

SDCAS Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Childrens Policy

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children is a part of the wider role of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific vulnerable adults and children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults and children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Some of the most vulnerable adults and children at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including justice services.

All agencies and professionals should:

- ✓ be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- ✓ be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults and children;
- ✓ share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances;
- ✓ contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare;
- ✓ take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the individual against specific plans; and
- ✓ work co-operatively with families and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

As one of its major activities, SDCAS seeks to serve the needs of vulnerable adults and children, promoting holistic development and in doing so the charity takes seriously the welfare of all those who come onto its premises or who are involved in its activities.

SDCAS Aims

SDCAS's objectives are the relief of poverty, the promotion of health, the relief of distress and the furtherance of education for asylum seekers and refugees in the London Borough of Southwark.

Summary of the Services Offered

SDCAS provides drop in services include: information, advice and guidance; referrals, advocacy and signposting; free hot lunches; practical support; English classes; health advice, mental health support; crèche; arts and crafts activities; gardening and allotment activities; parenting workshops; social functions; cultural celebrations; day trips; clothing and food parcels; and volunteering opportunities.

Service Users

Service users experience high levels of isolation, hardship and social exclusion and include refused asylum seekers whose applications to remain in the country have been turned down and as a consequence experience destitution and homelessness. Service users include

refugees who once they receive their status, struggle to understand and adapt to complex UK systems and adequate access to housing. Service users should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

Service Delivery

SDCAS aims to ensure that service users are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a happy and friendly atmosphere, recognising that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff, paid and unpaid, to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of vulnerable adults or children and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

SDCAS recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

The charity is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with vulnerable adults and children and to providing supervision.

The charity is committed to developing and maintaining good links with the statutory social services authorities.

Policy

- This policy outlines the steps SDCAS will make to safeguard those with care and support needs if they are deemed to be at risk or at risk and not be in a position to protect themselves against harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could those who are usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction, illness etc.

Abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect can take many different forms. Below are some examples:

- Physical abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Neglect (including self neglect)
- Sexual abuse or exploitation
- Financial or material abuse
- Disability
- Hate crime
- Discriminatory abuse (e.g., on the grounds of age or sexual orientation)
- Domestic abuse
- Organisation abuse (when a group or people are abused by an organisation such as in a hostel or care home).
- Human trafficking and modern slavery
- Female genital mutilation
- Restraint (unlawful or inappropriate use of restraint or physical interventions)

Prevent

- Radicalisation and extremism of adults or children with care and support needs is a form of emotional/psychological exploitation. Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through social media.
- If staff are concerned that an adult or child with care and support needs is at risk of being radicalised and drawn into terrorism, they should treat it in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.
- For more information about Prevent see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

The policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of SDCAS in working together with other professionals and agencies in promoting the adult's welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect and ensures that decisions made will allow adults to make their own choices and include them in any decision making.

The policy also ensure that safe and effective working practices are in place and is intended to support staff and volunteers to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding adults and children.

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers to:

- have an overview of adult and children safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults and children
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult or children with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

This policy is based on:

- The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support statutory guidance
- London Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures
- Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board's local procedures

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

SDCAS adheres to following the six key principles that underpin safeguarding work (See Care Act guidance).

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

Staff and volunteers should ensure that their work reflects the principles above and ensure the adult with care and support needs are involved in their decisions and informed consent is obtained. For children please seek further advice from SDCAS safeguarding leads.

- SDCAS should ensure that the safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk. Partners from the community should be involved in any safeguarding work in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- SDCAS should be transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

Who do I go to if I am concerned?

The named responsible person for safeguarding duties for SDCAS is listed at the end of this document.

All staff and volunteers should contact the Safeguarding Lead for any concerns/queries they have in regards to safeguarding adults and children. A log of the concern must be kept.

Key staff members/trustees will be responsible to make decisions about notifying adult or child social services if required and consider alternative actions, where necessary.

Safeguarding leads will also ensure that the safeguarding adults policies and procedures are in place and up to date and will ensure they are up to date with their safeguarding adult and children training.

What are your roles and responsibilities?

All staff, management, trustees and volunteers are expected to report any concerns to the named person for safeguarding. If the allegation is against one of SDCAS members, volunteers, trustees or directors, seek advice from safeguarding lead. If the allegation is against the safeguarding lead, seek advice from SDCAS Chair of Trustees.

- The designated safeguarding adults and children lead should be responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and brief feedback to the person raising the original concern.
- Feedback should be given in a way that will not make the situation worse or breach the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- If the police are involved, they should be consulted prior to giving feedback to the referrer to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.
- The local authority will decide on who will lead on a safeguarding enquiry should it progress to that stage.
- The named organisation should not conduct its own safeguarding enquiry unless instructed to do so by the local authority.
- Staff and volunteers should ensure that the adult with care and support needs is involved at all stages of their safeguarding enquiry ensuring a person-centred approach is adopted.

