

Keeping Young People Safe

A guide for staff, skippers, trip leads and volunteers.

Safeguarding is an essential part of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust core goal of inspiring young people to believe in a brighter future after cancer. The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust’s approach aims to ensure that all our activities promote a climate of inclusive respect and dignity that is supportive, safe and free from derogatory or degrading language, attitudes and behaviour. As well as describing ways in which the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust will act to protect young people from harm, it also aims to promote positive physical and mental health and wellbeing.

All participants on Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust activities are considered to be ‘young people’ in this context, although some elements may be adapted to suit their age and needs.

All staff, skippers, trip leads and volunteers take on a position of trust in relation to the young people and, at all times, are required to follow the principles and expectations set out in this document.

There are six elements to keeping young people safe in the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust:

1. The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust using best practice in **safer recruitment and training**;
2. **A Code of Personal Conduct** for all staff, skippers, trip leads and volunteers;
3. Guidance for staff, skippers and volunteers about the use of **social media and the protection of confidentiality**;
4. **Operating Procedures** for all activities that meet or exceed safety standards;
5. Clear processes and responsibilities with regards to **child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults**;
6. Feedback systems for **listening** to the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust’s participants, volunteers, skippers and staff to improve the organisations work.

Reviewed and updated by:	James Hall & Frank Fletcher with input from John Peckham	Date: March 2026
Key changes made: As Below		
Date	Change	
3 rd Dec 19	Inclusion of ‘Skippers’	
28 th Feb 22	Removal of ‘written’ permission (pg. 5)	
March 23	Social media policy guidance re written in line with incoming social media policy,	

	Updated language around outdoor adventure trips, removal of levels from stipulated safeguarding training in line with the sector.
April 24	Terminology updates, inclusion of Trip Leads, inclusion of finalised Social Media policy wording and general updates
March 25	Changes in line with Disclosure act 2020 + Inclusion of EDIB policy reference + general updates
Feb 26	General updates and inclusion of bullying and harassment statement

1. Safer Recruitment and training

All staff, skippers, trip leads, volunteers and Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trustees who are involved with the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust go through a recruitment process that includes:

- Clearly stating the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust's commitment to safeguarding as part of the advertising
- Any offer of employment will be made conditional on receipt of satisfactory DBS (at an appropriate level for the role) / PVG checks.
- The taking of at least two references;
- An interview to assess suitability, which may be by phone/video call
- Initial safeguarding training with regular updates.

Recruitment is the responsibility of the Leadership Team including the Chief Executive Officer and, possibly, an external HR Consultant.

A member of the Leadership Team shall conduct a full interview with all applicants for staff and skipper positions. The interview shall include questions about their experience of working with children. All volunteers shall complete and submit an online Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust application form and be interviewed by a member of the staff team (excluding hospital volunteers).

Any offer of employment to staff is made conditional on receipt of satisfactory references from current or previous employers and shall be sought in respect of all staff before they begin work. Where these are not available for valid reasons, references will be sought from reputable persons (i.e. GP, solicitor etc).

For volunteers(excluding those joining as a Hospital Volunteer), two references are required from either current or past employers, another organisation that they volunteer with or from a reputable person are required.

Any offer of employment will be made conditional on receipt of satisfactory Enhanced DBS / PVG checks. These checks are also required for all skippers and volunteers, whether sailing crew, medical workers or support staff who participate in the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust's activities and come into contact with young people.

NB: the above procedures do not apply to volunteers seeking roles that do not involve contact with young people, such as office based or some fundraising roles.

A Trustee must have a PVG before being appointed to the role to.

It is the policy of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust to re-check DBS Certificates for all staff, skippers and volunteers every three years.

Outdoor Adventure Centres belonging to other organisations and trips run on our behalf by other Sail Training Organisations:

The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust uses Outdoor Adventure Centres and works with other Sail Training Organisations for 3rd party sailing trips and Siblings trips. The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust will review the Child Protection Policy of the Outdoor Adventure

Centre/other Sail Training Organisations annually and shall take any measures that are deemed appropriate in order to be satisfied that they do not apply lower standards of child welfare than those of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust.

2. Code of Personal Conduct

This Code applies to anyone working on behalf of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust whether in a paid or volunteer role.

The aim is to set out what the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust expects from staff, skippers and volunteers in their interactions with young people whilst involved in activities organised by the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust.

Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust activities are highly ‘branded’ which is great for raising the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust’s profile. Whenever wearing Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust branded clothing, around an Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust branded boat, at an Outdoor Adventure Centre or involved in an event, staff, skippers and volunteers are perceived as representatives of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust and their behaviour must reflect that.

