

The Source Young People's Charity

Name of policy: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures

Date approved by Board of Trustees: August 2020

Date this policy will be reviewed: August 2022

Manager responsible for this policy: Director

Statement on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults:

The Source believes that it is always unacceptable for a vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind. The Source recognises its responsibility to ensure best practice around safeguarding and the welfare of vulnerable adults who use its services or who The Source becomes aware of through its work.

Introduction

This policy is based on the following documents and the statements therein:

- The Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board Safeguarding Adults Policy (www.hampshiresab.org.uk)
- Human Rights Act 1998 'No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.'
- Duty to notify the Home Office of potential victim of modern slavery Version 1 (1 November 2015). The 'Duty to Notify' is set out in Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy, Guidance and Toolkit 4LSAB (May 2015) which has been developed to meet the Care Act 2014.
- Care Act 2014 statutory guidance and should inform safeguarding practice at the local level.

This table outlines some of the approaches that can be used to promote wellbeing and prevention:

Principle	Description	Example Outcomes for vulnerable adults at risk
Empowerment	Presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.	<i>"I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens."</i>
Prevention	It is better to take action before harm occurs.	<i>"I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help."</i>
Proportionality	Proportionate and least intrusive responses appropriate to the risk presented.	<i>"I am sure that the professionals will work for my best interests, as I see them and will only get involved as much as needed." "I understand the role of everyone involved in my life."</i>
Partnership	Local solutions through agencies working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.	<i>"I know that they will treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together to get the best result for me."</i>
Protection	Support and representation for those in greatest need.	<i>"I get help and support to report abuse. I get help to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want and to which I am able."</i>
Accountability	Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.	<i>"I understand the role of everyone involved in my life."</i>

The characteristics of abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching well beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or embarrassed to raise any complaint. They may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others.

Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees and students. They will be referred to as 'staff or volunteers' for the purpose of this document.

Person led safeguarding

A person led approach leads to services for an individual which are:

- person centred and focused on the outcomes identified by the individual;
- planned and delivered in a joined-up way between organisations;
- responsive and which can be changed when required.

This policy adopts the Empowerment Principle above of 'no decision about me without me', and means that the vulnerable adult, their families and carers are working together with agencies to find the right solutions to keep the person safe and to support them in making informed choices.

Making Safeguarding Personal is a sector led initiative which aims to develop an outcomes focus to safeguarding and a range of responses to support people to improve or resolve their circumstances. It is about seeing people as experts in their own lives and working alongside them with the aim of enabling them to resolve their circumstances and support their recovery.

Making Safeguarding Personal seeks to achieve:

- A personalised approach that enables safeguarding to be done with, not to, people
- Practice that focuses on achieving meaningful improvement to people's circumstances rather than just on 'investigation' and 'conclusion'
- An approach that enables practitioners, families and social care to know what difference has been made

Aim of Policy

The aim of this policy is:

- to provide protection for vulnerable adults using The Source's services or who The Source becomes aware of through its work (including family / friends of service users)
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm from abuse / neglect.

Definitions

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This **may** include a person who:

- Is in a domestic violence relationship
- Has a mental illness
- Has a carer
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is using substances
- Is homeless
- Is suffering from financial hardship

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

- Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment
- Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism
- Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation
- Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from bank accounts or savings etc
- Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or causing malnutrition
- Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment
- Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will
- Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions
- Modern Slavery e.g. victim of slavery or human trafficking

Safeguarding Procedures

These procedures must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual. A full record must be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information.

Members of staff and volunteers should inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer promptly of any allegation or suspicion of abuse (or the Director if the Designated Safeguarding Officer is not available). The staff member or volunteer should make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse on a Serious Incident Form and either in their session evaluation form or if this is not appropriate on a young people's information form. The report should include the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the name of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the vulnerable adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, and the account which has been given of the allegation.

When a staff member, volunteer or student is involved in a disclosure, the Designated Safeguarding Officer must oversee the handling of the situation. The appropriate action and the member of staff responsible for carrying out the action will be identified. All actions must be recorded on a Monitoring Form.

