



Voices from
Care Cymru



Member Handbook



Welcome to VfCC

We are delighted to have you join our community. VfCC is a safe, supportive, and inclusive space where young people are encouraged to grow in confidence, develop new skills, build positive relationships, and achieve their full potential.

Our aim is to create an environment where young people can:

- **Feel safe, included, and respected**
- **Build confidence and resilience**
- **Learn new skills and explore opportunities**
- **Access support and guidance when needed**
- **Form positive friendships and connections**
- **Have their voices heard and valued**
- **Enjoy fun, engaging, and meaningful activities**



www.vfcc.org.uk



Voices From Care Cymru has been around for over 30 years, it was set up as there was no other organisation, in Wales, representing care experienced young people at the time. Deborah Jones, Chief Executive Officer, wanted to improve how children and young people were cared for and to do this she knew she had to get care experienced young people to speak about their experiences. It is important that corporate parents who make decisions about your lives really understand you and your care experience, to bring about change.

What you can expect from being a member:



- Welcome Pack
- Involvement in areas of work of interest to you
- Priority access to events
- regular communications
- connecting with other care experienced people
- opportunities to represent the care community

Please enjoy your membership with us, give new things a try, get involved in our work and help to build a care community across Wales to be proud of.



Our Values Shine Through Everything We Do

- Removing stigma, discrimination and barriers in life
- Young people guide our work and help tell professionals about their care experience
- Celebrating individuality and diversity of the care experienced community
- Helping care experienced young people to reach their full potential
- Creating a care family to meet, grow, learn and develop friendships

Voices that matter.

Young people have power in decisions made at every level of the organisation, from suggesting session plans and events, to advising on regional and national groups, to sitting on our board of trustee's. Your Voice is the voice that matters.





Outline of Services for Young People

WHAT WE DO

VfCC offers a wide range of services and opportunities designed to support the wellbeing, development, and aspirations of young people.

Wellbeing Support Services

We provide guidance, encouragement, and one-to-one support structured around 6 week goal focused action plans, to help young people navigate challenges and achieve their goals. Our staff and volunteers are here to listen and offer practical support in a confidential and non-judgemental environment.

Participation and Youth Voice

We believe young people should have a voice in decisions that affect them. We have dedicated Regional Advisory Groups as well as a National Advisory Board, to ensure your voice gets heard. Our Board of Trustees also has dedicated positions for young people to be a part of the decision making process.

Inclusion and Equality

VfCC is committed to creating a welcoming environment where everyone is treated fairly and with respect.

We celebrate diversity and do not tolerate discrimination, bullying, or harassment of any kind, you can find out more about this in our behaviour and conduct policy.

Safeguarding and Safety

The safety and wellbeing of young people is our priority. All staff and volunteers are committed to maintaining a safe environment and follow safeguarding policies and procedures to protect all members.

If a young person has concerns about their safety or wellbeing, they are encouraged to speak to a member of staff, more information on how we keep each other safe can be found in our safeguarding guide.

Recreational and Social Activities

We organise inclusive activities that give young people opportunities to have fun, build friendships, and develop confidence. You can read more about how you can get involved by reading our Access and Eligibility policy.



02920 451431



info@vfcc.org.uk

WWW.VFCC.ORG.UK



KEY WORKERS AND SUPPORT STAFF



At VfCC, young people may be supported by a member of staff who will help provide guidance, encouragement, consistency, and practical support.

Our role is to:

- Build positive and trusted relationships
- Encourage independence and personal growth
- Support young people to access opportunities and services, through signposting and referrals
- Listen and provide guidance where needed
- Help young people work towards their goals
- Promote wellbeing, confidence, and resilience

Although we work alongside young people and other professionals involved in their care, we work with a child or young person in a voluntary capacity, unlike the way in which social workers and PA's would work with you.