Principles:

- All interactions with young people, other volunteers and staff should be based on openness, honesty, trust and respect.
- Activities should be fun, inclusive and enjoyable.
- Staff, skippers and volunteers should be positive and approachable.
- An atmosphere of belonging should be created to allow individuals to be their true authentic self in line with our values.

Priorities:

- The safety and wellbeing of young people must be your first concern, including respecting their rights, promoting their welfare and understanding their individual needs.
- Creating a safe environment that maximises benefits and minimises risks to the young people.
- Ensuring that activities (e.g. games) are appropriate for the age, experience, maturity and ability of the people involved.
- Avoiding behaviour that is not tolerated by the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust including that which could be interpreted as bullying, verbal abuse, and physical abuse.
- Discriminating anyone based on aspects of their identity (as outlined in detail in our Racism & Identity Discrimination reporting process).
- Ensuring that relationships with young people remain appropriate at all times.
- Avoiding situations where an adult is alone with a young person away from others.
- Avoiding behaviour that is or could be interpreted as engaging or attempting to engage in sexual or inappropriate relationships with children, young people or vulnerable adults for whatever reason, including the use of suggestive conversations, comments, texting or emails.

- Avoid doing anything of a personal nature that young people can do for themselves, or another suitable young person can help them to do with their agreement.
- Maintaining confidentiality in relation to sensitive information.
- Discouraging and challenging rough or dangerous play, the use of bad or inappropriate language or behaviour between young people, staff or volunteers.
- Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust does not tolerate bullying or harassment. This is regardless of whether the conduct happens once or repeatedly, and whether it is intended or not. Neither will we tolerate retaliation against, or victimisation of, anyone who reports harassment or bullying. If you witness something you believe is bullying or harassment, you should report the incident in confidence to a member of the leadership team. We will take anything you report seriously and treat it in the strictest confidence, as far as possible.
- If you have any concerns about a child or young person's welfare you must take action in line with the procedures outlined in this document. Allegations of abuse of any kind or poor practice must not be allowed to go unchallenged or unrecorded.

Expectations of staff, skippers and volunteers:

- That they take the opportunity to be a positive role model to the young people on our trips.
- That they don't smoke or consume alcohol or banned substances during Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust activities.
- That they avoid doing (or not doing) anything that could bring the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust into disrepute. That they challenge and report behaviour not falling in line with the organisations [Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy](#).

Situations where individuals have failed to uphold this Code of Personal Conduct will be considered individually by the Chief Executive Officer or a member of staff appointed by the CEO. Members of staff could face disciplinary action; skippers and volunteers may be required to end their relationship with the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust.

If criminal behaviour is involved, including breaches of child protection legislation the police or relevant authorities will be informed and Disclosure Scotland/Disclosure and Barring Service will be informed appropriately.

3. Social Media and the protection of confidentiality

Social Media and the protection of confidentiality:

Preserving confidentiality for the young people we support is essential. The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust has a published [privacy notice](#), which all employees and volunteers are required to ensure they respect and adhere to.

On our trips we encourage young people, volunteers, and employees to take lots of photos and videos and we provide each boat or outdoor adventure group with a means to capture images and videos. These photos are provided to participants as mementos of their trip, and if consent has been given may also be used for promotional activities, including on social media.

What we do to safeguard young people on social media:

- We collect image and interview permissions to record whether young people (or their parent/guardian if under 18) are happy for their image/words to be used for a variety of purposes, including social media.
- Subject to the [Privacy Notice](#), the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust keeps and records that consent. If that consent changes the charity keeps and records that change.
- Before the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust posts any images or videos on social media it will have checked that we have the required permissions to do so.
- We do not remove photos of young people who have not given their permission for images to be used for publicity/promotion purposes from the trip photos link that is sent to all participants after a trip. This is because these photos are intended for personal use only, not publicity or promotion. Therefore, it is not permitted to share these photos online or on any social media, including 'private' accounts.

What we require of employees and volunteers in relation to social media:

N.B, there is an example scenario at the end of this section which helps to put into context why it is important.

