



# **Safeguarding: Children and Vulnerable Adults**

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## **Safeguarding: Children and Vulnerable Adults**

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Prepared by: Management Committee

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy applies to all Trustees, employees and volunteers. SpringAid Consultancy International CIC recognises the importance of its support services to families, children, young people and adults and its particular responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of those who are vulnerable or at risk.

The welfare of a child or vulnerable adult is paramount whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religion or sexual identity and they have the right to be protected from abuse.

We recognise that some children, young people and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable to abuse due to their disability, level of dependence, communication needs or other issues. We will always take extra care to look out for signs of abuse in this group of individuals and ensure that their needs are not neglected due to difficulties they may have in communicating signs of abuse.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to immediately and the appropriate action taken.

## **LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

This policy has been drawn up using laws and guidance from the following: Laws and guidance relating to children:

- The Children Act 1989 / The Children Act 2004
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- United convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Protection of Freedom Act 2012
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

Laws and guidance relating to vulnerable adults:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- No secrets January 2015
- Safeguarding Adults; A national framework of standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work 2005

## **DEFINITIONS**

A 'Child or young person' for the purpose of this statement refers to a person under the age of 18 years. This statement applies to all children and young people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, social orientation or religion.

A 'Vulnerable Adult' is defined as someone over the age of 18 years who receives a health, personal (includes personal care such as washing and dressing, toileting, feeding, financial matters) or social care service from a professional.

\*Please note that in the case of someone who is 18 years or older we do not have the right to report disclosures without their express permission unless that person is recognised as a vulnerable adult over 18 or there is a risk to someone under 18 years.

## **INTRODUCTION**

- We have a commitment to children and vulnerable adults. We continuously aim to learn from our work and the experiences gained through participation. This learning enables us to support service delivery and commissioning to meet the needs of local communities.
- Safeguarding is an integral part of all aspects of our work. It is essential that all our staff, partners and contractors are clear about their role in safeguarding and how we support them.
- Each child and young person should be formally registered within the group. The information includes an information/consent form which their parent/guardian must complete.
- Attendance register: a register will be kept for each session.

## **PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY**

- Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive support or access events run by SpringAid. This includes children of adult sufferers.
- Provide employees, Trustees and volunteers with information on safeguarding in line with current legislation.
- Set out our responsibilities towards the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Provide activities for children and young people to help them develop from childhood into adulthood and to provide support for them.
- To enable the children to express themselves.
- To assist the children in integrating into the community.
- To help children/young people appreciate the diversity of their cultures.

Safeguarding children and promoting their welfare includes:

- Protecting their rights to live in safety, free from harm, abuse, neglect, persecution and degrading treatment.
- Ensuring that people and organisations work together to prevent the risk of harm, abuse, neglect, persecution and degrading treatment.
- Ensuring that people's rights are respected and their physical and mental wellbeing is promoted at all times.
- Ensuring that decisions are undertaken with the person, supporting and empowering them and respecting their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs.
- Ensuring that all children grow and develop in circumstances that allow safe and effective care, free from abuse, persecution and degrading treatment.
- Children identified with needs receive services that support them to lead a fulfilled life with opportunities and life chances

Safeguarding adults includes:

- Protecting their rights to live in safety, free from harm, abuse, neglect, persecution and degrading treatment.
- Ensuring that people and organisations work together to prevent the risk of harm, abuse, neglect, persecution and degrading treatment.
- Ensuring that people's rights are respected and their physical and mental wellbeing is promoted at all times.
- Ensuring that decisions are undertaken with the person, supporting and empowering them and respecting their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs.
- Providing services and support tailored to the person's need and empower the person to be free from barriers to access services.

### **MEASURES IN PLACE TO SUPPORT AND SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

- All employees, Trustees and volunteers will have knowledge of child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults and know what our policy and procedures are.
- Listen to, value, encourage and support those we work with.
- Ensure that all employees and volunteers are aware of our safeguarding procedures towards children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Provide effective training and supervision for employees, Trustees and volunteers and adopt safeguarding leads.
- Adopt a code of conduct for employees, Trustees and volunteers.
- Include continuous risk assessment within our work with individual children, young people, vulnerable adults and their families.
- Recruit safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made including enhanced disclosure and barring service checks.

