

SAFEGUARDING POLICY – CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. Definition

Safeguarding is a broader term than 'child protection' or 'adult protection' as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding has been defined as:

- All agencies working with children, young people and their families, or vulnerable adults taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's or adult's welfare are minimised; and
- Where there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults welfare, all agencies taking appropriate actions to address those concerns
- All agencies working with children or vulnerable adults being aware of their obligations to ensure that they adopt safe working practices and have procedures in place to identify and deal with potential and actual abuses being carried out by their staff or volunteers

Sue Lambert Trust (SLT) is aware that it has a duty to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse. Abuse can be defined as any behaviour which knowingly or unwittingly causes harm, endangers life or violates rights. Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, financial or material, or neglect.

It is possible that SLT will become aware of actual or potential abuse when carrying out its work, and this Policy sets out SLT's commitments to protecting these groups from harm.

2. Key aims

SLT believes that adults and children have rights and that these should be respected and safeguarded. SLT is therefore committed to:

- Supporting and working in partnership with agencies tasked with protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse or harm. Ensuring that there are clear lines of communication with other agencies and that all reports are followed up
- Having an appropriate staff and volunteer recruitment policy and procedure – ensuring that all staff and volunteers complete an application form, have an interview to assess their suitability for the role, provide two satisfactory references and complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and that no-one has contact with our clients or their families before a satisfactory DBS report has been received. There is a separate DBS Check Policy in place, which outlines that a DBS should be completed before contact with clients commences and then every two years thereafter.

- Adopting safe working practices to minimise the risk of abuse being carried out by staff or volunteers
- Having appropriate procedures and guidelines in place to ensure that issues of abuse by staff and volunteers are promptly identified, investigated and dealt with
- Making responsibilities regarding these issues clear to staff and volunteers delivering services where there may be issues affecting these groups
- Ensuring that all groups irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, nationality or economic status have the right to be protected from abuse
- Responding quickly and effectively to issues when they arise
- Sharing information appropriately and on a need to know basis. A separate Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy and guidelines sets out the procedures for this.

3. Key principles

The following key principles apply to this Policy:

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is the key concern – and the need to protect them from abuse will override any other principles
- It is the responsibility of everyone within the organisation to report any concerns that they have promptly and to the correct agencies
- The ethical framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy will apply (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy BACP) – and all reasonable attempts will be made to protect confidentiality and maintain a relationship of trust and openness between SLT and its clients. It is recognised that there may sometimes be a conflict between the applicable principles within the BACP guidelines, and that it is not always possible to reconcile all the principles. In these circumstances the counsellor will consider all the relevant circumstances and ensure that they can justify decisions about sharing information that are made.
- Wherever possible, client consent will be sought prior to disclosing any information. Whether this is possible will be considered on a case by case basis – and consent may not be required where there are exceptional circumstances due to the urgency or seriousness of the situation.
- SLT will comply with the Norfolk Safeguarding Children and Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Protocols and referrals procedures.
- SLT will follow up on any referrals made to ensure that any risks are being identified and managed. SLT will support agencies in managing any risks to its clients and/or any vulnerable adult or child.

4. Who this policy affects

This Policy affects all staff, volunteers, trustees and clients.

5. Implementation

To implement this Policy SLT will:

- Brief staff and volunteers on this Policy and related procedures
- Develop guidelines and procedures which will be available to staff and volunteers
- Provide training to staff and volunteers on this Policy and related procedures as required. Safeguarding training is provided before contact with clients commences and then every two years thereafter. All staff and volunteers are made aware of the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Lead, Clare Evans (01603 723448). Expectations around Safeguarding are outlined in the Staff Handbook and Volunteer Contract
- Work within the Norfolk Safeguarding protocols – applying these protocols when sharing or receiving information regarding a person(s) safety
- Promote the Policy to clients and other stakeholders
- Identify a lead staff member with responsibility for implementing this policy and overseeing the management of individual cases. The Safeguarding Lead is currently Clare Evans (01603 723448).

6. Monitoring and Review

6.1 This Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it complies with legislative and regulatory requirements and best practice. It is subject to approval by SLT trustees and will be put to the trustees for approval after each review.

6.2 Performance against the Policy will be monitored through:

- Discussions of safeguarding issues as part of the induction, regular one to one and group supervision processes
- Keeping statistical information regarding any issues that are reported – and reporting these to the Board annually

7. Related guidance, policy and procedures:

- DBS check Policy
- Data Protection and Information Sharing Policy and Guidelines
- Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP 2010)
- Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board Protocols and procedures
- Norfolk Safeguarding Adults procedures