Safeguarding (Children and Adults)

Policy

Applicable Company: The Calico Group

Owner: Emma Thornber

Version Number: 5.0

Signed Off By: Boards
Review Cycle: Annually
Next Review Date: 17/09/2027

Policy Checklist Completed? Yes

1.0 Change History

Version number	Change details	Date
4.0	Annual Review – ET • Reviewed content to ensure it remains in line with updated legislation and best practice guidance. • Job titles and meeting structures updated. • The addition of the statement "ensuring commitment to cultural competency and supporting diverse vulnerable groups" following review with an EDI lens.	Aug 2025
5.0	Annual Review – ET • Reviewed content to ensure it remains in line with updated legislation and best practice guidance. • The word 'staff' has been replaced with the word 'employees' to align with Calico terminology. • Section 3 – The scope section has been simplified to be more explicit that it applies to all, including volunteers. • Section 6 – Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 guidance included. Information on the case law developments around DOLS included following the UK supreme court judgement of 02 June 2026. • Section 8 – Information has been added around Board level assurance. • Section 8 – Professional curiosity has been explicitly added. • Page 10 – 'all staff complete mental capacity act training' has been changed to 'colleagues who work with customers complete mental capacity act training'. This better reflects the training requirements as Ring Stones colleagues do not complete as standard.	July 2026

2.0 Introduction

This policy sets out Calico's group-wide approach to safeguarding.

Safeguarding children, young people and adults means protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

Within Calico we operate a zero-tolerance approach to neglect, degrading treatment, unnecessary or disproportionate restraint, and/or the deprivation of liberty.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ✓ Protect children, young people and adults who use our services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- ✓ Share the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding with our customers, their families, our workforce and volunteers, and anybody else that comes into contact with Calico.

3.0 Scope

This policy and associated documents apply to:

- **All people working with or for Calico and its subsidiaries**, including Board Members, employees and volunteers.

4.0 Principles

To safeguard **adults**, we will work to the following principles:

- ✓ safeguard individuals in a way that supports them in making choices ("Making Safeguarding Personal - MSP") (empowerment)
- ✓ prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults within our services (prevention)
- ✓ support people in a way that meets their needs and best interests (proportionality)
- ✓ support and represent people when they need protecting (protection)
- ✓ work in collaboration with other professionals and local communities (partnership)
- ✓ always be transparent and share information safely and appropriately (accountability).

To safeguard **children**, we will work to the following principles:

- ✓ protect children from abuse and maltreatment
- ✓ prevent harm to children's health and development
- ✓ provide support to meet children's needs when problems emerge
- ✓ ensure children grow up with safe and effective care, within their family where possible
- ✓ take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

We will do this by:

- ✓ ensuring that all our safeguarding systems and processes are person-centred, compliant, and effective *(Section 6)*
- ✓ ensuring that roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly laid out *(Section 7)*
- ✓ ensuring that all our people know how to recognise, respond, report, record and refer *(Section 8)*
- ✓ playing our role in ensuring strong multi-agency safeguarding frameworks within our communities *(Section 9).*

5.0 Measures

We will measure compliance against this policy using the following measures:

- ✓ Everyone who works within Calico Group knows what signs and indicators of abuse to look out for and who to contact for advice and support, demonstrated through our Safeguarding audits and regulatory inspections.
- ✓ Calico Group reports and responds in a timely and effective way to concerns about abuse.
- ✓ Individuals have access to the support and services that they need from their Business Units within Calico Group and the Group Designated Safeguarding Lead
- ✓ People have their voices heard within safeguarding procedures and services.
- ✓ We maximise their rights to choice and control, within the confines of their mental capacity and competence.
- ✓ Children and adults are protected when necessary and have improved quality of life as a result.
- ✓ Calico Group recognises that safeguarding children and adults is a shared responsibility and will ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to co-operate with the local authority in the operation of the safeguarding partnerships.