- You should only share photos/videos of young people from official Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust social media accounts.
- You should never upload and post any photos/videos of young people (such as photos you have 'saved' from an Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust social media post or photos from trip photos link) to your personal social media accounts.
- Do not take any images of young people on your own phone, camera, tablet etc. unless you have the specific, prior permission of an Operations or Communications Manager.
- If you do have permission to take photos of the trip, including of young people on your own devices (phone, camera, tablet etc.) we require you to hand the photos to us to be managed by the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust.
- You may share photos/videos of yourself and/or scenery, such as long-distance shots of boats, sunsets, beautiful landscapes etc, that do not include anyone else and post them as an original post. We invite you to tag @EMCTrust in these posts.
- **If in doubt, do not post.**

To reiterate, we collect the young person or their parent/guardian's consent to the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust sharing images of them. They have not consented to you, as an individual, sharing images of them on your personal social media feed.

An important distinction: The difference between sharing official Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust posts and posting one of your own.

We have detailed in this policy that you should only ever share posts from official Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust accounts and not post content featuring other young people to your own social media accounts.

This scenario helps explain what that means and why it matters.

Imagine you are a young person and you've said 'Yes' to photos on your Media Consent form ahead of your trip.

The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust posts photos/videos from your trip on social media, but there is a picture of you that you really dislike. You contact us, and we agree to remove that specific photo. When that photo is removed from the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust social media account(s) it will also disappear from the feed of anyone that has liked or shared that photo.

But, if someone has saved that picture and created an original post on their own timeline/feed, the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust has no control over it and cannot remove it. The link has been broken and that photo will remain in the public domain.

Unfortunately, the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust also supports young people that might relapse or die. We have a Sad News Photo Management procedure to try to ensure photos of young people who do relapse or die do not get used in communications without the express further permission of the young person/their family. If you do not know a young person has relapsed or died, you could cause distress to any friends or relatives who see it.

When a person gives the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust their permission to use their image in promotional materials, they are NOT giving their consent for you as an individual to do the same. To post their image to your personal accounts amounts to a breach of their privacy.

Friending and following on social media:

- The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust has a very clear rule that adults (employees, volunteers, partners or Trustees) should not 'friend' or follow any young person on social media that they have met initially through our activities, even if that young person was over 18 when they were involved in those activities.
- If you have a public social media presence, potentially young people could decide to follow you, but, as per above, you must not follow them back.

- Once a young person becomes a volunteer the relationship has changed, and you can be friends on social media, but you should be mindful that you met that person while in a position of trust in your interactions with them. If you have any concerns at any time, you should talk to your line manager or the Operations Managers/Volunteer and Team Development Manager (depending on your role within the organisation).
- The only exception to this is a situation where the two people were friends when both were accessing our services as beneficiaries and one subsequently became a volunteer - in which case the two people would not be required to terminate their online connection. However, the volunteer in this situation should still be mindful that they are now in a position of trust in their interactions online.
- If you are sent a private/direct message from a young person who is being supported by the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust (under or over 18) to your personal account(s) you should not reply. Instead, you should notify the Digital & Social Media Lead, who will reply on your behalf from an official @EMCTrust account. This is an important piece of safeguarding which protects both you and the young person by avoiding starting an inappropriate conversation - even with good intentions - but also ensures the young person is not ignored.

Raising a concern in relation to social media

Any concern about any issue or suspicion of malpractice should be raised at the earliest opportunity. If there is any uncertainty as to whether a particular act constitutes bribery or corruption, or if there are any other queries or concerns, these should be referred to the CEO or the Chair of Trustees as appropriate. Further reference should be made to the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

4. Operating Procedures

The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust has standard operating procedures for trips on yachts and the Canal Trip. Each boat has a copy of the standard operating procedures which skippers are required to be familiar with. They can be found in the Boat Folder on each boat. Volunteers and young people are briefed about these by the skipper in the introduction to each trip.

A trip (or trips) at Outdoor Adventure Centres or run by other Sail Training Organisations on the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust's behalf operate under that organisation's Operating Procedures. Their Instructors or Staff will be responsible for briefing volunteers and young people about operating procedures as required.

5. Child Protection, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and the Welfare of Young People

The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust has a responsibility to ensure that the law in England and Scotland is respected in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect. It fulfils this responsibility through:

- A **Safeguarding Policy**, agreed by the Trustees, that is reviewed at least annually.
- An appointed Safeguarding Lead who advises the Chief Executive Officer and Trustees and who ensures effective processes and procedures for dealing with any child protection, vulnerable adult or general welfare concerns.
- Ensuring that all staff, skippers and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding training.
- Ensuring that all staff, skippers and volunteers know what to do if they are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk or if they have a welfare concern.

Because Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust trips depend on a large number of people who are involved on an occasional basis, the Operations Managers play a key part in the process as they will be the person who manages any situation beyond the immediate trip and is involved in any referrals or follow up.