Staff Behaviour and Expectations

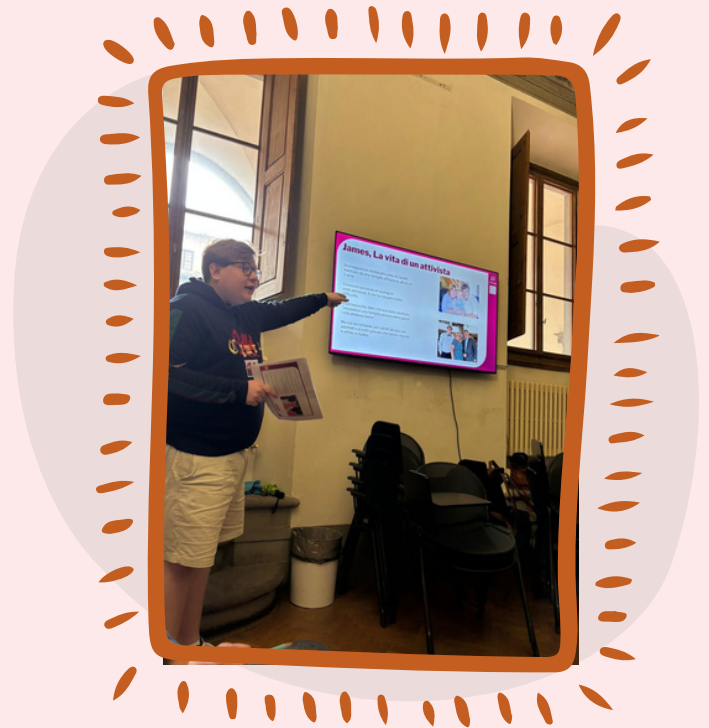
All VfCC staff and volunteers are expected to behave professionally, respectfully, and responsibly at all times.

We are committed to:

- Treating young people fairly and with respect
- Maintaining professional boundaries
- Listening without judgement
- Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Protecting confidentiality where appropriate
- Providing a safe and supportive environment

We ask all members to also treat staff, volunteers, and other young people with kindness and respect.

Complaints, Concerns and Feedback



Complaints, Concerns, and Feedback

VfCC welcomes feedback from young people, parents, carers, and professionals. We want members to feel confident speaking up if they are unhappy about something or feel improvements could be made.

If you have a complaint, concern, or suggestion:

- Speak to a member of staff or your Key Worker
- Request to speak with a manager
- Provide feedback verbally or in writing
- Ask for support to make a complaint if needed

All complaints and concerns will be taken seriously and managed fairly, respectfully, and confidentially wherever possible.

- ✓ Speak Up
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Listen
- ✓ Improve



Your voice matters.

If something doesn't feel right, we want to hear from you. Raising a complaint or concern helps us understand your experience and make sure you receive the support you need.



Help us improve.

Your feedback and ideas can make our services, activities and support better for everyone. We welcome suggestions on what is working well and what could be done differently.



It's safe and confidential.

You can speak to a trusted member of staff, volunteer or advocate. We will listen respectfully, take your concerns seriously, and support you through the process.

Useful Numbers & Support

Need Help? You're Not Alone

Whether you're struggling with housing, money, mental health, education, employment, or just need someone to talk to, there is support available. As a care leaver, you have rights and access to services that can help you navigate challenges and live independently



Working Wales

Free support with CVs, job searching, training, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities.

☎ 0800 028 4844

TGP Cymru Advocacy

If you're not receiving the support you're entitled to, advocacy services can help ensure your rights are upheld.

☎ 0808 801 0700

NHS 111 Wales

Health advice, urgent care guidance, and help finding a GP or dentist.

☎ 111

C.A.L.L. Helpline

Wales' mental health listening line offering confidential emotional support and information about local services.

☎ 0800 132 737 (24/7)

Shelter Cymru

Free and independent housing advice for people across Wales.

☎ 08000 495 495

Advicelink Cymru

Free advice about benefits, debt, and money management.

☎ 0800 702 2020



Policies and Procedure's

How we are allowed to help you



- ✓ POLICIES ARE
- ✓ DOUMENTS THAT
- ✓ EXPLAIN HOW WE
- ✓ WORK THE WAY WE DO,
- ✓ WHAT WE ARE
- ✓ ALLOWED TO DO AND
- ✓ WHAT WE ARE NOT
- ✓ ALLOWED TO DO

WE HAVE A LOT OF POLICIES THAT WE MUST FOLLOW TO KEEP US SAFE, THE ONES INCLUDED IN THIS HANDBOOK WERE MADE ESPECIALLY FOR YOU

YOU ARE EXPECTED TO READ THE POLICIES LISTED HERE, ALL POLICIES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE VFCC WEBSITE. YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT US IF YOU NEED SUPPORT TO ACCESS THE FULL VERSIONS.

POLICIES INCLUDED IN THIS HANDBOOK

- Service User Eligibility & Access Policy
- Advocacy & Representation Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure
- Behaviour and Conduct Policy

CONTACT INFORMATION



Phone
02920 451431



Email
info@vfcc.org.uk

Service User Eligibility & Access Policy

Voices From Care Cymru is here to support children, young people, and adults who have care experience. We want everyone to feel welcome, listened to, respected, and supported.

