



SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

SGPOL2a/ADULTSRISK

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline Sunflowers Suicide Support's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees, and contractors working for or on behalf of Sunflowers in both paid and voluntary capacities. Sunflowers is committed to creating a safe environment for adults at risk and upholding their rights to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

This policy aligns with UK safeguarding legislation, including the Care Act 2014, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Responsibilities

Trustees:

- Ensure proactive safeguarding measures to prevent harm to beneficiaries and individuals who come into contact with Sunflowers.
- Address all safeguarding incidents responsibly, and if necessary, make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Oversee policy implementation and monitor its effectiveness, addressing any challenges, achievements, or gaps.
- Report to the Board of Trustees on safeguarding issues and ensure that staff, volunteers, and trustees are trained and aware of safeguarding responsibilities.

Employees, Volunteers, and Contractors:

- Follow this policy's procedures and report any safeguarding concerns regarding adults at risk.
- Participate in safeguarding training and understand the responsibilities outlined in this policy.

Types of Abuse:

Recognised forms of abuse include:



- **Physical Abuse:** Physical harm or use of force, including hitting or restraint.
- **Domestic Abuse:** Abuse between partners or family members, covering physical, emotional, and financial abuse.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Non-consensual sexual activity, including exploitation.
- **Psychological/Emotional Abuse:** Verbal abuse, coercion, intimidation, or harassment.
- **Financial Abuse:** Misuse or theft of money or property.
- **Modern Slavery:** Enslavement, trafficking, and forced labour.
- **Discriminatory Abuse:** Harassment or unequal treatment based on protected characteristics.
- **Institutional Abuse:** Poor practices in care environments leading to harm.
- **Self-Neglect:** Neglect of personal care and hygiene, leading to risks of harm.

Recognising and Reporting Abuse

1. Recognising Abuse

Staff and volunteers should remain vigilant to signs of abuse, which may include unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, withdrawal from activities, or neglect in personal care.

2. Responding to Disclosures

- Listen carefully without judgment.
- Avoid promising confidentiality, explaining instead that sharing information may be necessary.
- Record the disclosure accurately, including dates, times, and the individual's own words, within 24 hours.

3. Reporting Concerns

- All safeguarding concerns should be reported to the DSL immediately.
- If the DSL is unavailable, employees should contact the DDSL or in their absence they should contact the local authority or NSPCC helpline.
- In cases of immediate danger, dial 999 to alert the police.

Legal Framework

This policy aligns with UK safeguarding laws and guidance:

- **The Care Act 2014:** Provides statutory guidance on safeguarding and defines types of abuse.



- **Mental Capacity Act 2005:** Supports individuals in making their own decisions or provides guidance when they cannot do so.
- **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018:** Ensures the confidentiality and secure handling of personal information in safeguarding cases.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Sunflowers respects confidentiality but recognizes that safeguarding concerns may necessitate sharing information with relevant agencies. Information should be shared with consent where possible, but if there is risk of harm or crime, information may be shared without consent. All records will be stored securely, accessible only to authorized personnel.

Multi-Agency Working

Sunflowers will collaborate with local authorities, police, and other agencies to:

- Share information to protect individuals at risk.
- Provide a safe environment for adults involved in safeguarding cases.
- Support investigations and attend multi-agency meetings as needed.

Key Contacts

- **Sunflowers Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Abbie Warren
- **Sunflowers Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):** Chloe Webb
- **Gloucestershire Adult Safeguarding Team:** 01452 426868
- **Emergency Out-of-Hours (Emergency Duty Team):** 01452 614194
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

For immediate danger, always call 999.

Communication Of the Policy:

To ensure the successful implementation of the policy it is essential that we at Sunflowers communicate it to our trustees, volunteers, any employees or partner employees or anyone acting on behalf of Sunflowers. All Staff, Volunteers and Trustees will have access to the Safeguarding policies of Sunflowers.

Monitoring and Review:



The designated safeguarding lead will report any challenges, difficulties or achievements and any gaps back to the management committee. The policy will be reviewed yearly, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Suicide Intervention plan and the adults at risk procedures.

There may be an instance where Sunflowers Suicide Support come into contact with adults who could be deemed at risk, for example:

- Suicidal intention
- Abusive relationships
- Drug or alcohol issues

Sunflowers has a duty of care to said person to signpost to relevant information with regard to accessing support and services including:

- Domestic violence helplines
- Drug & alcohol services
- Suicide crisis
- Samaritans
- Crisis team

If any member of Sunflowers Suicide Support has a concern regarding the safety of any adult person, they should in the first instance discuss this with their Line Manager, who will, if deemed necessary, contact the nominated safeguarding lead.

