

Safeguarding Policy

1. Statement of Commitment

Bremner & Co is committed to the welfare and protection of all children at risk, young people, and adults at risk who we reach through our work. We believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and that the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people must be central to everything we do.

Much of our work focuses on child health and nutrition across the life course, and on food policy and practice affecting some of the most disadvantaged families and communities in the UK and beyond. This brings us into contact - directly or indirectly - with children, young people, pregnant women, parents and carers, and adults who may be at risk. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always act in the best interests of those we serve.

This policy applies to all staff (employed and contracted), consultants, volunteers, and anyone acting on behalf of Bremner & Co, regardless of role, seniority, or location.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out:

- Bremner & Co's commitment to safeguarding and child protection
- Our shared responsibilities for keeping people safe
- How to recognise signs of abuse, neglect or concern
- How to respond to and report a safeguarding concern
- How we manage safe recruitment, training, and risk assessment

This policy covers the safeguarding of:

- **Children and young people** — defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, in line with the *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026* statutory guidance
- **Adults at risk** — defined under the *Care Act 2014* as any adult who has needs for care and support, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves from harm

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following key legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (statutory guidance, updated 18 March 2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (for contextual reference)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Charity Commission guidance: *Safeguarding and Protecting People for Charities and Trustees*
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (Female Genital Mutilation duty to report)
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - UNCRC Article 24 (right to health) and Article 27 (adequate standard of living).

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Executive/Partner

The Chief Executive/Partner hold ultimate accountability for safeguarding at Bremner & Co. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is approved, implemented, and reviewed annually
- Appointing and supporting a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Ensuring adequate resources are allocated for safeguarding training and compliance
- Reporting serious safeguarding incidents to the relevant Local Authority as required
- Embedding a culture of safeguarding throughout the organisation

4.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Bremner & Co will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead who is responsible for:

- Being the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Managing and recording all safeguarding concerns, allegations, and referrals
- Liaising with statutory agencies including local authority children's and adult services and the police
- Ensuring staff and volunteers receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation and guidance
- Reporting concerns to the appropriate authorities where required (serious incident reporting)

DSL contact: Trish Henderson, trish@bremnerco.com – 07862 243470 **Deputy DSL:** Myles Bremner, myles@bremnerco.com - 07985 170737

4.3 All Staff, Volunteers, and Representatives

Everyone working for or on behalf of Bremner & Co is responsible for:

- Reading, understanding, and adhering to this policy
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns promptly to the DSL
- Never investigating a concern themselves or making promises of confidentiality
- Acting in ways that promote the welfare and dignity of all people

5. Types of Abuse and Harm

All staff and representatives should be aware that abuse and harm can take many forms. These include:

In relation to children:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse and exploitation
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse (including witnessing abuse in the home)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE) and child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - there is a **mandatory legal duty** for regulated professionals to report known cases of FGM in under-18s to the police.

- Forced marriage
- Radicalisation / involvement in extremist activities
- Online abuse and exploitation
- Trafficking and modern slavery
- Food insecurity and nutritional neglect (*particularly relevant to Bremner & Co's work*)

In relation to adults at risk:

- Physical, psychological, and emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial and material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery and human trafficking
- Self-neglect

6. Recognising Concerns

Safeguarding concerns may not always be obvious. Signs that a child, young person, or adult at risk may be experiencing harm include, but are not limited to:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour, mood, or engagement
- Unexplained physical injuries or signs of poor physical health
- Signs of poor nutrition, hunger, or developmental delay
- Expressions of fear, anxiety, or distress relating to a person or place
- Disclosures — direct or indirect — of abuse or harm
- Signs of exploitation, coercion, or control
- Withdrawal from contact with trusted individuals or services

Staff are expected to place confidence in their professional judgement. Any sense of unease or persistent concern, including a “nagging doubt,” should be regarded as sufficient grounds

to report a concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Staff must be clear that determining whether abuse has occurred is not their responsibility; this assessment is undertaken by the appropriate statutory agencies.

7. Safeguarding in the Context of Our Work

As an organisation working on food policy, child nutrition, and public health, Bremner & Co may encounter safeguarding concerns in a number of specific contexts:

- **Research and stakeholder engagement:** Staff engaging with families, carers, community groups, or individuals experiencing food insecurity may encounter disclosures or indicators of concern relating to children or adults at risk.
- **Partner and grantee relationships:** Where we work with, fund, or commission other organisations, we expect those organisations to have their own appropriate safeguarding policies in place.
- **Public-facing communications and events:** Any event, workshop, or consultation activity where children, young people, or adults at risk may be present must include a documented risk assessment undertaken by Bremner & Co and appropriate safeguarding measures.
- **Online and digital work:** All online communications involving children or adults at risk must adhere to safe digital practice, including appropriate consent and data protection measures.

8. How to Report a Safeguarding Concern

If someone is in immediate danger:

Call 999 immediately.