What to do if you have a concern or a concern is brought to your attention:

You may have a concern, or a concern is brought to your attention that is specifically about Child Protection or Safeguarding a Vulnerable Adult or it could be a concern about the welfare of a young person more generally. The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust is not asking you to make a decision as to which of these it might be. Sharing a concern about a young person whatever their age is not a breach of confidentiality. Your responsibility is to respond to the young person and to raise that concern as outlined below.

A reminder about different types of abuse:

Abuse can be physical (including self-harm), emotional, sexual and can involve neglect, bullying or sexual violence and harassment, including between children. It may already have happened, or the young person may be at risk of it happening.

A reminder about recognising abuse and welfare concerns:

It is worth remembering that if you are not sure whether a young person is at risk or has been abused or harmed then if it looks, sounds or feels wrong then it probably is wrong. Trust your gut feeling. This is only the starting point. You are raising or passing on a concern. You are not investigating it or required to come to a conclusion about the outcome.

Establishing anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices in Safeguarding:

Adultification is a form of bias where children from Black, Asian, and minoritised ethnic communities, particularly Black children, are perceived as more mature and less vulnerable than their peers. This can lead to professionals assuming they can protect themselves, even in dangerous situations, and failing to provide necessary safeguarding. Conscious or unconscious bias may also cause practitioners to overlook child protection concerns, dismiss risks as cultural norms, or avoid raising issues for fear of being seen as discriminatory. This can leave children feeling isolated, unheard, and at greater risk of harm, including exploitation and violence.

Black and mixed-race children are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system, partly due to adultification, which results in harsher responses rather than protective interventions. Higher exclusion rates among some ethnic groups further limit access to support, increasing vulnerability to criminal exploitation and mental health issues. To ensure fair treatment, practitioners must assess risks consistently, consider cultural factors without making assumptions, and engage with families to understand each child's lived experience.

Further information on specifically safeguarding young people who come from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities can be found [here](#).

How to respond if a young person discloses something that indicates they may have been harmed or may be at risk:

- Stay calm and take your time.
- Listen actively in a caring, neutral way.
- Reassure them that it is right for them to have told you.
- Use open questions/statements and only to check you have correctly understood the information being shared.
- Let them know that you will have to tell someone who can help and do something about it.
- Ask what the young person wants to happen in response to the concern.
- Do not take sole responsibility yourself. Depending on where you are, inform the Skipper, Trip Lead or an Operations Manager immediately.
- Write everything down as soon as possible. There are forms on board yachts in the Boat Folder or in the Staff Folder at Outdoor Adventure Centres and on trips run by other Sail Training organisations. Write what was said, try not to interpret anything.
- Do check that information you have passed on has been acted upon.
- If you do not personally feel able to respond to the situation, then reassure the young person and ask for help from another volunteer or member of staff.

We ask you to avoid situations where an adult is alone with a young person away from others. However, if a young person wants to talk to you about a situation that's a concern to them then you will be able to find somewhere to have that chat that is out of earshot but where you are not alone e.g. the foredeck of a yacht or the other end of the lounge at an outdoor adventure trip.

What to do if you have a Child Protection, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults or general welfare concern that is not a disclosure from a young person, or someone brings a concern to your attention:

Depending on where you are you should speak to the Operations Manager, your Skipper or a Trip Lead at an outdoor adventure centre or a trip run by another Sail Training Organisation. If the concern involves that person then you should go above them to the Operations Manager, Safeguarding Lead or Chief Executive Officer. Mobile numbers for all of these people are in the front of your briefing booklet and they are on call at all times during a trip.

You may be asked to write down your concerns on a Young Person Welfare Concern Form (which can be found in the Staff Folder on each boat or at the outdoor adventure trip) or to check that someone completing a form has understood and recorded what you have said accurately.

Confidentiality:

It is important to keep information confidential and to involve the minimum number of people. However, because of the nature of trips you may find that you need to talk to a Skipper because you are at sea or away from base at the time who will then need to take the information to the Operations Manager.

6. Feedback and whistleblowing

To encourage the best practice in keeping young people safe and promoting the aims of the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust, all participants, their family members, volunteers, skippers and staff are encouraged to provide feedback about activities and the organisation. The open and honest sharing of good and bad practice helps the organisation to continually improve its work.

The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust will encourage feedback using methods such as:

- A volunteer feedback form.
- The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust's Whistleblowing policy.

If you have any questions about Keeping Young People Safe in the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust, please direct them to one of the Operations Managers.

© Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust 2026; all rights reserved