Confidentiality will only be breached if needed and in line with best practice.

Sunflowers 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.

Sunflowers 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.

Sunflowers 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.

Policy Statement:

Sunflowers 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.

Sunflowers 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.

Sunflowers acknowledges that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and is committed to prevent abuse and neglect through safeguarding the welfare of all adults involved.

Sunflowers 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.

Sunflowers recognises that there is a legal framework within which sports 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 Sunflowers 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.

Commitments:

To implement this policy Sunflowers will ensure that:

Everyone involved with Sunflowers 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 Sunflowers 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 Sunflowers



Sunflowers acts in accordance with best practice advice, for example, from UK Sport, Sport England, Sport Wales, Sport Scotland, Sport Northern Ireland, National Governing Bodies, NSPCC, Ann Craft Trust.

Sunflowers will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard an adult.

All Board members, staff, officials, 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.

Sunflowers uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers and staff to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation and within the sporting community.

Sunflowers 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 Sunflowers includes an assessment of, 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.

Implementation :

Sunflowers 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.
- Access to relevant legal and professional advice.
- 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
- 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, Coaches, Officials, Volunteers and Members 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.

Key Points:

- There is a **legal duty on Local Authorities** to provide support to 'adults at risk'.
- **Adults at risk** are defined in legislation and the criteria applied differs between each home nation (see definitions for each home nation on page 12).
- The safeguarding legislation applies **to all forms of abuse** that harm a person's well-being.
- The law provides a framework for good practice in safeguarding that makes the overall well-being of the adult at risk a priority of any intervention.
- The law in all four home nations emphasises the importance of person-centred safeguarding, (referred to as **'Making Safeguarding Personal'** in England).
- The law provides a framework for making decisions on behalf of adults who can't make decisions for themselves (**Mental Capacity**).
- The law provides a framework for sports organisations **to share concerns** they have about adults at risk with the local authority.



- The law provides a framework for all organisations **to share information** and cooperate to protect adults at risk.

Safeguarding Adults Legislation:

Safeguarding Adults in all home nations is compliant with United Nations directives on the rights of disabled people and commitments to the rights of older people. It is covered by:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance.

- England - The Care Act 2014
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance (especially chapter 14) 2014

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.

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. In Scotland and Wales, the Local Authority can gain access to an adult to find out if they are at risk of harm for example, if that access is being blocked by another person.

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. A sporting organisation may need to take action as part of safeguarding an adult, for example, to use the disciplinary procedures in relation to a member of staff or member who has been reported to be harming a participant. 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.

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 in each home nation lists categories of abuse differently however, they all include the following types of abuse:

- Physical
- Sexual



- Psychological
- Neglect
- Financial

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. Some of these are named specifically within home nation legislations.

Abuse can take place within a sporting context and the person causing harm might be any other person. For example: a member of staff, a coach, a volunteer, a participant, or a fan.

Some examples of abuse within sport include:

- Harassment of a participant because of their (perceived) disability or other protected characteristics.
- Not meeting the needs of the participant e.g. training without a necessary break.
- A coach intentionally striking an athlete
- One elite participant controlling another athlete with threats of withdrawal from their partnership
- An official who sends unwanted sexually explicit text messages to a participant with learning disabilities.
- A participant threatens another participant with physical harm and persistently blames them for poor performance.

Abuse or neglect outside sport 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.

Signs and Indicators of Abuse and Neglect:

An adult may confide to a member of staff, coach, 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. You may notice that a participant in a team has been missing from practice sessions and is not responding to reminders from team members or coaches.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance. This could be a player whose appearance becomes unkempt, does not wear suitable sports kit and there is a deterioration in hygiene.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. For example, a participant may be looking quiet and withdrawn when their brother comes to collect them from sessions in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile.
- 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 / another person they are being abused – i.e., a disclosure

Mental Capacity and Decision Making:



We make many decisions every day, often without realising. UK Law assumes that all people over the age of 16 have the ability to make their own decisions, unless it has been proved that they can't. It also gives us the right to make any decision that we need to make and gives us the right to make our own decisions even if others consider them to be unwise.

