

Safeguarding Adults Policy

The Deafness Resource Centre is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines. We will safeguard adults by ensuring that our activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe.

The Deafness Resource Centre is committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates: the recognition of adults who may be at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk; knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself; and being willing to report safeguarding concerns.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community, in the person's own home and in any care setting.

The Deafness Resource Centre is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all adults to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

1. Policy Statement

The Deafness Resource Centre believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status. To that end the Deafness Resource Centre:

- is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.
- acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved.
- recognises that health, well-being, ability, disability and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience. We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, to communication in raising concerns or seeking help. We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.
- recognises that there is a legal framework within which we need to work to safeguard adults who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Actions taken by Deafness Resource Centre will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of the Deafness Resource Centre to safeguarding adults and to ensure that everyone involved in Deafness Resource Centre is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.

- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

3. Scope

This safeguarding adult policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in the Deafness Resource Centre including Board members, Staff, Volunteers and sub-contractors and to all concerns about the safety of adults whilst taking part in our organisation, its activities and in the wider community.

We expect our partner organisations, including for example, suppliers, sub-contractors and centre users to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in this Safeguarding Adults Policy and associated procedures.

4. Commitments

In order to implement this policy the Deafness Resource Centre will ensure that:

- Everyone involved with the Deafness Resource Centre is aware of the safeguarding adult procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.
- Any concern that an adult is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with the Deafness Resource Centre Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.
- The well-being of those at risk of harm will be put first and the adult actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve.
- Those views and wishes will be respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to (see the Safeguarding Adults Procedures).
- Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures
- The Deafness Resource Centre will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard an adult.
- All Board members, staff, and volunteers understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults and have completed and are up to date with safeguarding adult training and learning opportunities appropriate for their role.
- The Deafness Resource Centre uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers and staff to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation.
- The Deafness Resource Centre shares information about anyone found to be a risk to adults with the appropriate bodies. For example: Disclosure and Barring Service, Services, Police, Local Authority/Social Services.

- When planning activities and events the Deafness Resource Centre includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all adults from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the Board and senior management team on an annual basis.
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Adults Procedures are reviewed no less than on a two yearly basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board or as a result of any other significant change or event.

5. Implementation

The Deafness Resource Centre is committed to developing and maintaining its capability to implement this policy and procedures. In order to do so the following will be in place:

- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for the safety and welfare of all adults.
- Regular management reports to the Board detailing how risks to adult safeguarding are being addressed and how any reports have been addressed.
- Safeguarding adult procedures that deal effectively with any concerns of abuse or neglect, including those caused through poor practice.
- A Safeguarding Lead
- A delegated Safeguarding Lead for events/trips.
- Arrangements to work effectively with other relevant organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, including arrangements for sharing information.
- Codes of conduct for Board members, Staff, Volunteers and other relevant individuals that specify zero tolerance of abuse in any form.
- Risk assessments that specifically include safeguarding of adults.
- Policies and procedures that address the following areas and which are consistent with this Safeguarding Adults policy.
 - ✓ Safeguarding Children
 - ✓ Bullying and harassment
 - ✓ Social Media
 - ✓ Equality, diversity and inclusion
 - ✓ Safe activities risk assessments
 - ✓ Code of Conducts
 - ✓ Discipline and grievance
 - ✓ Concerns, Complaints and Compliments
 - ✓ Whistleblowing
 - ✓ Safe recruitment and selection (staff and volunteers)
 - ✓ Information policy, data protection and information sharing

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Fitzgerald', is written over a horizontal line.

6. Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Helen Fitzgerald Chief Officer

Telephone 01744 23887

Recognising and Reporting Abuse - Procedures

1. Definition of an Adult at Risk

The Safeguarding Adults legislation creates specific responsibilities on Local Authorities, Health, and the Police to provide additional protection from abuse and neglect to Adults at Risk.

When a Local Authority has reason to believe there is an adult at risk, they have a responsibility to find out more about the situation and decide what actions need to be taken to support the adult.

The actions that need to be taken might be by the Local Authority (usually social services) and/or by other agencies, for example the Police and Health. The Local Authority role includes having multi-agency procedures which coordinate the actions taken by different organisations.

An **adult at risk** is an individual aged 18 years and over who:

- (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) AND;
- (b) is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect, AND;
- (c) as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

2. Abuse and Neglect

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it. Any or all of the following types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, omission or ignorance.

There are different types and patterns of abuse and neglect and different circumstances in which they may take place.

