

## **The Wilbur & Niso Smith Foundation Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

The Wilbur & Niso Smith Foundation (the 'Foundation'/'we'/'us') is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales, number 1161513.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Board annually, and as part of any safeguarding incident investigation, to test that it has been complied with and to see if any improvements might be made to it.

This Safeguarding Policy was last updated on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

### **Our Contact Details**

Our registered and main trading address is Unit 9, 5-7 Wells Terrace, London N4 3JU. For general queries, please contact us by email at [team@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org](mailto:team@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org) or by post at: Unit 9, 5-7 Wells Terrace, London N4 3JU.

### **Aims of the Policy**

This policy applies to anyone working for the Foundation or on the Foundation's behalf, including our staff, freelance contractors, suppliers, consultants, partners, donors, trustees, volunteers, and any other people with whom we work.

Our charitable activities include working with a variety of people, including those under the age of 18. The purpose of this policy is to protect all of our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers and provide stakeholders and the public with the overarching principles that guide our approach in doing so. This applies to any charitable activity we undertake in person and online.

We believe that:

- Nobody who is involved in our work should ever experience abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.
- We all have a responsibility to promote the welfare of our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, to keep them safe and to work in a way that protects them.
- We all have a collective responsibility for creating a culture in which our people not only feel safe, but also able to speak up, if they have any concerns.

This policy should be read in line with our [code of conduct](#).

### **Reporting Concerns**

If you come into contact with, or suspect harm or abuse is taking place, you must report your concerns to us immediately. You can contact:

- The Foundation Manager, Georgina Brown, by email at [georgina@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org](mailto:georgina@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org) or by post at: Unit 9, 5-7 Wells Terrace, London N4 3JU
- The Prize Manager, Charlotte Maddox, by email at [charlotte@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org](mailto:charlotte@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org)

If your query is in regard to one of our staff, whether employed or a freelance contractor, it will be escalated to our board of trustees.

Safeguarding Lead Trustee: Ruth Sorby

The trustee appointed as lead for safeguarding will provide oversight of and lead on any incident investigation and reporting. Either staff member will be able to escalate your query to the lead trustee. You are also able to contact the trustees directly via [trustees@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org](mailto:trustees@wilbur-niso-smithfoundation.org).

If a crime is in progress, or an individual in immediate danger, call the police, as you would in any other circumstances.

### **Identifying Harm**

Harm, or abuse, can take many forms, such as physical, psychological, emotional, financial, sexual or institutional abuse, including neglect and exploitation. Signs that may indicate the different types of abuse are at Appendix 1.

The Foundation works mainly in an online context. Adults who have direct contact with young people have all undertaken a DBS check. No one else should be in contact with a young person under the age of 18 on behalf of the Foundation, without the inclusion of their parent or guardian and/or a DBS-checked member of the Foundation staff.

We work with fiction and understand that good writing can sometimes be understood, whether rightly or wrongly, as truth. If a young writer under the age of 18, creates cause for concern for their welfare, including, for example, by writing a realistic portrayal of harm or abuse, the content should be immediately reported to the Foundation. Any fiction which raises concerns about a person's safety or welfare may result in the writer being referred to relevant support services or authorities to investigate.

The Foundation will decide the most appropriate course of action, including, for example:

- Signposting support options to the writer in regard to their fictional character, including, for example, seeking support from Childline or their in-country support network
- Seeking advice from the NSPCC
- Seeking advice from Child Helpline International
- Seeking advice from CEOP, Child Exploitation and Online Protection
- Seeking advice from the local authority
- Making a referral to children's services

Any concerns will be kept confidential and must not be discussed with anyone other than the Foundation staff or board of trustees. A record of the concern and any action taken will be kept securely.

### **Responsibility**

The trustees are mindful of their reporting obligations to the Charity Commission in respect of [Serious Incident Reporting](#) and, if applicable, any other regulators.

The trustees are aware of and will comply with the Charity Commission guidance on [safeguarding people and handling safeguarding allegations](#). The trustees are also aware of the [10 actions trustee boards need to take](#) to ensure good safeguarding governance.

