Safeguarding Policy Statement

BEACON OF LOVE COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY

Company number 16988579 | Create · Belong · Become

Approved: 17 October 2026 | Next scheduled review: 17 October 2027

1. Our statement and scope

Beacon of Love Community Interest Company is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults taking part in its creative arts, personal-development and community activities. A child or young person is anyone under 18. The welfare of children is paramount. All Participants have the right to be treated with dignity, listened to and protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

This statement applies to directors, employees, session facilitators, contractors and volunteers. It covers activities delivered at third-party premises, including schools, colleges, community centres, workplaces and other agreed venues, as well as any Beacon of Love activity delivered online or off-site.

2. Our safeguarding commitments

- Promote safe, inclusive and accessible activities, taking account of disability, age, communication needs, background and individual circumstances.
- Listen to Participants and take all concerns seriously, including concerns about poor practice, bullying, harassment, exploitation and abuse.
- Recruit and supervise personnel safely, verify identity and references, and obtain DBS checks and barred-list information only where the role is legally eligible and the check is appropriate.
- Provide safeguarding induction and role-appropriate training, clear professional boundaries, and appropriate session risk assessments and supervision.
- Keep accurate, confidential safeguarding records and respond promptly to concerns without conducting our own investigation.
- Use appropriate procedures for online communication, photography and filming, consent, and the safe handling of Participant information.
- Review safeguarding practice at least annually and following significant incidents, changes in delivery or changes in relevant law or guidance.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): John Christian Small, Founder & Development Director.

Email: enquiry@beacon-of-love.org

A Deputy DSL has not yet been appointed. The host venue safeguarding lead is an alternative reporting contact only, not an internal Deputy DSL. Where no suitable host contact and escalation route can be confirmed, Beacon of Love will not proceed with independently managed activity involving children or adults at risk until an alternative arrangement is established.

4. Working in third-party venues

Beacon of Love normally delivers sessions from premises operated by third parties. Beacon of Love retains responsibility for its own safeguarding policy, personnel and actions, and will also comply with the host venue's applicable safeguarding, child-protection, adult-safeguarding, emergency and visitor procedures. Where requirements differ, personnel must follow the arrangement that best protects the Participant and seek immediate advice from the relevant safeguarding lead; they must not ignore a legal reporting duty.

Before each session, the session lead will confirm the venue safeguarding officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead, their contact details and deputy/alternative contact, the referral route, emergency arrangements, supervision and collection arrangements where relevant, and how incidents will be recorded and securely shared.

5. Reporting a safeguarding concern at a venue

- If anyone is in immediate danger, call 999 first and follow the venue's emergency procedures.
- Listen calmly, take the concern seriously, do not promise secrecy, and do not ask leading questions or attempt to investigate.
- Report the concern without delay to the host venue's safeguarding officer/DSL using the venue's agreed reporting process. At the same time, notify Beacon of Love's DSL, John Christian Small, unless the concern involves him.
- Record the date, time, location, facts, the Participant's own words where possible, witnesses and actions taken. Share the record securely with the authorised safeguarding leads; do not circulate it informally.
- If the venue safeguarding officer is unavailable, the concern is not acted on, or delay would expose someone to harm, use the venue's escalation route and contact the relevant local authority children's social care or adult safeguarding service, police or emergency services as appropriate. Do not wait for permission to protect someone at immediate risk.
- If the concern relates to a member of Beacon of Love personnel, promptly involve the host safeguarding lead and seek advice from the relevant local authority designated officer (LADO) where the child-related allegations criteria may apply. If it concerns the Beacon DSL, bypass him and report directly to the host safeguarding lead and appropriate statutory authority.

The venue and Beacon of Love will agree who makes any statutory referral, but that agreement must never delay necessary action. Beacon of Love will assess whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service is legally required when the relevant conditions are met.

6. Adults, consent and additional support

For adult safeguarding, Beacon of Love will consider the Care Act 2014 safeguarding framework, including whether an adult has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and may be unable to protect themselves because of those needs. Age or disability alone does not establish that an adult meets these criteria. Personnel will consider the adult's wishes, consent, mental capacity and safety, seeking statutory advice where appropriate.