For all other concerns, follow this process:

Step 1 — Do not delay. Report your concern to the DSL as soon as possible on the same day, and certainly within 24 hours.

Step 2 — Record. Write down what you observed, heard, or were told, using the person's own words where possible. Record the date, time, and those present. Do not share this with others beyond the DSL.

Step 3 — DSL will assess. The DSL will review the concern and determine the appropriate next steps. This may include consultation with a local authority safeguarding team, referral to children's or adult services, or a report to the police.

Step 4 — Refer if necessary. If a referral to statutory services is made, the DSL will document this and follow up to confirm receipt.

Step 5 — Review. The DSL will update records and, where appropriate, review what (if any) changes need to be made to our practices.

Key contacts:

Service	Contact
Emergency services	999
NSPCC Helpline	0808 800 5000 / help@nspcc.org.uk
Local Authority Children's Services	https://www.adcs.org.uk/directory/
Local Authority Adult Safeguarding	https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/find-your-nearest-safeguarding-adults-board/
Police (non-emergency)	101
Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding hub (MASH)	0300 500 80 90

9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Safeguarding concerns are **not** subject to normal confidentiality rules. Where there is reasonable concern that a child or adult is at risk of harm, information must be shared with the relevant statutory agencies even without the consent of the individual concerned.

Staff must never promise confidentiality to someone who discloses a safeguarding concern. Instead, reassure them that their information will be treated sensitively and shared only with those who need to know.

Information sharing must comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Sharing should be necessary, proportionate, relevant, and accurate. In line with *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026*, the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration and can override data protection considerations where appropriate.

10. Safe Recruitment

Bremner & Co is committed to safe recruitment practices. For all roles involving regular contact with children or adults at risk, we will:

- Verify identity and qualifications
- Obtain satisfactory references
- Carry out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks at the appropriate level
- Ensure new starters are not permitted to work unsupervised with children or adults at risk until all checks are complete
- Make clear in job descriptions that the role is subject to safeguarding requirements

For roles not involving direct contact with vulnerable people, we will still follow safe recruitment principles and assess whether any contact is likely to arise in practice.

11. Training

All staff and volunteers will:

- Receive safeguarding induction as part of their onboarding, including an introduction to this policy and their personal responsibilities
- Complete appropriate safeguarding training within 60 days of joining, and refresher training at least every two years. DSL will review training adequacy annually if role appropriate.
- Be made aware of any changes to safeguarding legislation and guidance as they arise

The DSL will complete enhanced safeguarding training appropriate to their lead role and keep their knowledge current.

12. Working with Partner Organisations

Where Bremner & Co works in partnership with, funds, or commissions other organisations, we will:

- Any partner who has direct contact with children or adults at risk *must* evidence a policy
- Where appropriate include safeguarding expectations within partnership agreements and contracts
- Take a risk-based approach to the level of scrutiny applied, with higher due diligence for organisations working directly with children or adults at risk

13. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, volunteer, or contractor, the DSL must be informed immediately. The DSL will:

- Not investigate the allegation internally before consulting with the appropriate statutory authority
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the allegation relates to work with children
- Ensure the individual concerned is not in a position to cause further harm while the matter is considered
- Handle the process fairly, including maintaining appropriate confidentiality
- This process applies regardless of whether the alleged incident occurred within or outside of Bremner & Co's work.

14. Online Safety

Bremner & Co recognises the importance of safe digital practice. When engaging with children, young people, or adults at risk online or via digital channels, staff must:

- Use official organisational channels only, never personal social media or messaging apps
- Obtain appropriate consents before recording, photographing, or publishing content featuring individuals
- Be alert to signs of online harm or exploitation in the course of digital engagement
- Follow our data protection policy at all times

15. Whistleblowing

Any member of staff, volunteer, or representative who has concerns about safeguarding practices within Bremner & Co — including concerns about how a concern has been managed — should raise this with the DSL, or if this is not appropriate, directly with the Chief Executive/Partner.

Bremner & Co is committed to a no-blame culture for raising safeguarding concerns in good faith. [Whistle Blowing Policy.docx](#)

16. Recording and Data Retention

All safeguarding records will be:

- Stored securely and separately from general personnel files
- Accessible only to those with a legitimate need to know
- Retained in accordance with Local Authority guidance and our data protection policy
- Subject to regular review by the DSL

17. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and approved by the Chief Executive/Partner. It will be updated sooner if required by changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or organisational circumstance.

Review date

May 2027]

May 2027

18. Related Policies

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Bremner & Co Code of Conduct
 - Data Protection and Privacy Policy
 - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Social Media Policy (within IT policy)
 - Photography and Sharing Images Guidance - [Bremner and Co brand guidelines v0.2.pptx](#)
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Bremner & Co is committed to making the food system fairer and ensuring that everyone — especially children — has the right to good, nutritious, healthy food. Our safeguarding commitments are inseparable from that mission.