This guide explains who can get support from VFCC and how we work with people.

What We Believe

At VFCC, we believe:

- Your voice matters.
- You should be involved in decisions about your life.
- Everyone deserves respect and kindness.
- Support should help you feel safe and confident.
- Everyone should be treated fairly, no matter who they are or where they come from.
- Children and young people have rights, and those rights should be protected.



How We Support People

We provide support in different places across Wales.

Support at Our Offices

You might visit us for:

- One-to-one support meetings
- Advocacy support
- Group activities and workshops
- Drop-in sessions
- Meetings where you can share your views and experiences



We work hard to make our offices safe, welcoming, and accessible.

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Support in the Community

We can also meet people in places such as:

- Schools and colleges
- Community centres
- Youth clubs
- Other safe community locations

Sometimes we may:

- Attend important meetings with you
- Support you at appointments
- Offer support online or by phone when needed

Your safety is always important to us.



What Support Can We Offer?

Individual Support

We can help you:

- Understand your rights
- Speak up about things that matter to you
- Prepare for important meetings
- Access support with housing, health, education, or moving into adulthood
- Find other services that may be able to help



Together, we will agree on goals and decide what support is right for you.

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Group Activities

You can also take part in:

- Youth forums
- Advisory groups
- Consultation events
- Campaigns to improve services
- Activities that build confidence, skills, and leadership

Joining these activities is always your choice.



Who Can Use VFCC Services?

We mainly support:

- Children and young people who are in care
- Care leavers
- Children and Young People that live with a family member that is not their parent
- Children, Young People and Adult's that were adopted
- Adults who have experience of care



Sometimes we may also work with brothers, sisters, or family members if it helps support a care-experienced person.

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How Old Do You Need to Be?

We usually support:

- Children and young people under 25
- Care leavers and adults with care experience

Some projects may have different age rules.



How Can You Get Support?

You can contact us yourself, or someone can help you get in touch.

Referrals can come from:

- You (self-referral)
- Social workers
- Schools or colleges
- Health services
- Housing services
- Other support organisations



We try to make getting support simple and easy. You can contact us through our website, Facebook and Instagram accounts if you are unable to call us.

Service User Eligibility & Access Policy

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Your Choice and Consent

Before we start supporting you:

- We will explain what support we can offer.
- We will ask for your consent (permission).
- We will explain things in a way you can understand.
- You can change your mind and stop receiving support at any time.

Sometimes, if we are worried about someone's safety, we may need to share information to keep people safe.



Who Gets Priority Support?



If lots of people need help at the same time, we may need to prioritise those who:

- Are at risk of harm
- Have safeguarding concerns
- Are going through big life changes
- Have little or no support from others
- Need urgent advocacy support
- Have important meetings or deadlines coming up

We always try to make these decisions fairly.

Service User Eligibility & Access Policy

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Making Support Accessible

We want everyone to be able to use our services.

We can offer:

- Flexible appointment times
- Different meeting locations
- Online or phone support
- Communication support if needed
- A trauma-informed approach
- Respect for different cultures, identities, and backgrounds



We will make reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

Keeping You Safe

Everyone at VFCC follows safeguarding and safety rules.



Our staff and volunteers are trained to:

- Listen to concerns
- Help keep people safe
- Take action when someone may be at risk - This could include calling your adult, emergency contact or emergency services. you will always be told when this is happening.

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Tell Us What You Think

Your feedback helps us improve.

We welcome:

- Compliments
- Suggestions
- Complaints



We will listen to what you say and use your feedback to make our services better. If you would like to make a complaint, suggestion, or give us a compliment, a member of staff will be happy to show you how to do this, or a trusted adult can help you.

Need Support?

If you think VFCC could help you, you can contact us directly or ask a trusted adult, social worker, teacher, or support worker to help you get in touch.

Your voice matters, and we're here to listen

Advocacy and Representation Policy



We want to help children and young people who have experience of care have their voices heard. We believe that what you think, feel, and want is important. We can help you speak up, share your ideas, raise concerns, and make sure people listen to you.

What is an Advocate?

An advocate is someone who helps you:

- ✓ Understand your rights
- ✓ Say what you think and feel
- ✓ Speak to professionals
- ✓ Prepare for meetings
- ✓ Raise concerns or make complaints
- ✓ Make sure your views are heard

Advocates are there to support you and what you want.