We will achieve best practice by:

- ✓ Ensuring all services take appropriate action, in a timely manner to safeguard and promote the welfare of all customers.
- ✓ Ensuring responsibilities and procedures are fully understood and that everyone can recognise the signs and indicators of abuse or neglect and respond to them appropriately.
- ✓ Ensuring all relevant safeguarding policies and procedures and regularly reviewed and remain fit for purpose, meeting local and national guidance with all statutory requirements in place.
- ✓ Sourcing and providing up to date relevant and specialist training to identified cohorts of employees as identified by the organisations regularly updated training needs analysis.
- ✓ Participating in, and disseminating learning from, serious case reviews and safeguarding adult reviews to all services as appropriate.

- ✓ Hearing the voice of individuals and making safeguarding personal for adults, young people and children through all safeguarding investigations and enquiries.
- ✓ Ensuring commitment to cultural competency and supporting diverse vulnerable groups.
- ✓ Maintaining current, and forging new, collaborative relationships with relevant partner agencies within the local authority safeguarding partnerships, NHS Trusts or other stakeholders relevant to the service.
- ✓ Actively participating in internal and multi-agency audits to inform best practice
- ✓ Identifying safeguarding themes and trends within services, geographic areas or service user groups to target learning and development within those services identified within the analysis.
- ✓ Maintaining and developing our knowledge and expertise within the safeguarding arena including the authorship, involvement and dissemination of lessons learnt within local safeguarding enquires, serious case reviews and safeguarding adult/children at risk reviews.
- ✓ Disseminating learning and development recommendations from all key enquiries.
- ✓ Undertaking audits relevant to our safeguarding practice.
- ✓ Monitoring lessons learnt and service developments to be assured learning has become embedded in practice.
- ✓ Utilising cross-agency systems to ensure a multi-agency/multi-disciplinary approach to safeguarding.
- ✓ Safeguard against abuse, neglect, and exploitation are an integral part in the delivery of services and any child, young person, or adult at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation know how to tell us, know that they will get a consistent response, and understand that appropriate interventions will take place.

6.0 Linked Information

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- ✓ Safeguarding Procedures of each Business Unit (which incorporate the relevant Local Authority Strategies and reporting procedures)
- ✓ Incident, Accident, and Near miss reporting procedure
- ✓ Audit schedules
- ✓ Domestic abuse policy
- ✓ Whistleblowing procedure
- ✓ Safer recruitment procedure
- ✓ Training matrix
- ✓ Meeting structure diagram
- ✓ Policy review schedule

This policy outlines how we will meet our legislative requirements in relation to:

- ✓ The Care Act 2014
- ✓ Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 (Statutory Guidance)
- ✓ Children Act 1989
- ✓ Children Act 2004

- ✓ Children and Young Persons Act 1933
- ✓ Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- ✓ Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- ✓ Modern Slavery Act 2015
- ✓ Human Rights Act 1998
- ✓ Equality Act 2010
- ✓ Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Code of Practice
- ✓ Mental Health Act 1983
- ✓ Data Protection Act 2018
- ✓ Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)
- ✓ Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- ✓ Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 (including CQC Fundamental Standards)
- ✓ Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and Economic Standards.

N.B – 2026 development re DOLS - Calico will comply with the Mental Capacity Act 2005, associated Codes of Practice and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) requirements. The Group will keep its arrangements under review and implement any changes required by future legislative, case law, or regulatory developments, including the introduction of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS).

7.0 Review

This policy and associated processes will be reviewed annually, or sooner upon the release of new or amended regulation/guidance or following identified improvements to practice.

8.0 Systems and Processes

This policy and related documents (*listed in section 6)* outline the safeguarding systems and processes in place across Calico. Collectively, they ensure that all Business Units comply with all applicable legislation, guidance, and best practice in their fields.

All documentation is readily available on the Document Hub and are on display in service locations as appropriate. This is to ensure that our people always have immediate access, and that our customers can read about our approach to safeguarding.

- **This policy** establishes the 'why'; it shares the key principles behind our approach to safeguarding, and the legislation that we comply with.
- The **safeguarding procedures** for each Business Unit establish the 'how'. They outline our person-centred and transparent safeguarding practice in each Business Unit, whilst providing a 'step-by-step' guide for our workforce. These procedures bring in all Local Authority Strategies and reporting requirements specific to each different service/area. Each Business Unit will review their company/service procedures in line with the policy review schedule, monitored by the CGG/H&RSGG. They will do this

in conjunction with their local partners to ensure a collaborative approach and to influence consistently reviewed and improved practice.

