to acknowledge receipt. If no acknowledgement is forthcoming then the DSO will call the school.
- All information, actions and communication about the referral, including dates and times information is received and passed on, will be recorded on CPOMs
- If a disclosure is made outside of school hours, or before a weekend/break when the school will be closed, a decision to report the incident immediately to the MASH may be made
- If required, Chapter One will follow-up with the school not more than 2 working days later to ask for confirmation, in writing via email, that the report has been received and that appropriate action is taking place. This will be recorded on CPOMs
- Chapter One will keep an updated list of school DSLs available and accessible to all programme staff at all times
- All reports, actions and conversations of a safeguarding nature will be logged securely on CPOMS

7. Procedure for dealing with a Disclosure or Concern of Abuse in the ELI programme or to Chapter One staff in a school

ELIs are Chapter One staff based in schools part-time, and other Chapter One staff visit schools occasionally. All Chapter One staff present in schools should adhere to the policies and procedures within that as well as Chapter One's procedures:

- All Chapter One staff members present in schools should familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding procedures and DSLs in that school
- If a staff member has a personal connection with any children at a school and/or on the programme and/or teachers at the school, this will be disclosed to the school at the start of the programme.
- If a child makes a disclosure to an ELI, or other Chapter One staff member in a school, or a Chapter One employee observes something of concern, they should report it according to the school's procedure to the school DSL. The school should be asked to acknowledge receipt.
- The ELI/staff member should also complete a 'new incident' log on CPOMs
- Where required, there is a Chapter One ELI Log of Concern form for submission to schools (Appendix 2)

8. Procedure with dealing with an allegation of abuse AGAINST a Chapter One staff member or volunteer

Any adult who receives the allegation of abuse, whether it is a Chapter One staff member, another volunteer, or a teacher in a partner school (who be acting on a disclosure from child) shall immediately do the following:

If the allegation is made by a child, or school staff member has a concern about Chapter One staff or volunteers:

- Immediately after receiving an allegation or disclosure, contact Emma Bell, the DSO at Chapter One using emma@chapterone.org email address.
- If they are on the school premises at the time the allegation is made, and/or it has been made by a child, ensure that the school DSL or Deputy is immediately made aware.
- Provide this detailed information to the DSO as soon as you are able to, including the names of relevant adults and/or young people and, if the disclosure was made by a child, details of the account given to you using the words that they used as well as including any other information you feel is relevant.

For allegations against reading volunteers:

- The Chapter One DSO will lead on any investigations involving a reading volunteer and will liaise with the school DSL as part of this process.
- The DSO may also seek guidance from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), in line with Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.. The school DSL may also do this.
- Based on the investigation, the DSO will take a decision, inform the school about future involvement of the volunteer tutor on the Chapter One programme, and inform the LADO and police if necessary.
- It is appropriate to suspend a volunteer from reading while an investigation is taking place.

For allegations against Chapter One staff:

- The Chapter One CEO/DSO will lead on any investigations involving a staff member and will liaise with the school DSL as part of this process.
- Any allegations against Chapter One employees will also be reported to the Trustees. In all cases of an allegation being made, the organisation's Whistleblowing Policy will be followed.
- The Chapter One DSL (and/or Trustee) will ensure that any investigation involves the school DSL and LADO where appropriate, in line with Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- It may be appropriate to suspend a member of staff from their duties while an investigation is taking place.
- Email emma@chapterone.org regarding a concern/allegation against a Chapter One staff member
- Email vicechair_chapterone@gmail.com regarding a concern/allegation against the CEO

9. Appropriate Volunteer/Staff Behaviour

Chapter One staff and volunteers will also be trained to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in their interactions with children. On registration to be an online reading volunteer, volunteers are required to read and accept our Volunteer Code of Conduct (copies available on request). Safeguarding training will also help to protect them against any malicious or unfounded allegations of inappropriate behaviour. The following are the essential requirements for all staff and volunteers to comply with:

- Remember that staff and volunteers are in a position of responsibility and should use language carefully
- Speak in a manner appropriate for the age group e.g. no swearing, no suggestive or derogatory comments
- Do not share personal information with students e.g Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, phone number and email address
- Do not ask children for their personal information
- Do not arrange to meet a child anywhere outside the school setting

- Do not offer to send children individual gifts or money or make promises to them that cannot be fulfilled
- Do not interact with children under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- Volunteers should always seek permission from the Programme Manager before taking photographs

10. Vulnerable Adults

Chapter One does not deliver services to, or work directly with, vulnerable adults. However, we recognise that some of our volunteers or staff may fall into this category under safeguarding definitions (for example, due to age, disability, health conditions, or other circumstances). In such cases, Chapter One has a duty of care to ensure volunteers and staff members are treated with dignity, respect, and appropriate safeguarding consideration. Chapter One's approach to lone working is outlined in our **Lone Working Policy**, which can be found [here](#). **Any concerns about the wellbeing or safety of a volunteer or staff member who may be a vulnerable adult must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) at safeguarding@chapterone.org.**

11. Guidelines for teachers

Chapter One will ensure that teachers are briefed on how to introduce the Online Reading Volunteers programme to their pupils. Teachers will be reminded to set the programme in the context of general discussions about online safety, emphasising that children should not share their personal contact details with their volunteer, and that if they are ever concerned about something their volunteer says they should tell a trusted adult.