The trustee designated as safeguarding lead has oversight of all aspects of safeguarding. They will work with the Foundation staff to ensure:

- An annual review of safeguarding and child protection, with any recommendations made to the Board.
- The Board receives regular reports, to ensure this and related policies are being applied consistently.
- The Board provides oversight of any lapses in safeguarding.
- Any concerns or queries are properly investigated and dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively, and any reporting to the Police/statutory authorities is carried out.
- Charitable activity is planned to take into account potential safeguarding risks and ensure these are adequately mitigated.
- All relevant checks are carried out in recruiting staff, freelance contractors and volunteers, including for example, safeguarding training and DBS clearance for those who have direct contact with or access to sensitive data for children under 18.
- A register of incidents and reports is maintained.
- Safeguarding requirements including, for example, DBS checks, and responsibilities are reflected in job descriptions, as appropriate.
- Personal data is stored and managed in a safe way that is compliant with data protection regulations, including valid consent to use any imagery or video.
- Staff, volunteers and others are aware of this safeguarding policy and their responsibilities on induction, including the signs of potential abuse and how to report these, with regular reminders and updates as necessary.

### **Working With Other Organisations**

In working with other organisations, including any grant making, we will comply with Charity Commission guidance by carrying out relevant due diligence and having a written agreement that sets out:

- Our relationship.
- The role of each organisation.
- Monitoring and reporting arrangements.

Any partner organisation will have their own safeguarding policy that must, as a minimum, meet the standards we outline in this policy, and include any additional legal or regulatory requirements specific to their work.

### **Safeguarding and Online Safety**

We will identify and manage online risks by ensuring:

- The online services we provide are suitable for our users and we use privacy settings, age restrictions and password protection where necessary.
- We follow data protection legislation. You can find our Privacy Policy [here](#). If you believe you have been able to access sensitive information that you should not be able to, you must inform us immediately.
- The services we use are selected in line with our privacy policy and code of conduct. You are responsible for reading and confirming any of our partner's or supplier's policies including, for example, Submittable.
- We have permission to display any images on our website or social media accounts, including gaining consent from an individual or, parent/guardian where necessary.

Online concerns may be reported using this policy, or directly to a social media provider using their reporting process, if relevant.

### **Safeguarding and Fundraising**

When fundraising for the Foundation, we will ensure that:

- We comply with the Code of Fundraising Practice.
- Staff and volunteers are made aware of the [Chartered Institute of Fundraising guidance](#) on keeping fundraising safe.
- Our fundraising material is accessible, clear and ethical, including, for example, not placing any undue pressure on individuals to donate.
- We do not solicit or accept donations from anyone whom we know or think may not be competent to make their own decisions.
- We are sensitive to any particular need that a donor may have.

### **Appendix 1 – Signs of Abuse**

The Appendix provides a list of the signs of abuse to support you to assess whether your concern constitutes a safeguarding risk. With creative writing at the heart of the Foundation's work for all ages, the line between fiction and real can look blurred. If you are uncertain but concerned, please inform the Foundation regardless.

TYPE	SIGNS
Physical Abuse	Bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, marks, broken bones, unexplained marks; untreated injuries in various stages of healing, open wounds, cuts, punctures; broken glasses/frames, or any other physical signs of being punished or restrained; findings of either an overdose or underdose medications; an individual's report being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated; a vulnerable person's sudden change in behaviour; a caregiver's refusal to allow visitors to see a vulnerable person alone.

Emotional Abuse	A person being emotionally upset or agitated; being extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or non-responsive; nervousness around certain people; a person's report of being verbally or mentally mistreated.
Sexual Abuse	Bruises around the breasts or genital area; unexplained venereal disease or genital infections; unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding; torn, stained, or bloody under clothing; an individual's report of being sexually assaulted or raped.
Neglect and self-neglect	Dehydration, malnutrition, poor personal hygiene; unattended or untreated health problems; unclean or unsafe living conditions (e.g., homelessness, no heat or running water, improper wiring, unsanitary conditions (e.g., dirt, fleas, lice on person, soiled bedding, faecal/urine smell, inadequate clothing); an individual's report of being mistreated.
Exploitation	Sudden changes in bank account or banking practice, including an unexplained withdrawal of large sums of money; adding additional names on bank signature cards; unauthorised withdrawal of funds; abrupt changes in a will or other financial documents; unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions; bills unpaid despite the money being available to pay them; forging a signature on financial transactions or for the titles of possessions; sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming rights to a person's possessions; unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside the family; providing services that are not necessary; an individual's report of exploitation.