- As referenced within the safeguarding procedures described above; Sunflower cards, and **our incident, accident and near miss procedure** outline how safeguarding concerns should be raised internally within the Group, and how they will be handled. This procedure also outlines how relevant safeguarding incidents will be reported to regulatory bodies like the CQC or Charity Commission.
- The **domestic abuse policy** outlines our commitment as an employer in working to meet the needs of families living in and escaping domestic abuse. This covers both our people and our customers.
- The **whistleblowing procedure** outlines the steps our workforce should take to raise concerns (or provide information) about the working practices of either the organisation or an individual within.
- The **safer recruitment procedure** outlines the steps we will take to ensure our recruitment procedures are in line with legislation and regulation, and that only people with the right skills and values become part of the Group.
- The **training matrix** outlines the training required by role type and area. The Calico Group provides training appropriate to job roles (e.g. toolbox talks, team meetings, briefings, formal training, induction etc). Training focuses on key areas for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children and adults, including:
    - ✓ Recognising signs of abuse.
    - ✓ Related legislative requirements.
    - ✓ Awareness of Safeguarding Leads and Champions.
    - ✓ Terminology (including 'Adult at Risk' as defined by the Care Act, and how phrases are sometimes used interchangeably across our Local Authorities i.e. Vulnerable Adult).
    - ✓ Understanding the importance of whistleblowing procedures.
    - ✓ Understanding the importance of creating a safe environment to minimise the risk of abuse.
    - ✓ Understanding their role as an 'alerter', including how to report concerns of abuse.
- The **meeting structure** shows the flow of information across the Group. Learning and development recommendations from all key enquiries, and lessons learnt in-house, are disseminated to each Business Unit via the Care Governance Group (CGG) or Homes & Ring Stones Governance Group (H&RSGG) as appropriate *(see section 8 below)*.
- Cross company **learning** is a priority for the Group as we know that learning from each other, and growing together, is a unique benefit of being part of a multi-disciplinary Group structure; our Safeguarding Working Group facilitates this. The Working Group monitors safeguarding themes, trends, audit findings, reviews, learning outcomes, and training compliance to identify areas of good practice, emerging risks, and opportunities for improvement. Learning arising from safeguarding enquiries, reviews, inspections, audits, and incidents is disseminated across the Group and monitored to ensure improvements are implemented and embedded in practice.
- **Audits** take place on our safeguarding systems and processes at both local level and via our internal auditors, to identify areas of best practice and/or areas for improvement.

- All documents are reviewed as part of our **monitored document review process**. Reviews will also take place upon the release of new or amended legislation/guidance, or newly identified improvements to practice.

8.0 Roles & Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility.

All people at Calico (including volunteers) have a responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their colleagues, and of our customers and their families, and must follow this policy, and the procedure relating to their business area. Professional curiosity is encouraged in line within individual roles and responsibilities, whilst maintaining professional boundaries.

Each person at Calico is required to attend mandatory safeguarding awareness training upon commencing their role and attend regular re-fresher training. Depending on roles within the Group, further training may be required in line with Local Authority requirements or specific safeguarding duties.

Group leaders and managers are required to be familiar with the specific Local Authority policy and procedures that pertain to their service location(s).They are responsible for ensuring that teams and services have access to the relevant procedures and are supported to understand them, are supported to escalate concerns as required, and are supported to access regular safeguarding training and have opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding. Group leaders and managers are responsible for ensuring that systems and processes operate effectively within their areas.

The named safeguarding leads in each Business Unit are the first port of call for safeguarding issues or concerns, they also ensure that the importance of safeguarding is communicated within their areas of responsibility and advise employees on matters pertaining to safeguarding. Safeguarding leads (and the Group Director of Governance) are responsible for reviewing documentation relating to safeguarding such as policies and procedures and hold responsibility to consistently develop their knowledge and expertise within the safeguarding arena.

Our Human Resources teams, in collaboration with Business Units, are responsible for ensuring our people are consistently subject to safer recruitment procedures and that such information can be evidenced with auditors and regulators as required, and the provision of suitable training programmes.