We make so many decisions that it is easy to take this ability for granted. The Law says that to make a decision we need to:

- Understand information
- Remember it for long enough
- Think about the information
- Communicate our decision

A person's ability to do this may be affected by things such as learning disability, dementia, mental health needs, acquired brain injury and physical ill health.

Most adults have the ability to make their own decisions given the right support however, some adults with care and support needs have the experience of other people making decisions about them and for them.

Some people can only make simple decisions like which colour T-shirt to wear or can only make decisions if a lot of time is spent supporting them to understand the options. If someone has a disability that means they need support to understand or make a decision this must be provided. A small number of people cannot make any decisions. Being unable to make a decision is called "lacking mental capacity".

Mental capacity refers to the ability to make a decision at the time that decision is needed. A person's mental capacity can change. If it is safe/possible to wait until they are able to be involved in decision making or to make the decision themselves.

For example:



- A person with epilepsy may not be able to make a decision following a seizure.
- Someone who is anxious may not be able to make a decision at that point.
- A person may not be able to respond as quickly if they have just taken some medication that causes fatigue.

Mental Capacity is important for safeguarding for several reasons:

Not being allowed to make decisions one is capable of making is abuse. For example, a disabled adult may want to take part in an activity but their parent who is their carer won't allow them to and will not provide the support they would need. Conversely the adult may not seem to be benefiting from an activity other people are insisting they do.

Another situation is where an adult is being abused and they are scared of the consequences of going against the views of the person abusing them. It is recognised in the law as coercion and a person can be seen not to have mental capacity because they cannot make 'free and informed decisions'

Mental Capacity must also be considered when we believe abuse or neglect might be taking place. It is important to make sure an 'adult at risk' has choices in the actions taken to safeguard them, including whether or not they want other people informed about what has happened, however, in some situations the adult may not have the mental capacity to understand the choice or to tell you, their views.

Each home nation has legislation that describes when and how we can make decisions for people who are unable to make decisions for themselves. The principles are the same:

- We can only make decisions for other people if they cannot do that for themselves at the time the decision is needed.
- If the decision can wait, wait – e.g., to get help to help the person make their decision or until they can make it themselves.



- If we have to make a decision for someone else then we must make the decision in their best interests (for their benefit) and take into account what we know about their preferences and wishes.
- If the action we are taking to keep people safe will restrict them then we must think of the way to do that which restricts to their freedom and rights as little as possible.

Many potential difficulties with making decisions can be overcome with preparation. A person needing support to help them make decisions whilst taking part in a sports organisation will ordinarily be accompanied by someone e.g., a family member or formal carer whose role includes supporting them to make decisions.

It is good practice to get as much information about the person as possible. Some people with care and support needs will have a 'One page profile' or a 'This is me' document that describes important things about them. Some of those things will be about how to support the person, their routines, food, and drink choices etc. but will also include things they like and don't like doing. It's also important to have an agreement with the person who has enrolled the adult in the sports activity about how different types of decisions will be made on a day-to-day basis.

If a person who has a lot of difficulty making their own decisions is thought to be being abused or neglected you will need to refer the situation to the Local Authority, and this should result in health or social care professionals assessing mental capacity and/or getting the person the support, they need to make decisions.

There may be times when an organisation needs to make decisions on behalf of an individual in an emergency. Decisions taken to safeguard an adult who cannot make the decision for themselves could include:

- Sharing information about safeguarding concerns with people that can help protect them.
- Stopping them being in contact with the person causing harm.



Recording and Information Sharing:

All organisations must comply with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Information about concerns of abuse includes personal data. It is therefore important to be clear as to the grounds for processing and sharing information about concerns of abuse.

Processing information includes record keeping. Records relating to safeguarding concerns must be accurate and relevant. They must be stored confidentially with access only to those with a need to know.

Sharing information, with the right people, is central to good practice in safeguarding adults.

However, information sharing must only ever be with those with a 'need to know'.

This does **NOT** automatically include the persons spouse, partner, adult, child, unpaid or paid carer.

Information should only be shared with family and friends and/or carers with the consent of the adult or if the adult does not have capacity to make that decision and family/ friends/ carers need to know in order to help keep the person safe.

The purpose of Data Protection legislation is not to prevent information sharing but to ensure personal information is only shared appropriately. Data protection legislation allows information sharing within an organisation.

For example:

- Anyone who has a concern about harm can make a report to an appropriate person within the same organisation
- Case management meetings can take place to agree to co-ordinate actions by the organisation.



