

HIKIKOMORI UK

Safeguarding Policy

Last updated: August 2026

1. Purpose

Hikikomori UK is committed to promoting the welfare of adults, children, and young people and protecting them from harm.

Our work is primarily with parents, carers, and families affected by hikikomori and prolonged social withdrawal. We recognise that some members of our community may be vulnerable due to mental health difficulties, social isolation, caring responsibilities, disability, or other circumstances.

Although Hikikomori UK does not currently provide clinical, therapeutic, or regulated care services, we recognise our duty to respond appropriately if safeguarding concerns arise through our activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Volunteers
- Contractors acting on behalf of Hikikomori UK

It covers:

- Adults at risk
- Children and young people under 18
- Online activities organised by Hikikomori UK (peer self-help group)
- Events, meetings, and community engagement activities

For the purposes of this policy:

- A **child or young person** is anyone under 18 years old.
- An **adult** is anyone over 18 years old.
- An **adult at risk** is an adult who has care and support needs and may be unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy, and guidance that seeks to protect:

- Adults in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from [the Ann Craft Trust](#).
- Children in England. A summary of the key legislation and guidance is available from [the NSPCC](#).

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance, and other related documents, available on our website.

3. Safeguarding Principles

We believe:

- Everyone has the right to be safe and treated with dignity and respect.
- The welfare of children and adults at risk is paramount.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Concerns should be taken seriously and acted on promptly.
- People should be listened to, supported, and treated fairly.
- Information should be shared appropriately when there is a safeguarding concern.

4. Current Services and Safeguarding

At present, Hikikomori UK:

- provides information and signposting;
- operates online communities and communication channels;
- facilitates an online peer self-help group for adults;

- engages in awareness raising, research, and partnership activities.

Hikikomori UK does not provide:

- crisis intervention;
- counselling or psychotherapy;
- case management;
- advocacy services;
- direct support to children and young people.

Participants should be reminded that our peer groups are not a substitute for professional support. Any safeguarding concerns identified within group activities will be managed in line with this policy.

5. Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

A safeguarding concern may involve:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Financial abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Coercive control
- Self-neglect
- Online abuse
- Exploitation
- Significant risk of harm to self or others

6. Responding to a Concern

If someone discloses a safeguarding concern:

- Listen calmly and respectfully.
- Do not promise confidentiality.
- Do not investigate yourself.
- Record what was said as accurately as possible.
- Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.
- If someone is in immediate danger, contact emergency services on 999.

7. Online Community and Peer Self-Help Groups

Because Hikikomori UK operates mainly online, particular attention will be given to:

- Respectful and safe conduct.
- Protecting personal information.
- Managing inappropriate behaviour.
- Responding to disclosures of abuse or exploitation.
- Responding to indications of significant risk of harm.

The online peer self-help group is intended to provide mutual support, not therapy or crisis support.

Participants may be removed from activities if their behaviour creates a safeguarding risk to themselves or others.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name: Marie Diebolt

Email: info@hikikomori.org.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- receiving safeguarding concerns;

- maintaining safeguarding records;
- seeking advice from statutory agencies where required;
- reporting serious concerns;
- supporting volunteers on safeguarding matters.

9. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

Safeguarding concerns will:

- be recorded promptly;
- be stored securely;
- be shared only on a need-to-know basis;
- comply with data protection requirements.

Information may be shared without consent where there is a risk of significant harm or where required by law.

10. Concerns About a Volunteer

Any concern involving a volunteer should be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where necessary, advice will be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or relevant safeguarding authority.

11. Key Contacts

- **Emergency:** 999
- **Police non-emergency:** 101
- **Samaritans** (urgent emotional support, any time): 116 123
- **NHS 111** (non-emergency medical help): 111
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
- **Warwickshire Family Connect (Children):** 01926 414144
- **Warwickshire Adult Social Care:** 01926 412080

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation, guidance, or organisational activities change.