The **Safeguarding Working Group** monitors safeguarding themes, trends, audit findings, reviews, learning outcomes, and training compliance to identify areas of good practice, emerging risks, and opportunities for improvement. Learning arising from safeguarding enquiries, reviews, inspections, audits, and incidents is disseminated across the Group and monitored to ensure improvements are implemented and embedded in practice.

For Syncora and GBS, the **Care Governance Group** (CGG) must provide assurance to the CEO, Executive Leadership Team and Group DSO that safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and that safeguarding activity is analysed to identify any trends

and to ensure investigations are carried out as required with any learning shared (where appropriate).

For Homes and Ringstones, the **Homes and Ring Stones Governance Group** (H&RS GG) will provide assurance to the CEO, Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Group DSO that safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and that safeguarding activity is analysed to identify any trends and to ensure investigations are carried out as required with any learning shared (where appropriate).



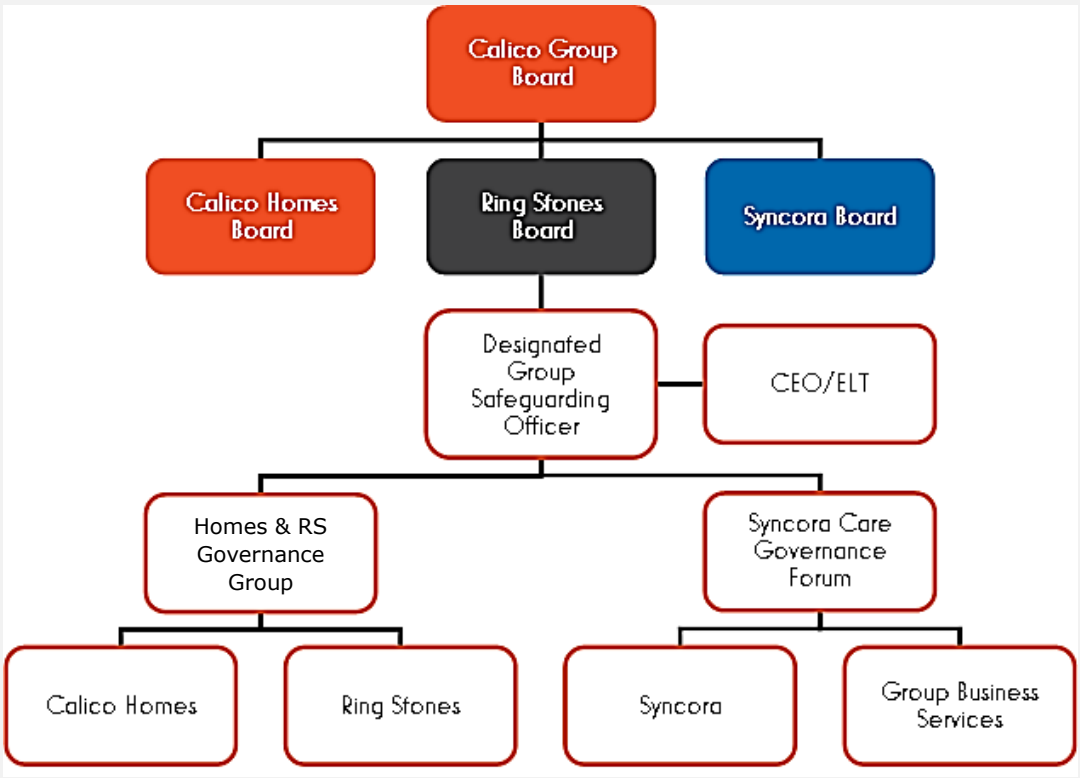
Group safeguarding is monitored and governed by the **Calico Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) – the Executive Director of Syncora.** The Group DSO holds delegated responsibility from the CEO for ensuring there are robust systems, process, procedures, and policy in place that support compliance with national and local standards for safeguarding. The Group DSO will provide assurance to the Boards, CEO and Executive Team that safeguarding is monitored, through audit and within Governance Groups, and Boards. The Group DSO will provide operational support and guidance to designated safeguarding leads across the Group and support individual employees volunteers where appropriate.