There are also many situations in which it is perfectly legal to share information about adult safeguarding concerns outside the organisation. Importantly personal information can be shared with the consent of the adult concerned. However, the adult may not always want information to be shared. This may be because they fear repercussions from the person causing harm or are scared that they will lose control of their situation to statutory bodies or because they feel stupid or embarrassed. Their wishes should be respected unless there are over-riding reasons for sharing information.

The circumstances when we need to share information without the adult's consent include those where:

- it is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e., it might put them or the person making contact at further risk.
- you believe they or someone else is at risk, including children.
- you believe the adult is being coerced or is under duress.
- it is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report that a serious crime has been committed.
- the adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them.
- the person causing harm has care and support needs.
- the concerns are about an adult at risk living in Wales or Northern Ireland (where there is a duty to report to the Local Authority).

When information is shared without the consent of the adult this must be explained to them, when it is safe to do so, and any further actions should still fully include them.

If you are in doubt as to whether to share information, seek advice e.g. seek legal advice and/or contact the Local Authority and explain the situation without giving personal details about the person at risk or the person causing harm.

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons to share or not share information.



Multi-Agency Working:

Safeguarding adults' legislation gives the lead role for adult safeguarding to the Local Authority. However, it is recognised that safeguarding can involve a wide range of organisations.

Sports bodies may need to cooperate with the Local Authority and the Police including to:

- Provide more information about the concern you have raised.
- Provide a safe venue for the adult to meet with other professionals e.g., Police/Social Workers/Advocates.
- Attend safeguarding meetings.
- Coordinate internal investigations (e.g., complaints, disciplinary) with investigations by the police or other agencies.
- Share information about the outcomes of internal investigations.
- Provide a safe environment for the adult to continue their sporting activity/ their role in the organisation.

Useful Contacts and Numbers:

Action on Elder Abuse

A national organisation based in London. It aims to prevent the abuse of older people by raising awareness, encouraging education, promoting research and collecting and disseminating information.

Tel: 020 8765 7000

Email: enquiries@elderabuse.org.uk

www.elderabuse.org.uk

Ann Craft Trust (ACT)

A national organisation providing information and advice about adult safeguarding. ACT have a specialist Safeguarding Adults in Sport and Activity team to support the sector.

Tel: 0115 951 5400

Email: Ann-Craft-Trust@nottingham.ac.uk

www.anncrafttrust.org



Men's Advice Line

For male domestic abuse survivors

Tel: 0808 801 0327

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline

Tel: 0800 999 5428

National 24Hour Freephone Domestic Abuse Helplines

England	Northern Ireland
Tel: 0808 2000 247 www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/Contact-us	Tel: 0808 802 1414 www.dsahelpline.org Twitter: www.twitter.com/dsahelpline Facebook: www.facebook.com/dsahelpline
Scotland	Wales
Tel: 0800 027 1234 Email: helpline@sdafmh.org.uk Web chat: sdafmh.org.uk	Llinell Gymorth Byw HebOfn/ Live free from fear helpline Tel: 0808 8010 800 Type Talk: 18001 0808 801 0800 Text: 078600 77 333

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Rape Crisis Federation of England and Wales

Rape Crisis was launched in 1996 and exists to provide a range of facilities and resources to enable the continuance and development of Rape Crisis Groups throughout Wales and England.

Email: info@rapecrisis.co.uk

www.rapecrisis.co.uk

Respond

Respond provides a range of services to victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse who have learning disabilities and training and support to those working with them.



Tel: 020 7383 0700 or
0808 808 0700 (Helpline)
Email: services@respond.org.uk
www.respond.org.uk

Stop Hate Crime

Works to challenge all forms of Hate Crime and discrimination, based on any aspect of an individual's identity. Stop Hate UK provides independent, confidential and accessible reporting and support for victims, witnesses and third parties.

24 hours service:

Telephone: 0800 138 1625

Web Chat: www.stophateuk.org/talk-to-us/

E mail: talk@stophateuk.org

Text: 07717 989 025

Text relay: 18001 0800 138 1625

By post: PO Box 851, Leeds LS1 9QS

Susy Lamplugh Trust

The Trust is a leading authority on personal safety. Its role is to minimise the damage caused to individuals and to society by aggression in all its forms – physical, verbal and psychological.