7. Data protection and information sharing

Beacon of Love will process Participant and safeguarding information in accordance with applicable UK data protection law, including the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. It will collect only information needed for safe and effective delivery, restrict access to authorised people, use secure storage and transfer methods, and apply appropriate retention and deletion arrangements.

As sessions take place in third-party venues, the host organisation may separately hold Participant information. Before delivery, Beacon of Love and the venue will clarify their respective information-governance responsibilities and agree secure reporting and sharing arrangements. Personal information will be shared on an appropriate lawful basis when necessary to protect a child or adult; confidentiality and data protection must not be used as reasons to withhold information where sharing is lawful and necessary for safeguarding.

Routine photography, publicity and marketing require separate consideration of privacy, appropriate permissions and the safeguarding interests of Participants. Safeguarding incident records must not be used for promotional purposes.

8. Professional conduct

All personnel must maintain appropriate boundaries, avoid inappropriate private communication or relationships with Participants, and comply with the venue's supervision and conduct requirements. Beacon of Love normally avoids initiating physical contact during sessions, except where proportionate action is needed to prevent immediate harm, provide appropriately authorised first aid or deliver agreed, risk-assessed assistance. Any significant intervention must be recorded and reported.

9. Applicable legal and practice framework

Beacon of Love will have regard, as applicable to the activity and setting, to the Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (current statutory guidance), Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition for school and college settings), Care Act 2014 and its statutory guidance, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Exceptions Order where relevant to DBS checks, Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, and local safeguarding partnership procedures.

10. Safeguarding referral and escalation: action required of the DSL

- On receiving a concern, John Christian Small (DSL) must promptly establish immediate safety needs. If there is imminent danger, a serious crime in progress or urgent medical need, call 999. The DSL must not wait for venue permission before taking emergency action.
- Record the report promptly and factually: who raised it, date/time, venue, Participant details, exact words where possible, observed facts, immediate action, people informed, decisions and reasons. Do not interrogate a Participant, promise confidentiality or conduct an investigation.
- For a child at risk of significant harm or where specialist assessment is needed, contact the children's social care/MASH service for the LOCAL AUTHORITY WHERE THE CHILD IS LOCATED, following its published referral process. Where a crime is suspected, contact police as appropriate. Seek advice promptly if unsure of the referral threshold; do not wait to obtain proof.
- For an adult, consider the person's wishes, consent, capacity and safety. Where the Care Act safeguarding criteria may apply, contact the local authority adult safeguarding team. Urgent police/emergency action takes precedence. Document the decision whether or not to refer and the reasons.
- Where the session is hosted, notify the venue DSL promptly and agree who submits the statutory referral, recording the named referrer, agency, time, method and any reference number. If the venue does not act or cannot be reached, the Beacon DSL must make the necessary external referral directly and document this; reporting to the venue alone does not discharge Beacon's safeguarding responsibility.
- After referral, follow the receiving agency's instructions, confirm receipt where feasible, arrange immediate protective measures with the venue, share information securely on a need-to-know basis, and log follow-up actions and closure. Re-escalate if the risk persists or no timely response is received.
- If the allegation concerns someone working with children, contact the venue's senior safeguarding lead and the relevant local authority designated officer (LADO) without delay where the allegations threshold may be met; follow local procedures and statutory timescales, including notification within one working day where required. Do not begin an internal investigation that could compromise police or LADO enquiries.
- If the concern involves John Christian Small, bypass him entirely: the reporting person should contact the host DSL/senior manager and the relevant children's social care, adult safeguarding service, LADO or police as appropriate. An independent person must oversee any Beacon governance decisions; do not rely on the subject of an allegation to handle or close the matter.
- Following the appropriate external process, assess whether Beacon of Love has a legal duty to refer an individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service if it is a regulated activity provider or personnel supplier and the statutory conditions are met. This is separate from any police, LADO or local authority referral.