- Work collaboratively with local authorities and professional bodies to ensure best practice in the interest of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults

## **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

- In relation to safeguarding, we are committed to having arrangements in place to ensure effective learning and development for all staff and volunteers. All staffs are required to undertake safeguarding learning & development appropriate to their roles.
- Support, supervision and advice can be provided by our safeguarding lead or accessed via Local safeguarding professionals as necessary. Supervision is mandatory for those undertaking regular activity that requires a safeguarding focus either for children or adults. The requirement of supervision should be reviewed within any performance review or PDR.
- Supervision is essential for staff and volunteers who regularly engages with children and vulnerable adults. It is the responsibility of management to establish the type of supervision that is required for the role that the staff member is undertaking.

## **RECRUITMENT**

SpringAid has a 'duty of care' towards the people we work with to protect from harm. As part of our screening process we ensure necessary checks are carried out, including Enhanced DBS Disclosures are obtained for all employees, Trustees and volunteers. Where there has been a delay in receipt of a cleared disclosure SpringAid, where satisfied that the employee, Trustee or volunteer is safe to practice and suitable references have been followed up, will allow the employee, Trustee or volunteer to have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults under supervision and on the provision that they are not left alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. We have a duty to report any employee, Trustee or volunteer to the Independent Safeguarding Authority who has been removed from duty for allegedly causing harm or posing a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

- Equality and diversity are at the heart of our values. Throughout the development of the policies and processes cited in this document, we have given due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity, and to foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic (as cited in the Equality Act 2010). This policy and procedure will not discriminate, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of the 9 protected

characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation).

- This policy forms part of our commitment to create a positive culture of dignity and respect for all individuals including staff, volunteers, children, vulnerable Adults and their families and carers as well as community partners. The intention is to identify, remove or minimise discriminatory practice with regard to the characteristics given protection by the Equality Act 2010 as well as to promote positive practice and value the diversity of all individuals and communities.
- Participation of vulnerable groups of people, including children, is encouraged and reasonable adjustments will be supported to enable inclusive engagement of everyone.

### **SAFEGUARDING LEAD**

- SpringAid has a dedicated Safeguarding Lead for children and vulnerable adults, ensuring that the policy is being put into practice;
- Being the first point of contact for child protection issues;
- Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues;
- Bringing any child protection concerns to the notice of the Management Committee and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate;
- Ensuring that paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate supervision;
- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Child Protection Representative.

### **DEFINITION OF ABUSE**

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological. It endangers and impairs someone's physical and emotional health and development. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur in the instance of a vulnerable person who is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent.

### **UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNISING ABUSE**

Abuse may include but is not exclusive to the following (please see Appendix 1 for a more in-depth definition of each area listed below):

- Physical abuse
- Neglect / Self neglect
- Verbal abuse
- Psychological / Emotional abuse

- Sexual abuse (including sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation)
- Extremism and Radicalisation
- Domestic abuse
- Modern Day Slavery
- Mate crime and Hate crime
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse

### **RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OR SUSPECTED ABUSE**

**\*Please refer to the flow chart (Appendix 1) detailing how to report, record and respond to an allegation of abuse or suspected abuse.**

The flow chart gives advice on how to respond to an allegation of abuse. It is important to be aware that the person first encountering a case of abuse or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has taken place. This is the task for the professional child protection and safeguarding teams.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The legal principle that the “welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount” means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations in the organisation should not override the right of the individual to be protected from harm.