Tel: 020 83921839

Fax: 020 8392 1830

Email: info@suzylamplugh.org

www.suzylamplugh.org

Victim Support

Provides practical advice and help, emotional support, and reassurance to those who have suffered the effects of a crime.

Tel: 0808 168 9111

www.victimsupport.com



Women's Aid Federation of England and Wales

Women's Aid is a national domestic violence charity. It also runs a domestic violence online help service.

www.womensaid.org.uk/information-support

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

SGPOL1/CHILD

Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines Sunflowers Suicide Support's approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, as required by the Children Act 1989 and relevant UK legislation. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and trustees in both paid and unpaid roles, as well as contractors and partner employees acting on behalf of Sunflowers.

The objective of this policy is to protect children from harm and to ensure the highest standards of safeguarding practices. In this policy, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 18.

Responsibilities

Trustees:

- Proactively safeguard and promote the welfare of beneficiaries and ensure risks are managed effectively.
- Make a serious incident report to the Charity Commission in cases of significant safeguarding risks or incidents.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Oversee the implementation of this policy and monitor its effectiveness.
- Report any challenges, gaps, or achievements to the Board of Trustees.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers, and trustees are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and have access to regular training.

Employees, Volunteers, and Contractors:

- Follow procedures in this policy and report any concerns about a child's welfare immediately.
- Engage in safeguarding training and refreshers as required.



- Ensure any safeguarding concerns are reported to the DSL or other designated authorities as necessary.

Types of Abuse

Sunflowers recognises various types of abuse, including:

- **Physical Abuse:** Physical harm to a child, including hitting, shaking, poisoning, or suffocation.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent maltreatment causing severe adverse effects on a child's emotional development, such as bullying, overprotection, or exposing them to distressing situations.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Forcing or enticing a child to participate in sexual activities, including both physical and non-physical contact.
- **Neglect:** Failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, resulting in serious impairment of health or development.
- **Exploitation:** Including sexual and criminal exploitation, where children are coerced into activities for the benefit of others.

Additional Safeguarding Concerns

- **Bullying:** Repeated, intentional harm, either physical or emotional, where the victim struggles to defend themselves.
- **Self-Harm:** Behaviours that cause injury or harm, requiring intervention to prevent significant harm.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** A criminal act involving partial or total removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons.
- **Forced Marriage:** Marriage conducted without full consent, often involving emotional or physical coercion.
- **Child Trafficking:** Recruitment, transportation, or transfer of children for exploitation purposes.



- **Internet and Technology Risks:** Includes online grooming and exposure to inappropriate content.

Safeguarding Procedures

1. Recognising Abuse

All staff and volunteers must remain vigilant for signs of abuse and neglect. Indicators may include changes in behaviour, unexplained injuries, or signs of distress.

2. Responding to Disclosures

- Listen carefully and remain calm.
- Do not promise confidentiality; explain the need to share the information with relevant parties.
- Take brief notes immediately after the conversation or write up within 24 hours.
- Record the date, time, location, and the child's exact words as closely as possible.

3. Reporting Concerns

- Report all safeguarding concerns to the DSL as soon as possible.
- For immediate concerns, contact the police by dialing 999.
- If the DSL is unavailable, consult the NSPCC helpline (0808 800 5000) or Gloucestershire Children's Social Care.

Allegations Involving Trustees, Volunteers, or Employees

All allegations against trustees, employees, or volunteers must be reported to the DSL within one working day. The DSL will assess the allegation and consult police or social care colleagues if necessary.

Sunflowers employs strict recruitment and background check procedures, including DBS checks for relevant positions, to ensure suitability for working with children. Safeguarding training is mandatory for staff and volunteers working directly with children or vulnerable individuals.

Use of Images and Social Media

- Obtain parental permission before photographing or recording children for Sunflowers-related activities.



- Ensure children are appropriately dressed in all media.
- Personal details of children should never be shared publicly.

Key Contacts for Safeguarding in Gloucestershire

- **Sunflowers Safeguarding Lead:** Abbie Warren
- **Gloucestershire Social Care (The Front Door):** 01452 426565 (Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm)
- **Out of Office Hours (Emergency Duty Team):** 01452 614194
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

In emergencies, always call 999 for immediate police assistance.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with UK legislation and safeguarding best practices. The DSL will report significant findings to the Board of Trustees, and contact information will be verified for accuracy during each review.

Adopted by Sunflowers 20/04/2018