What We Believe

When we support you, we will make sure:

- 🗣️ Your Voice is heard
- ✓ Your Choices are respected
- 💪 You Stay in Control of decisions about your life
- 🤝 Everyone is Treated Fairly
- 🔒 Your Information is Kept Private
- ❤️ We Support What Is Best for You

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What Can VFCC Help With?

We can help you:

- Understand your rights
- Get ready for meetings
- Tell people what you want
- Speak up if something is wrong
- Make complaints or give feedback
- Share ideas to improve services for care-experienced young people



If you want us to, we can sometimes speak on your behalf.

What We Cannot Do

There are some things we cannot do.

- ✗ Make decisions for you
- ✗ Tell you what choices to make
- ✗ Act without your permission
- ✗ Give legal advice
- ✗ Replace social workers, carers, or other services

If we cannot help, we will try to find someone who can.

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Your Permission Matters

Before we support you, we will explain:

- What advocacy is
- How we can help
- What information we may need

We will ask for your permission first.

You can change your mind and stop getting support at any time.



Keeping Information Safe

We will keep your information private.

We will only share information if:

- You say we can, or
- We are worried that someone may be at risk of harm, or
- The law says we must share it

If we need to share information to keep someone safe, we will explain this whenever possible.

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If We Disagree with Someone

Sometimes you might not agree with a decision that has been made.

We can help you:

- Ask questions
- Challenge decisions respectfully
- Explain your views
- Find ways to solve problems

We will always try to support you in a positive and respectful way.



Keeping You Safe

Everyone at VFCC is trained to help keep children and young people safe.

If we are worried that you or someone else is in danger, we must take action to help protect them.

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Complaints and Feedback

You have the right to tell us if:

- You are unhappy with our support
- Something has gone wrong
- You think we could do something better

You will never get into trouble for sharing your concerns.

We will listen and take your feedback seriously.



Our Promise to You

At Voices From Care Cymru, we promise to:

- ☀ Listen to you
- ☀ Respect you
- ☀ Support you
- ☀ Help you understand your rights
- ☀ Make sure your voice is heard

Because your experiences, opinions, and ideas matter. ❤

Your voice matters, and we're here to listen

Staying Safe Safeguarding Guide



At Voices From Care Cymru (VFCC), we want every child and young person to feel safe, respected, listened to, and supported. Keeping you safe is one of the most important things we do.

What Does "Safeguarding" Mean?

Safeguarding means helping to keep children and young people safe from harm, abuse, neglect, bullying, exploitation, or anything that could put them at risk.

Everyone at VFCC has a responsibility to help keep children safe.



Our Promise to You

We will:

- ✓ Listen to you
- ✓ Take your worries seriously
- ✓ Treat you with kindness and respect
- ✓ Support you when things are difficult
- ✓ Help you understand your rights
- ✓ Act if we think someone is unsafe
- ✓ Make sure your voice is heard

We believe every child and young person deserves to feel safe and valued

Your voice matters, and we're here to listen

Staying Safe Safeguarding Guide



At Voices From Care Cymru (VFCC), we want every child and young person to feel safe, respected, listened to, and supported. Keeping you safe is one of the most important things we do.

What Might Make Someone Unsafe?

Sometimes children and young people can be hurt or treated badly.

This might include:

- Being hit or physically hurt
- Being shouted at, threatened, or made to feel scared
- Being neglected or not looked after properly
- Being bullied online or in person
- Being pressured into doing things they don't want to do
- Being tricked, controlled, or exploited by someone
- Feeling unsafe at home, school, online, or in the community



If You Want to Tell Someone Something

You can talk to a VFCC staff member or volunteer if:

- You are worried about yourself
- You are worried about a friend
- Something has happened that has upset or frightened you
- You do not feel safe
- You need help or support

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Will What I Say Stay Private?

Most of the time, yes.

However, if we think you or another child is at risk of being harmed, we may need to share information with people who can help keep you safe, such as social services or the police.

If this happens, we will explain it to you as much as we can.



Remember

✗ We cannot promise to keep secrets that involve someone being unsafe.

✓ We can promise to listen and get the right help.

How We Expect Adults at VFCC to Behave

All VFCC staff and volunteers must:

- Treat you with respect
- Be professional and kind
- Keep appropriate boundaries
- Never make you feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- Follow rules about communication, social media, and activities

If a staff member or volunteer makes you feel worried or unsafe, you can tell another trusted adult.

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Staying Safe Safeguarding Guide



At Voices From Care Cymru (VFCC), we want every child and young person to feel safe, respected, listened to, and supported. Keeping you safe is one of the most important things we do.