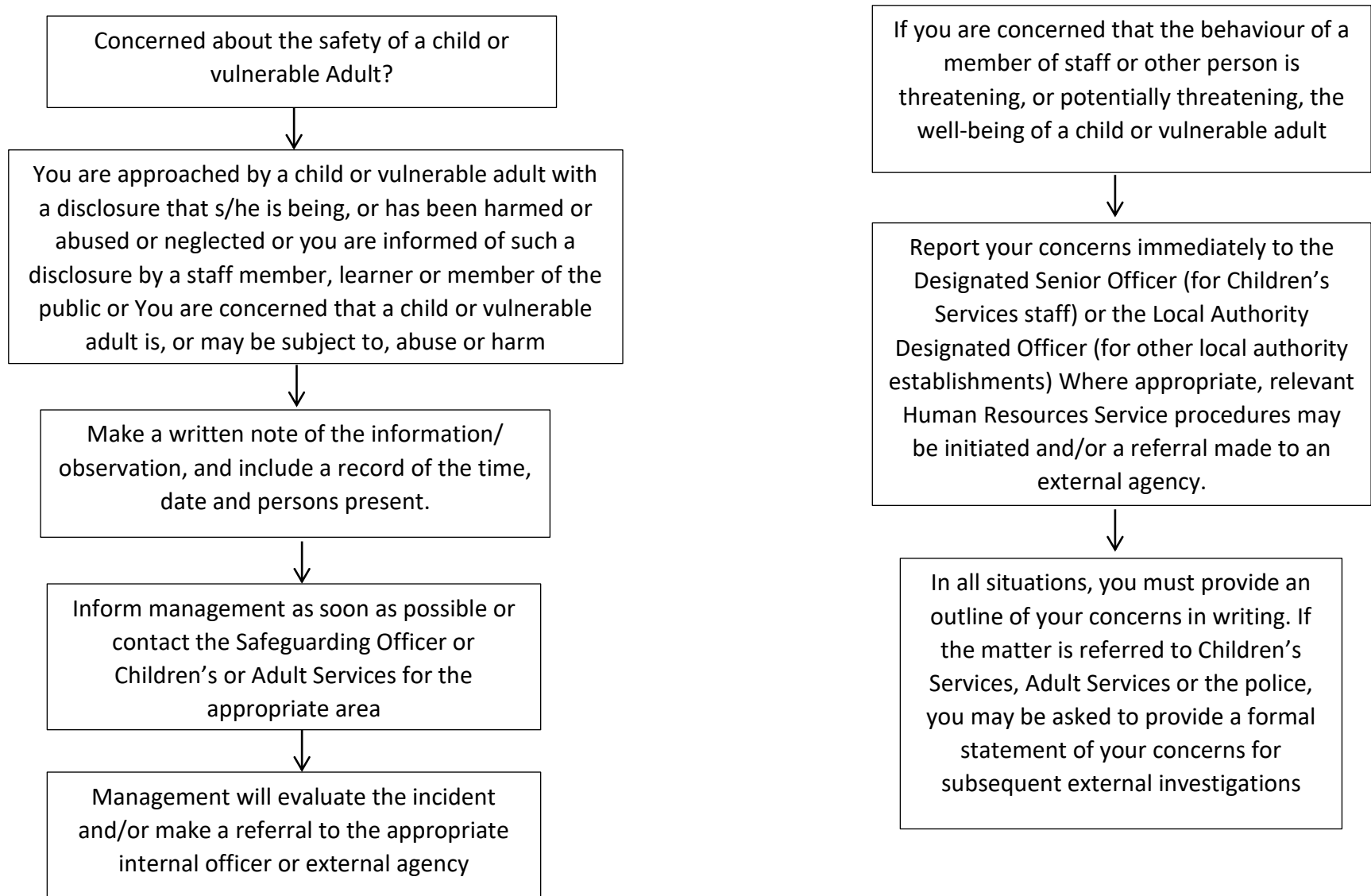
Any concern for the welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult must be reported immediately to one of the Safeguarding Leads and further action taken as required.

We will make sure that all records will be limited to those who require access or have a specific interest in the issue. Records will be stored securely and destroyed within a reasonable time frame, unless there is a need to keep them

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims.



Appendix 1: What to do if you have concerns for the safety of a child or vulnerable adult or in the case of allegations about a member of staff.



**NB: If you have immediate concerns that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of significant harm contact the relevant Children's Services or Adult Services. If you think a criminal offence has been committed contact the police.**