12. Support for staff and volunteers who receive Safeguarding disclosures

Receiving a disclosure of concern from a child can be distressing. When a volunteer reports a concern, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will always acknowledge receipt and check that the volunteer has no additional support needs. This includes reminding them that they can get back in touch at any point if they feel like they need additional support/opportunity to debrief. It is important for the Designated Safeguarding Officer to explain to volunteers that we won't be able to share details of any investigation or outcome with them, and naturally volunteers may find this challenging.

Chapter One is committed to ensuring that staff have access to debriefing with the Designated Safeguarding Officer and can also use the support offered by the Employee Assistance Programme.

13. Chapter One Review of Safeguarding Incidents

Chapter One will collate all reports of abuse/concern, log on CPOMS and take appropriate action. These reports will be anonymised and reviewed by the Board on a regular basis. Any learning from specific incidents will be fed back into training and policy review, reflecting the organisation's culture of continuous learning.

Appendix 1

Online Reading Volunteers Rapid Reporting Form

This must be completed as soon as possible after any disclosure/concern

Name of Child:	Date/Time of Reading Session:
Name and Email of Volunteer:	Volunteer Organisation:
Date Form Completed:	Time Form Completed:
Reasons for Recording Incident: Why are you filling out this form?	
Incident Details <i>What are your concerns? What were the child's exact words? What have you said to the child?</i> Use the child's exact word and direct speech “..” rather than your own. Make it clear where/if you are expressing your opinion. Once you've recorded all the relevant details then email the form to safeguarding@chapterone.org	



Safeguarding: In school Log of Concern (ELIs)

This must be completed as soon as possible after any disclosure/concern
(ELI must ensure school DSL is informed and Log of Concern is signed before leaving school site)

Name of Child:	Date/Time of Concern:
Year Group/Class:	Name and Email of ELI:
Date Form Completed:	Time Form Completed:
School Name:	Name and Email Address of School DSL Reported to:
Reasons for Recording Incident: Why are you filling out this form?	
Incident Details <i>What are your concerns? What were the child's exact words? What have you said to the child?</i> Use the child's exact word and direct speech “..” rather than your own. Make it clear where/if you are expressing your opinion. If your concern is regarding marks on the child, please complete the body map form on the next page.	

Signed by ELI: _____ Signed by School DSL: _____

This form is to be handed to the school DSL and uploaded to Chapter One CPOMS. If a copy is made for this purpose, please ensure the additional copy is shredded.

Should the school wish to discuss this concern with a Chapter One Designated Safeguarding Officer, please email safeguarding@chapterone.org

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
March 2018		Policy approved by the Trustee Board
June 2019	EB	Review of policy and additions made to reference other policies
January 2020	EB	Addition to clarify process to be followed if disclosure received out of hours
May/June 2020	EB	Alterations to meet needs of home reading sessions
Jan 2021	EB	Updates made for Home reading sessions
May 2022	EB	Updates made for call recording, ELIs in schools, Home reading sessions, support for volunteers making disclosures, refinement of procedures
Jan 2023	EB	Updated with references to Chapter One
May 2023	EB	Updated Section 10 - allegations made against volunteers or staff
Sept 2023	EB	Further updates to Section 10; inclusion of DSO and Deputy DSO details
Sept 2024	SL	Inclusion of CPOMS for logging incidents; inclusion of Operational Safeguarding Lead and Trustee responsible for Safeguarding; making reference to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub; link to KCSIE 2024; update on use of photographs by volunteers; inclusion of email contacts for relevant trustees; inclusion of responsibility of staff who know children in schools
Sept 2025	SL	Clarity of the different programmes Chapter One has in place; updated section in training for DSOs, staff and volunteers, to include Expert View sessions; inclusion of a section on Vulnerable Adults; ELI reporting form added to appendix; removal of anything related to the Home reading sessions; inclusion of the ADSO; inclusion of how we risk assess DBS'; included link to Lone Working Policy
Sept 2026	SL	Change of Trustee details; inclusion of volunteers and all staff reading KCSIE; inclusion of update on LOA process; inclusion of sharing risk assessments