Staff members and volunteers who are dealing with an allegation of abuse should attempt to gain the consent of the vulnerable adult to make a referral to another agency if appropriate. However, gaining consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on, and a referral without consent may be considered appropriate in light of:

- The scale of the abuse
- The risk of harm to others
- The capacity of the person to understand the issues of abuse and consent.

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Social Services then it should be reported.

Where the alleged abuser is a member of staff/volunteer, The Source's standard procedures will be followed, commencing with removal from active duty.

The well-being and safety of local people is our main concern, and we adopt a zero tolerance stance on the abuse, neglect or discrimination of any person, but particularly people at risk or in vulnerable situations in whatever setting.

The Source endeavours to maintain good partnership working at the local level when concerns are raised and to work together effectively with other services to ensure a co-ordinated approach.

Any suspicion of abuse or neglect should be reported either to the Hampshire Adult Services on 0300 555 1386/ Surrey Adult Services 0300 470 9100 or the police on 101.

If you report concerns because you suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused or you are being abused yourself. Contact the relevant service below:

- Hampshire Adult Services on **0300 555 1386**
- Surrey Adult Services on **0300 470 9100** (Out of Hours **01483 517898**)
- Police on **101** (only where a crime is taking place, has just occurred, or is suspected).
- **999** in emergency situations where it is believed someone is in immediate danger (e.g. where there is the risk or occurrence of severe physical injury), and where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk.

Responding to an Allegation

The Designated Safeguarding Officer shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local adult social services duty social worker. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the record must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing (usually by email) to the relevant local authority adult social services department within 24 hours.

Responding appropriately to an allegation of abuse

In the event of an incident or disclosure:

DO

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Assess whether emergency services are required and, if needed, call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
- Ensure dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Follow correct procedure
- Explain areas of confidentiality; immediately speak to your manager for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- Remember the need for ongoing support.

DON'T

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgemental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence (i.e. try not to disturb the scene, clothing or victim if at all possible, if the allegation or disclosure concerns a possible rape or sexual assault, try to discourage the adult from washing, showering or bathing, or from washing their clothes, secure the scene e.g. by locking the door, preserve all containers, documents and locations.) If you are in doubt contact the police and ask for advice.
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions
- Assume Information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes (only write down what happened, what was said, what you observed and the timings)
- Panic

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies, following a referral from the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Confidentiality

Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality which should be clearly understood by all.

Under The Care Act 2014, staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all by their Line Manager.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in the Fair Processing of Data Policy. Records will only include details required in the initial contact form.

If an adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

Within that context, the adult should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Where possible, consent should be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

Where a disclosure has been made, staff should let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.

Staff should assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The adult's involvement in the process of sharing information should be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

The role of key individual agencies

Adult Social Services

The Department of Health's recent 'No secrets' guidance document requires that authorities develop a local framework within which all responsible agencies work together to ensure a coherent policy for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.

All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multi-agency work aimed at protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults. It is normal practice for the Board to be comprised of people from partner organisations who have the ability to influence decision making and resource allocation within their organisations.

The Police

The Police play a vital role in safeguarding adults where cases involve alleged criminal acts. It becomes the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime. Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is to deal with all instances involving vulnerable adult protection that arise within The Source. He/she will respond to all vulnerable adult protection concerns and enquiries. The designated Safeguarding Officer for The Source is Ellie Jones ellie.jones@thesourceforyou.co.uk (07752 084582).

Where appropriate, the Designated Safeguarding Officer may delegate specific tasks in these procedures to experienced team members.

Line Manager

The role of the line manager is to support the member of staff, trustee or volunteer involved with the incident and to ensure the correct procedures are followed.

The line manager could, if agreed with the staff member dealing with the incident, make contact with the Designated Safeguarding Officer in the first instance.

The line manager should ensure that all staff within their team are familiar with The Source's vulnerable adult protection procedures and ensure that all staff undertake training, as appropriate.

Training

The Source will ensure that training/development is available to all staff to enable them to recognise and reduce factors which are potential indicators of abuse. All staff/volunteers who work face to face with vulnerable adults will undertake in-house safeguarding training and updates equivalent to Level 2 training and managers will undertake a minimum of Level 3 training.