**The Braillists Foundation CIO**

**Safeguarding Policy**

**Version 2.5, June 2022**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, adults at risk of harm and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with the Braillists Foundation. This includes potential harm caused by:

* The conduct of personnel associated with the Braillists Foundation
* The design and implementation of the Braillists Foundation’s programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by the Braillists Foundation, and informs associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

**What is Safeguarding?**

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect[[1]](#footnote-1).

The work we are doing is linking several sectors: Technical/IT, educational, social engagement and disability/Visual Impairment. We therefore understand safeguarding to mean protecting people, including children and adults at risk, from harm that potentially arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes across these sectors.

**Scope**

* All Board members
* All members of the Braillists Hub email group
* Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to the Braillists Foundation, including but not limited to the following: volunteers; consultants/contractors; visitors to events

**Policy Statement**

The Braillists Foundation believes that everyone with whom we come into contact, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has the right to be protected from all forms of discrimination, harm, abuse or neglect

The Braillists Foundation is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment, both online and offline, and an open, respectful listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.

The Braillists Foundation acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults and children who come in contact with them.

The Braillists Foundation recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and the need for care and support can affect a person’s resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help.

**Activities through which The Braillists Foundation might be in contact with vulnerable adults:**

**Online**The vast majority of our activities take place online: Braille tuition, workshops, information events, social online events etc. The Braillists Foundation moderation policy applies a code of conduct for all of these activities.

**Face-to-face events**
Occasionally the Braillists Foundation will organise in person events: braille events with social elements, public demonstrations and/or lessons in hired spaces, private one-to-one tuition or group meetings in hired spaces.

**Activities through which The Braillists Foundation might be in contact with children:**

Online
The Braillists Foundation does not promote events as suitable for children without their guardians and would therefore assume guardians are present. When it is obvious a child is attending an online event without their guardian present we will moderate content appropriately until the guardian is present or the child is removed from the event by the moderator.

Face-to-face events
The Braillists Foundation will only organise events designed for adults over 18. Children are welcome to attend only so long as they are accompanied by their parent/guardian or another adult nominated by the parent/guardian.

The Braillists Foundation will not attend exhibitions which are promoted as events where children may attend without guardians. In the event that an unaccompanied child approaches the Braillists Foundation's stand or otherwise interacts with Braillists Foundation personnel during an event, the most senior member of Braillists personnel present at the time of the incident will ensure that concerns are promptly reported to the event organisers.

Risk Assessments

Where the Braillists Foundation is taking part in public events, we will ensure that proper risk assessments have been undertaken by the organisers and that safeguarding protocols are in place.

The Braillists Foundation commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

**Prevention**

The Braillists Foundation’s Responsibilities

The Braillists Foundation will:

* Ensure all personnel have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
* Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with the Braillists Foundation. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated. Adherence to data protection regulation also applies.
* Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying volunteers and associated personnel
* Ensure all personnel receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
* Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to statutory process.
* Hold regular check-ins re. safeguarding at board meetings or operational meetings.

Additionally, all personnel are obliged to:

* Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
* Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

**Enabling Reports**

The Braillists Foundation will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to all personnel and the communities with which we work. For ease of access the email address: safeguarding@braillists.org is available.

The Braillists Foundation will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

**How to report a safeguarding concern**

Anyone having a concern or complaint relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to:

The Safeguarding Lead (Dave Williams)

The Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Ilka Staeglin)

This can also be done by using the email address: safeguarding@braillists.org

In an urgent situation, any Board member can also be contacted.

**Response and responsibilities**

The Braillists Foundation will follow up on safeguarding reports and concerns according to legal and statutory obligations.

Levels of Response:

Once a concern has been reported or a complaint received in relation to safeguarding, the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will

* Assess the immediate level of urgency and seek medical attention, if required
* Follow up on the concern/complaint by investigating the matter
* Depending on the outcome, escalate internally, externally and/or refer to the relevant authorities and/or Local Authority .

**Confidentiality**

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

**Associated policies**

Moderation policy for webinars (Code of Conduct)

1. NHS ‘What is Safeguarding? Easy Read’ 2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)