11. Venue reporting arrangements and pre-session checklist

- The name, role, direct contact details and availability of the venue Safeguarding Officer/DSL, and their deputy or alternative reporting contact; the venue must confirm that this person can receive and escalate concerns arising during Beacon of Love sessions.
- The venue's safeguarding, child-protection and adult-safeguarding policies, its concern-reporting process, allegations procedure and routes for escalating concerns if the safeguarding contact is unavailable, implicated or fails to respond.
- The relevant local authority area and current contact routes for children's social care/MASH, adult safeguarding and the LADO, as applicable; who will make statutory referrals and how Beacon of Love will confirm and document that they were made.

- Emergency arrangements, including how to summon emergency services, first-aid provision, fire and evacuation procedures, emergency access and who takes charge of immediate protective action.
- Session-specific risk assessments, safeguarding supervision, appropriate staffing and one-to-one arrangements, accessibility and agreed assistance, and child arrival, collection and emergency-contact procedures where applicable.
- The venue's requirements for safer recruitment, DBS eligibility, induction, safeguarding training, visitor sign-in, identification, professional boundaries and reporting of personnel conduct concerns.
- Agreed procedures for online safety, photography/filming, consent, communications with Participants and parents/carers, and the use of personal devices.
- Data protection responsibilities, secure transfer and storage of safeguarding records, permitted access, confidentiality, information sharing and who retains the official incident record.
- How Participants, parents/carers and staff can raise complaints or safeguarding concerns independently, including a route that bypasses John Christian Small if the concern relates to him.
- Mandatory pre-session safeguarding confirmation: before ANY Beacon of Love session takes place at a third-party venue, Beacon of Love will seek, obtain or confirm with the venue the information and arrangements below. The session lead will record the confirmation, the name and role of the venue representative providing it, the date and any actions required. Written confirmation should be obtained wherever practicable. If a critical safeguarding arrangement cannot be confirmed or made adequate, the session must not proceed until the risk has been resolved.

EMERGENCY EXCEPTION: If any Participant or other person is in immediate danger, call 999 first. Neither permission from the third-party venue nor any internal reporting or authorisation procedure may delay emergency action. Inform the relevant safeguarding leads as soon as it is safe to do so and document the actions taken.

Before each session begins, the Beacon of Love session lead must ensure these arrangements remain valid and that the venue safeguarding contact is reachable. Any change, absence or newly identified risk must be resolved before proceeding. Confirmation of arrangements does not transfer Beacon of Love's safeguarding accountability to the venue.

- The venue DSL may receive concerns and coordinate the venue's safeguarding response; Beacon's DSL retains responsibility for Beacon personnel, documentation, cooperation and referrals that Beacon must make. Where responsibilities are disputed, act to protect the Participant and contact statutory services directly.
- For activity in a venue without an available safeguarding lead, do not assume the venue will manage concerns. Agree another competent reporting and escalation arrangement in advance or postpone the activity where safeguarding cannot be managed safely.

12. Records, confidentiality and governance controls

- Keep safeguarding records separate from ordinary programme notes, with restricted access, secure transfer, a documented retention schedule and clear arrangements for handling a subject access request or data breach. Identify whether Beacon and the venue are independent controllers or have another legally applicable arrangement before routinely sharing Participant data.
- Do not use ordinary email distribution lists, group chats or social media to share safeguarding reports. Record the lawful basis and necessity of disclosures; safeguarding information may be shared without consent when lawful and necessary to protect someone.
- Before new activities begin, ensure appropriate recruitment/DBS eligibility assessment, induction and training, risk assessments, photography and digital communication rules, insurance, complaints/whistleblowing routes, and safeguarding contact details for the borough in which each venue operates.
- The board/director should record approval of this policy and review safeguarding arrangements at least annually, after any serious incident, and when guidance or the operating model changes.

13. Complaints, review and approval

Participants, parents/carers, venue representatives and others may raise concerns through the venue safeguarding route or directly with Beacon of Love at enquiry@beacon-of-love.org. Safeguarding concerns must be handled through safeguarding procedures rather than delayed by a general complaints process.

This statement is reviewed at least annually and earlier following a serious incident, significant operational change or updated guidance. It must be read alongside Beacon of Love's detailed Safeguarding & Professional Conduct Policy and Safeguarding Procedures.

Director Approval

John Christian Small
Founder & Development Director

J C Small

Date signed: 19 October 2026 | Next review: 19 October 2027