Safeguarding legislation include the following types of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional/Psychological/Mental
- Neglect and acts of Omission
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational / Institutional
- Self-neglect
- Domestic Abuse (including coercive control)
- Modern slavery

Abuse can take place in any relationship and there are many contexts in which abuse might take place; e.g. Institutional abuse, Domestic Abuse, Forced Marriage, Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery, Sexual Exploitation, County Lines, Radicalisation, Hate Crime, Mate Crime, Cyber bullying,

Scams.

Abuse or neglect could be carried out by:

- A spouse, partner or family member
- Neighbours or residents
- Friends, acquaintances or strangers
- People who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable
- Paid staff, professionals or volunteers providing care and support

Often the perpetrator is known to the adult and may be in a position of trust and/or power.

3. Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect

An adult may confide to a member of staff, volunteer or another participant that they are experiencing abuse inside or outside of the organisation's setting. Similarly, others may suspect that this is the case.

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected. There may be other explanations, but they should not be ignored. The signs and symptoms include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries – or lack of medical attention when an injury is present.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person
- Self-harm.
- A fear of a particular group of people or individual.
- A parent/carer always speaks for the person and doesn't allow them to make their own choices
- They may tell you or another person they are being abused i.e a disclosure

4. Person Centred Safeguarding/ Making Safeguarding Personal

The legislation also recognises that adults make choices that may mean that one part of our well-being suffers at the expense of another – for example we move away from friends and family to take a better job. Similarly, adults can choose to risk their personal safety; for example, to provide care to a partner with dementia who becomes abusive when they are disorientated and anxious.

None of us can make these choices for another adult. If we are supporting someone to make choices about their own safety we need to understand 'What matters' to them and what outcomes they want to achieve from any actions agencies take to help them to protect themselves.

The concept of 'Person Centred Safeguarding'/'Making Safeguarding Personal' means engaging the person in a conversation about how best to respond to their situation in a way that enhances their involvement, choice and control, as well as improving their quality of life, well-being and safety.

Organisations work to support adults to achieve the outcomes they want for themselves. The adult's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs must be taken into account when decisions are made about how to support them to be safe. There may be many different ways to prevent further harm.

Working with the person will mean that actions taken help them to find the solution that is right for them. Treating people with respect, enhancing their dignity and supporting their ability to make decisions also helps promote people's sense of self-worth and supports recovery from abuse.

If someone has difficulty making their views and wishes known, then they can be supported or represented by an advocate. This might be a safe family member or friend of their choice or a professional advocate (usually from a third sector organisation).

5. Care Act 2014 – Key Principles

The Act's principles are:

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

6. Raising a concern

The primary aim should always be to determine the outcome that the adult who needs care and support wants, and to support them to achieve this.

The following is guidance on actions to be taken dependant on the severity of the concern. If you need any additional guidance you should always talk to your manager or, if this is not possible, the Designated Person for Safeguarding

Low Level Concerns are raised which appear to be matters of complaint, dissatisfaction or indicate a need to obtain general information about money matters, health and care services etc. There are no indications that significant distress or harm has occurred as a result of abuse.	Establish what outcomes the person wants to achieve and provide information as required: Signpost to information and advice or other health and wellbeing support. Signpost to Adult Social Services for further information about support that may be available.
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And/or There are no allegations of abuse taking place due to the actions or inactions of a third party. And/or The concerns raised do not relate to an adult who needs, or may need, care and support	Signpost to relevant complaints department and/or Care Quality Commission for issues relating to care or health services. Clearly record all discussions, decisions and actions as soon as possible on Charity Log. Seek advice from the Designated Person for Safeguarding if required.
Medium Level An adult who needs care and support or a third party discloses concerns that indicate that they, or other adults who need care and support, are experiencing abuse. And/or The concerns appear to indicate a need for action to prevent or end the abuse. And The person raising the concern is, or appears, able to decide on the course of action they wish to take and is, or appears, able to take this action themselves, or obtain support to do so	Remain calm and listen to what the person is telling you. Establish the basic facts Establish what outcomes the person would like to achieve Signpost to the Police or Adult Social Services where they can report, and have appropriate action taken, in response to their concerns. Clearly record all discussions, decisions and actions as near to the time as possible Seek advice from the Designated Person for Safeguarding if required
High Level An adult who needs care and support or a third party discloses that they or other adults who need care and support are experiencing abuse and that they and/or others in their environment, are at risk of significant harm. And The person disclosing this information: Is unwilling to give consent for the information to be shared. Or Is unwilling to contact relevant sources of support themselves Or	If there appears to be an immediate and significant risk to life, health or public safety. Remain calm & obtain relevant factual information. Where is the abuse happening? Who is affected? What is the impact of the abuse? Who is alleged to be causing the harm? Establish what outcomes the person is seeking by sharing this with you. Advise the person that it is best that the person with the most information makes contact with the Police or adult Social Services If the person is still unwilling, or appears unable, to pass the information on and you