Staying Safe Online

Being online can be fun, but it can sometimes be unsafe.

If someone online:

- Makes you feel uncomfortable
- Asks for personal information
- Sends upsetting messages
- Pressures you to do something you don't want to do

Tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. VFCC staff can help you think about ways to stay safe online.



What Happens If Someone Is in Immediate Danger?

If someone is in immediate danger or needs urgent help:

 Call 999 straight away.

Other People Who Can Help

You can also contact:  NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Or speak to:

- A trusted adult
- A teacher
- A social worker
- A foster carer

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Behaviour Guide for Young People

At Voices From Care Cymru, we want everyone to feel welcome, safe, respected, and included. This guide explains how we can all work together to create a positive environment where everyone can enjoy activities, make friends, and have their voices heard.

Our Values

We believe in:

- ♥ Respect
- ☀ Kindness
- 🤝 Inclusion
- 👂 Listening to each other
- 💪 Helping young people feel empowered
- ✅ Taking responsibility for our actions

These values help us create a safe and supportive space for everyone.



What We Ask From You

When you attend a VFCC activity, event, or group, we ask that you:

- ✅ Treat others kindly and respectfully
- ✅ Listen when others are speaking
- ✅ Respect different opinions and experiences
- ✅ Follow safety instructions
- ✅ Help make everyone feel welcome
- ✅ Take care of yourself and others
- ✅ Ask for help if you need it

We know everyone has difficult days sometimes, and we are here to support you.

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What You Can Expect From Us

VFCC staff and volunteers will:

- ✓ Treat you fairly
- ✓ Listen to your views
- ✓ Respect your identity, beliefs, and background
- ✓ Be honest and trustworthy
- ✓ Help keep you safe
- ✓ Support you if you are struggling
- ✓ Challenge behaviour that may harm others

Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and compassion.



Respecting Personal Boundaries

Boundaries help keep everyone safe.

VFCC staff and volunteers will:

- Keep professional relationships with young people
- Use approved ways to communicate with you
- Not have favourite young people
- Not share inappropriate personal information
- Not contact you through personal social media accounts
- Not ask for or accept inappropriate gifts

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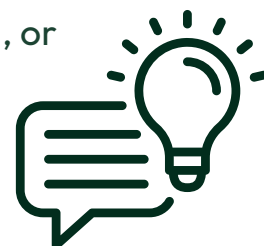
If Someone Is Upset or Struggling

Sometimes behaviour can be affected by stress, worry, sadness, trauma, or difficult experiences.

If someone becomes upset, staff will:

-  Stay calm
-  Listen
-  Offer support
-  Help find solutions
-  Give space when needed

We will always try to understand what is happening before deciding how best to help.



Bullying Is Never Okay

At VFCC, we do not accept bullying in any form. Bullying can include:

-  Hitting or hurting someone
-  Name-calling
-  Threatening people
-  Leaving someone out on purpose
-  Spreading rumours
-  Being unkind online
-  Making fun of someone because of who they are

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What To Do If You Are Being Bullied

If someone is bullying you or someone else:

-  Tell a trusted adult
-  Talk to a VFCC staff member or volunteer
-  Tell us if you see bullying happening

We will:

-  Take you seriously
-  Listen to everyone involved
-  Help stop the bullying
-  Support anyone affected
-  Find fair ways to move forward



What Happens If The Rules Are Broken?

If someone breaks these expectations, we will always try to help and support them first.

Depending on what happened, we may:

- Have a conversation about the behaviour
- Offer extra support
- Agree a plan to help things improve
- Review whether the person can continue attending activities safely

Any action will be fair, supportive, and focused on keeping everyone safe.

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Our Promise

At Voices From Care Cymru, we want every young person to:

- ☀️ Feel safe
- ☀️ Feel respected
- ☀️ Feel included
- ☀️ Have fun
- ☀️ Be heard
- ☀️ Be themselves



Together, we can create a positive, welcoming community where everyone belongs. ❤️

Need Support? We're Here for You ❤️

We know that policies can sometimes be confusing, and you might have questions about your rights, staying safe, making a complaint, or what support is available to you. If there is anything in these policies that you do not understand, or if something is worrying you, please speak to a member of the Voices From Care Cymru team. There is no problem too big or too small. We will listen, take your concerns seriously, and do our best to help you find the support you need. Remember, you do not have to face challenges on your own. Asking for help is a sign of strength, and there will always be someone at VFCC who is ready to listen and support you. ❤️

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