Staff and volunteers who have any adult safeguarding concerns should:

1. Respond

- Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 for emergency services
- Get brief details about what has happened in the case of an adult what the adult would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation

- Seek consent from the adult to take action and to report the concern. Consider whether the adult may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. If you decide to act against their wishes or without their consent, you must record your decision and the reasons for this.

2. Report

- Name the person to whom staff/volunteers need to report any potential safeguarding concerns. This will usually be the organisation's designated safeguarding lead (see above)

3. Record

- Complete a safeguarding form (attached) with all the relevant and submit this to the Safeguarding Lead.
- As far as possible, records should be written contemporaneously, dated and signed.
- Keep records about safeguarding concerns confidential and in a location where the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access should not be given to any unauthorised personal for accessing confidential information including the sharing of passwords.

4. Refer

In making a decision whether to refer or not, the designated safeguarding lead should take into account:

- (1) In the case of an adult - the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
- (2) whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
- (3) the safety or wellbeing of children or other adults with care and support needs
- (4) whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
- (5) whether a crime has been committed

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the police if a crime has been committed and/or
- Southwark Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for possible safeguarding enquiry
- relevant regulatory bodies such as Care Quality Commission, Ofsted, Charities commission
- service commissioning teams
- family/relatives as appropriate (seek advice from adult social services)

The designated safeguarding lead should keep a record of the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring.

The local authority will decide on who will lead on a safeguarding enquiry should it progress to that stage. The named organisation should not conduct its own safeguarding enquiry unless instructed to do so by the local authority.

Complaints procedure

SDCAS promotes transparency and honesty when things go wrong.

- SDCAS should apologise and be honest with service users and other relevant people when things go wrong.
- If a staff or volunteer or any other member of the organisation is unhappy with SDCAS's decision about the safeguarding concern, refer them to the organisations complaints policy and procedure.
- Consider incidents of abuse which may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more.
- Staff and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.
- SDCAS is registered with the Charity Commission and therefore all staff and volunteers have a legal Duty of Care to give a full and honest explanation to people when things go wrong.
- SDCAS is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation.

Why is it important to take action?

It may be difficult for adults with care and support needs to protect themselves and to report abuse. They rely on you to help them

Confidentiality and information sharing

SDCAS expects all staff, volunteers, trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with GDPR law SDCAS does not share information if not required.

It should however be noted that information should be shared with authorities if an adult is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm. Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference to preventing harm. For further guidance on information sharing and safeguarding see: <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/sharing-information/keymessages.asp>

Recruitment and selection

SDCAS is committed to safe recruitment practices, such as Disclosure and Barring checks reduce the risk of exposing adults and children with care and support needs to people unsuitable to work with them.

Training, awareness raising and supervision?

- All staff and volunteers should be clear about the core values of SDCAS and commitment to safeguarding adults.
- SDCAS ensures that all staff and volunteers receive basic awareness training on safeguarding adults
- Those adults may report things of concern to staff or volunteers who should be equipped with the basic knowledge around safeguarding adults and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and action is required.

- It is also useful to discuss training with staff who have attended training sessions to ensure they are embedding this in practice.

Voluntary organisations (including volunteers) who support adults and children with care and support needs can access the basic awareness safeguarding training provided by Southwark Council contact: My learning source (Below)

Useful contacts

SDCAS Safeguarding

Lead

Pauline Nandoo

Tel: 0207 732 0505

Email:

If your concern relates to an adult at risk of harm or abuse, please contact our

Useful local contacts

- The [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#) Telephone: 020 7525 1921 or 020 7525 5000 (out of hours, Email: mash@southwark.gov.uk and [Common Assessment Framework \(CAF\)](#))
- [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) QAU duty number 020 7525 3297, QAU service manager (LADO) 020 7525 0689 or Head of social work improvement and quality assurance 020 7525 0387
- For My Learning Source enquires contact ODAdmin@southwark.gov.uk
- Southwark Council Early Help Service: Tel: 020 7525 4780, Email: earlyhelp@southwark.gov.uk
- Southwark Council [Keeping safe and reporting abuse](#) - various contact numbers and emails for a variety of different needs including reporting child abuse
- Southwark Council contacts for reporting [adult abuse](#)

For reasons of consistency and practicality, the charity's procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults will be the same as those for safeguarding children and young people (qv) except where the law, or the specific circumstances of an individual's need require otherwise.

Policy review date: March 2021 by HR

**Record of Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers Safeguarding Meeting
STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

These notes are strictly confidential and must not be photocopied. Permission must be obtained from the Safeguarding lead before they are shared with other people.

Vulnerable adult or child's name, DOB and address
Reason why adult or child is deemed vulnerable
Nature of alleged abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, financial, neglect including self neglect, discriminatory and institutional)
Discussion date, time, participants and content (each contact)
1.
2.
3.
4.
Vulnerable adult's views, what outcomes they want, strategy for involving them in their safeguarding process and appointment of 'link person'.
Other potentially vulnerable adults or children at risk

Systemic issues			
Facts, risks and any other relevant information			
Safeguarding action and investigation plan			
	Action	Agency & individual responsible	Date due