Appears to lack mental capacity to make a decision about their own safety or getting support	remain concerned contact the Emergency services on 999 and explain your concerns. Inform your manager and the Designated Person for Safeguarding. If the risk is not immediate Obtain relevant factual information. Discuss the concern with your manager. You/your manager must contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding for further advice. The Designated Person for Safeguarding will support you to assess the situation (including any need for onward disclosure The Designated Person for Safeguarding will make a record of their actions, discussions and outcomes.
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7. Confidentiality & Consent

All of those who share information with the Deafness Resource Centre need to have confidence that we will protect their privacy and personal data. It is important that all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in this area.

Confidentiality

The Deafness Resource Centre recognises that personal information relating to safeguarding is highly sensitive and must be carefully managed. It is not possible to give absolute assurances of confidentiality to those who raise safeguarding issues, as exceptions may apply (see below). Nonetheless in all circumstances the Deafness Resource Centre will strive to protect confidentiality.

Keeping information secure includes careful consideration of the use of emails and other forms of digital communication. Where emails regarding safeguarding concerns are sent internally within the Deafness Resource Centre thought must be given as to who needs to receive the information. If additional staff need to be copied into emails about safeguarding concerns it is good practice to specify the reason they have been included.

Staff should avoid putting personal information within email subject lines and must ensure that personally identifiable information (such as names & addresses) is used only where absolutely necessary. Data will not be disclosed to external organisations or other parties without the subject's consent, unless there are exceptional circumstances

8. Onward disclosure of safeguarding information In Exceptional Circumstances

The Deafness Resource Centre's aim is to empower individuals to raise concerns themselves, in order to obtain support from appropriate local resources. There may be exceptional circumstances in which onward disclosure of information by the Deafness Resource Centre, rather than by the person raising concerns themselves, to an external agency might be required. Exceptional Circumstances are considered to apply;

- a) Where there are concerns about terrorism and/or serious criminal activity
- b) Where there is a legal requirement to disclose information (e.g. a court order, Coroner's Office request, Health and Safety Executive, Disclosure & Barring Service)
- c) Where, in certain circumstances, the Police, Social Services or other statutory authority formally request the disclosure of information. Each request will be considered on an individual basis by the person responsible for data protection issues within the department which holds the requested data.
- d) Where it is not possible to obtain the consent of the adult at risk of abuse and there is a reasonable belief that onward disclosure of information is required in order to prevent serious harm to an adult who needs care and support (vital interests) and/or other members of the public (public interests)
- e) Where a third party discloses concerns about an adult who needs care and support but indicates that they are unable or unwilling to pass this information onto relevant agencies themselves.

In all such cases your manager and the Designated Person for Safeguarding should be consulted.

9. Mental Capacity

Mental capacity means being able to make your own decisions. The Deafness Resource Centre recognises that it is the right of adults who have mental capacity to make their own choices, the Deafness Resource Centre adopts the Mental Capacity Act 2005 presumption of mental capacity, unless a person's apparent comprehension of a situation gives rise to doubt.

The mental capacity of the adult concerned to consent to information being shared is a key element in considering any onward disclosure to another agency. This is important in helping us to take appropriate and proportionate action in response to a concern.

The Designated Person for Safeguarding should be contacted in any situation where there is doubt about an adult's mental capacity in regard to a safeguarding concern. If the risk is immediate and likely to cause significant harm however, and there are reasonable grounds to believe that a person lacks mental capacity to make a decision about their safety, then the emergency services should be contacted immediately.

10. Storage, retention and deletion of information

Information about individual cases should only be accessible to those who have a demonstrable need to know.

Data relating to any substantiated safeguarding allegations relating to the Deafness Resource Centre's staff and volunteers should be retained for a minimum of 10 years from the date of the allegation. Disposal of this data after this time period should only be undertaken by the Chief Executive.

Data relating to other safeguarding issues should be retained for a minimum of 6 years from the date of the allegation unless instructed otherwise, in writing, by the Designated Person for Safeguarding or Chief Executive.



Contacts:

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St Helens Out of Hours Emergency Team 0345 0500 148

Email: EDT@halton.gov.uk

Halton Borough Council 0151 907 8306

Halton Out of Hours 0345 0500 148

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