

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding policy (incorporating Children and Vulnerable Adults policy)

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to all staff, including managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Rotherham Federation.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in the activities and services that we provide. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- provide staff and volunteers with the principles and good practice guidelines to enable them to meet their safeguarding responsibilities.

Rotherham Federation believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989;
- all people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some children, young people and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their parents and carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by ensuring we:

- provide a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults to take part in any activity or access any service organised by Rotherham Federation;
- support children, young people and vulnerable adults to be aware of their own safety and to keep themselves safe;
- promote an environment where children, young people and vulnerable adults feel secure, are enabled to talk and are listened to;
- make decisions based on the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- have clear safeguarding policies and procedures which are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Adult Social Care Team in the areas in which we operate;
- appoint a Safeguarding Team who will take lead responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues;
- provide the appropriate level of support to children, young people and vulnerable adults who have suffered significant harm and to staff involved in any safeguarding issue;
- create a culture of safer staff recruitment and adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- promote a culture of transparency where all staff feel able to challenge and raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, and address these concerns sensitively and effectively;
- ensure all members of staff receive safeguarding training appropriate to their roles;

- ensure all members of staff who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults have regular supervision and can access support when needed;

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- understand our duty of care to children, young people and vulnerable adults and staff who undertake our activities;
- ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe when we work in partnership with other agencies;
- carry out an annual review of the Safeguarding Policy and procedures, and make changes as soon as possible if any gaps or weaknesses are identified;
- make the policy and procedures available to children, young people, vulnerable adults and their parents or carers on request.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICY AND PROCEDURE REFERENCES

This policy and supporting procedures are underpinned by the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 2015
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government 2015

This policy should be read alongside the following policies and procedures which also support safeguarding within our organisation:

- Recruitment
- Health and Safety
- Anti-bullying
- Whistleblowing
- Lone working

Rotherham Federation has a Safeguarding Team which comprises of:

Sarah Fletcher – Designated Safeguarding Officer
Kathryn Wild – Designated Safeguarding Officer
Phil Hayes – CEO

All staff should ensure they have the contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Officers available at all times when working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

The **Designated Safeguarding Officer** will:

- act as first point of contact for staff in raising a safeguarding concern;
- refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations of abuse to the relevant investigating agencies;
- liaise and co-operate with the Local Safeguarding Board and Child or Adult Social Care Teams in each area in which the Trust operates;

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- work closely with staff to support children, young people and vulnerable adults where abuse is suspected or disclosed;
- provide advice and support to staff on issues relating to safeguarding;
- inform the CEO of any issues and ongoing investigations;
- maintain accurate, secure records of referrals or concerns;
- ensure that cover is provided in the case of absence from the role.

The **Safeguarding Team** will:

- participate in relevant Safeguarding Training every year, including refresher training and Prevention Training;
- review the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and provide information on findings to the Trust to ensure best practice is maintained.

The **Safeguarding Team, including CEO**, will:

- ensure that safe recruitment procedures are followed when recruiting staff and volunteers;
- ensure that all staff receive Safeguarding Training appropriate to their role and keep records of attendance.

A Safeguarding Meeting will be held on a quarterly basis with representation from the Board, HR team, the Safeguarding Officer, and other Senior Managers. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss safeguarding arrangements and provide recommendations for implementing these in practice.

Sufficient time and resources are allocated to the Safeguarding Team in recognition of their strategic and operational responsibilities.

Any allegations of abuse or concerns about the behaviour of members of the Safeguarding Team are investigated and addressed in line with this policy.

Dealing with disclosures or concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult

Rotherham Federation staff have regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults primarily through youth, play, education, community and employment programmes and are likely to be involved in working closely with these groups, some of whom may be marginalised, disaffected and vulnerable. Working in this close proximity means that Rotherham Federation staff may become aware of a situation where a child, young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of suffering significant harm.

The following procedure aims to support staff to respond effectively to a safeguarding disclosure or concern. The same procedure should be followed if a participant makes a disclosure of historical abuse, even if they are no longer in contact with the alleged abuser.

Ways abuse might be brought to your attention:

- a participant might make a direct disclosure about him or herself, or about another participant;
- a participant might offer information that is worrying but is not a direct disclosure;
- a member of staff might be concerned about a participants' appearance or behaviour or about the behaviour of a parent or carer towards a participant;
- a parent, carer or third party might make a direct disclosure about a participant or offer information that is worrying but is not a direct disclosure.

Talking to a participant who has told you that he/she or another participant is being abused:

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- reassure the participant that telling someone was the right thing to do;
- tell the participant that you now have to do what you can to keep them (or another participant) safe;
- tell the participant what you are going to do next and who else needs to know about it;
- let the participant tell their whole story - don't try to investigate or question the participant but do make sure that you are clear about what they are saying;
- ask the participant what they would like to happen as a result of what they have said, but don't make or infer promises that you can't keep.

In the case of a vulnerable adult, remember that all adults have a fundamental right to make their own decisions, and you should seek to gain the consent of the vulnerable adult before speaking to anyone else. However, if the vulnerable adult refuses or is unable to give consent, you should tell them that you are concerned for their welfare, explain that you must share the information to help keep them safe, and who you will share this with.

Action to be taken by staff if concerns are raised or a disclosure is made:

- contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible and inform them of the disclosure or concerns;
- make a written recording using the Safeguarding Report Form A;
- pass any written information to the Designated Safeguarding Officer safely and securely and do not keep any records for yourself.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will take on the responsibility a detailed in this policy and complete Safeguarding Report Form B.

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Children and Vulnerable Adults policy

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to ensure children and vulnerable adults are treated by Rotherham Federation volunteers and employees, in a way which is free from abuse or harm.

A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of:

- mental or other disability, age or illness;
- who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself; or
- unable to protect him/herself from significant or serious exploitation.

A child is anyone up to and including the age of 18. Extensions of this age exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings.

It is the responsibility of the Trustees, delegated to the CEO, to ensure that relevant staff receive training on Safeguarding and ensure DBS checks are undertaken where necessary.

It is the policy of Rotherham Federation that no-one shall work or volunteer to work in an environment where they may come into contact with children or vulnerable adults within or on behalf of Rotherham Federation who:

- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children or vulnerable adults; or
- Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning sexual offences.

Training on Child and Adult Protection

Training will be given to all staff and volunteers who work in a community setting.

Disclosure and Barring Checks

The nature of Rotherham Federation's work with voluntary and community groups, mean there is the potential for all staff to come into contact with vulnerable adults and children. Therefore, it is the policy of Rotherham Federation for all employees to have a disclosure and barring check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.

All volunteers, who may come into regular contact with vulnerable adults and children will also have a DBS check.

No employee or volunteer shall knowingly work directly with children or vulnerable adults until approval is given by their line manager following a criminal record check.

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Any employee who has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children or vulnerable adults or been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning a sexual offence, will be subject to dismissal.

Staff are assured that information obtained from the Disclosure and Barring Service will be treated in absolute confidence.

Response to allegations or suspicions of abuse

The designated safeguarding lead is the member of staff who will be specifically trained to oversee this policy.

Staff should report immediately any suspicions of abuse by Rotherham Federation volunteers, employees or by any member of the public or in the designated safeguarding lead's absence, to the Rotherham Federation CEO.

Advice should then be sought from the adult protection team at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council or the police.

If the child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger staff should contact the emergency services in the first instance.

Types of abuse

In the context of this policy abuse can be:

Physical;
Emotional;
Sexual;
legal/financial;
neglect;
discriminatory; or
institutional.



Trustee

27/09/2021

Date
August 2023

Date for review