Calico Group **Board,** and company Boards, hold specific responsibilities for monitoring safeguarding arrangements. These responsibilities include ensuring that policies are in place that reflect relevant guidance and legislation, that there is effective reporting of safeguarding matters and analysis of trends, that any safeguarding shortcomings have been appropriately reported, and that monitoring arrangements confirm that the shortcomings have been addressed.

The Group Board and subsidiary Boards are responsible for obtaining assurance that safeguarding arrangements across the Group remain effective, compliant and person-centred. To support this, Boards receive regular safeguarding assurance, including information on safeguarding activity, emerging themes and trends, significant incidents, audit outcomes, regulatory matters, training compliance, lessons learned, and the effectiveness of safeguarding systems and controls.

Significant safeguarding incidents, Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs), Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, serious regulatory concerns, or any matter presenting a material risk to individuals, services or the Group's reputation, will be escalated through the appropriate governance arrangements and reported to the relevant Executive Director, Group Designated Safeguarding Officer, Chief Executive and Board as required.

Boards receive assurance that safeguarding risks are being effectively managed, that actions arising from audits, reviews and learning events are implemented and monitored, and that appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard children, young people and adults who come into contact with the Group. This assurance is provided through governance reporting, internal audit activity, regulatory inspection outcomes, safeguarding reviews and oversight by the relevant governance groups.



The effectiveness of our safeguarding roles and responsibilities are reviewed as part of the internal audit programme.

9.0 Our People

Calico recruit/engage with appropriately qualified/experienced employees and volunteers, via safe recruitment processes overseen by our HR department. This helps to ensure suitability and safety.

Upon joining Calico, all employees and volunteers undertake a corporate induction, which includes bespoke safeguarding training and area specific process information.

Our people are made aware of their individual responsibilities to recognise, respond, report, record and refer via the above induction process and as part of regular ongoing training.

All employees and volunteers read this policy (and their Business Unit/service procedure) and understand their role and associated responsibilities. Management support is provided where required.

Annual safeguarding training is mandatory for all Calico people, irrespective of role held. This is monitored by the Talent & Development Department, and the Governance Groups. Additional training is also provided and encouraged.

Colleagues who work with customers complete Mental Capacity Act training and work within the requirements of this Act. We ensure that all adults are included in decision making where able to do so.

All our people understand their individual responsibilities in preventing discrimination in relation to the protected characteristics set out in S4 of the Equality Act 2010. All employees undertake mandatory annual training on equality, and work within the parameters of the company's Equality policy. This is to ensure that everybody coming into contact with our services will be treated with respect, in a manner that is not degrading, and not be deprived of their liberty for the purpose of receiving care or treatment without lawful authority.

Our people understand how to raise and deal with allegations against employees members, and the difference between whistleblowing and safeguarding, as covered via our training programme.

All managers across the company are provided with Leadership Training and understand how to support their employees in dealing with issues, including domestic abuse.

Extended support is available and provided to both employees and management via the supervision and 'My Time' process. There are further additional support mechanisms in place including telephone or face to face counselling. This support is available to our people 24 hours a day, 365 days a week.

Employee and volunteer understanding of systems and processes is managed within each service. Instances of non-compliance with this policy or related protocol is dealt with via our company HR policies and procedures. Assessment of compliance against policy is overseen by the Group Director of Governance and conducted via our audit process.

10.0 Our Communities

We will actively take notice to all information received by the company, including complaints and incidents. Where potential abuse is identified preventative actions will be taken, including escalation where appropriate, in line with individual service protocols. We do not rely solely on reported concerns to tackle safeguarding issues. We actively listen.

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with a wide range of statutory and non-statutory services, and the importance of sharing information appropriately. The processes for sharing information between stakeholders, such as professionals and Safeguarding Adults/Children's Boards are contained within Business Unit/service procedures.

We work in partnership with other relevant bodies, sharing information in line with this policy and associated protocols, contributing to individual risk assessments,

MARAC, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Adult Safeguarding Board, serious case reviews, and regularly review outcomes for people using our services to prevent repeated abuse.

Our policies and processes are discussed with relevant Local Safeguarding Boards to ensure suitable alignment and to ensure we play a collaborative and effective safeguarding role in the communities we work in. A key guiding principle here is not working in silo and ensuring we are sharing information appropriately and safely to prevent harm.