

Policy/Procedure	Safeguarding Policy & Reporting Procedure
Who policy applies to	Staff, volunteers, trustees, tutors
Date Approved	31st July 2026
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INTRODUCTION & SCOPE

Cheshire, Halton & Warrington Race & Equality Centre (CHAWREC) offers a wide range of services to the public, many of which support vulnerable adults such as refugees and asylum seekers. Although the Centre generally supports adults only, children can be involved in the Centre's activities and therefore the scope of this policy also extends to safeguarding of children.

This policy comes from the starting point that all staff, trustees and volunteers in whatever setting and role, are in the front line in preventing harm or abuse occurring including alleviating distress and in taking action. Our duty under the Prevent agenda to prevent and respond to the threat of radicalisation is an integral part of our safeguarding approach.

Purpose

The purpose of detailing our overarching approach to Safeguarding is to ensure our learners, service users and staff, including tutors, volunteers and trustees, are safe both when they are with us and also that they have clear reporting mechanisms to alert us to actual and/or potential harm/distress going on in their lives with the knowledge that we will take appropriate and timely action to help them.

Statement of Commitment

CHAWREC is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which all adults, children, young people, staff, volunteers and trustees are safe, respected and protected from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation and radicalisation.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers, trustees and partners have a duty to act on concerns, report safeguarding issues promptly and contribute to a culture of vigilance, accountability and care.

CHAWREC recognises that many of the people who access our services may face increased vulnerability because of:

- displacement and migration;
- trauma and experiences of persecution;
- language barriers;
- insecure immigration status;
- poverty and homelessness;
- social isolation;
- discrimination and racism;
- mental health challenges;
- exploitation or trafficking risks.

Our safeguarding approach is:

- trauma-informed;
- culturally competent and anti-racist;
- person-centred;
- rights-based;
- compliant with UK safeguarding legislation and guidance.

We are committed to:

- preventing harm wherever possible;
- responding promptly and proportionately to concerns;
- working in partnership with statutory agencies and community organisations;
- ensuring safer recruitment and safer working practices;
- maintaining robust safeguarding governance;
- promoting welfare, dignity and wellbeing.

LEGAL & POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy reflects the principles contained within several legal frameworks including the Care Act 2014, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Public Disclosure Act 1998, Equality Act 2010, Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the Charity Commission Safeguarding guidance.

The policy and its associated procedures are also consistent with the Safeguarding Children Partnership's guidance in respect of the safeguarding of children and young people and the Local Safeguarding Adult Board guidance.

Principles

CHAWREC follows the six principles of safeguarding under the Care Act:

1. Empowerment
2. Prevention
3. Proportionality

4. Protection
5. Partnership
6. Accountability

DEFINITIONS

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. Safeguarding is about making people aware of their rights, encouraging them to have a dialogue with us over matters of concern to them and protecting them and taking the necessary steps to support them and keep them from harm.

Adults at Risk

As CHAWREC primarily works with adults, safeguarding adults at risk forms the core focus of this policy and safeguarding procedures.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

- has needs for care and support;
- is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect;
- and because of those needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Child

Although CHAWREC does not primarily provide services to children, all staff and volunteers remain responsible for recognising and responding appropriately to concerns relating to children who may come into contact with the organisation through family engagement, community events or disclosures made by adult service users.

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a variety of forms and can be either overt or covert. We recognise that many of these forms can be both face to face or within a digital environment. Examples of abuse include:

Type of Abuse	Definition
Physical abuse	Physical harm to an individual's body from, for example, hitting, restrictive practices and medication
Domestic abuse	Threats, violence and abuse between individuals that are family members or in an intimate relationship

Sexual abuse	Sexual relationships or activities that an individual does not or cannot consent to
Emotional/psychological abuse	Threats, humiliation, controlling behaviour, blaming, verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation
Financial/material abuse	Use of an individual's money or possessions without permission. Includes theft, fraud, scamming, coercion, self-serving involvement in an individual's financial affairs
Discriminatory abuse	Individuals being treated differently due to personal traits such as age, gender, race, sexual orientation etc.
Institutional/organisational abuse	When an organisation's needs are put above an individual's needs e.g. telling an individual that they must go to bed at a certain time
Self-neglect	When an individual fails to care for their own basic needs, such as hygiene, nutrition, health or living conditions, putting themselves at risk.
Neglect by others	People responsible for an individual not seeing to their basic needs such as nutrition or hygiene either deliberately or inadvertently. Depriving someone of the essentials to live a safe, healthy life – eg food, heating, suitable clothing and accommodation.
Modern slavery	Situations where individuals are exploited, controlled or forced to work against their will, often involving trafficking, coercion and abuse of power.

Typically these forms of abuse are about the context in which they occur rather than the form the abuse takes. Brief descriptors are below:

- **Spiritual or ritual abuse** - Can be defined as coercion and control of one individual by another in a spiritual context. The person experiences spiritual abuse as a deeply emotional personal attack. This abuse may include: manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision making, requirements for secrecy and silence, pressure to conform, misuse of scripture or using the pulpit to control behaviour, requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position and isolation from others, especially those external to the abusive context.
- **Abusive use of social media** - This is where people are subject to emotional (and sometimes financial and sexual) abuse via the medium of social media. It can involve grooming for subsequent in-person abuse.

- **Sexual exploitation** - This can be closely linked to modern slavery and takes the form of being forced or coerced into escort work, prostitution and pornography. It involves exploitative situations and relationships where people receive 'something' (e.g. accommodation, alcohol, affection, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual activities.
- **Trafficking** - Similar to modern slavery, this can include victims that have been brought from overseas, and vulnerable people in the UK. Slave masters and traffickers will deceive, coerce and force adults and children into a life of abuse, callous treatment and slavery.
- **Radicalisation** - This involves the manipulation and coercion of people to draw them into increasingly extreme and violent ways of being, including inciting them to acts of violence. It has similarities to spiritual or ritual abuse in the elements of controlling people and cutting off their ties with their former lives.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Board of Trustees** is responsible for ensuring that:

- safeguarding is prioritised within governance;
- safeguarding risks are monitored;
- there is a safeguarding lead trustee;
- safeguarding policies are reviewed annually;
- serious incidents are reported to the Charity Commission where required;
- safeguarding training is undertaken every two years.

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead/s (DSL)** is responsible for:

- receiving and managing safeguarding concerns;
- making safeguarding referrals;
- liaising with statutory agencies;
- maintaining safeguarding records;
- advising staff and volunteers;
- ensuring safeguarding training is delivered;
- overseeing safeguarding quality assurance;
- reporting safeguarding themes and risks to trustees.

All **staff, tutors and volunteers** must:

- complete safeguarding training;
- recognise signs of abuse or neglect;

- report concerns immediately;
- maintain professional boundaries;
- record concerns accurately;
- promote a safe environment.

Safeguarding concerns must never be ignored, minimised or delayed.

SAFER RECRUITMENT & WORKING PRACTICES

CHAWREC is committed to safer recruitment and safer working practice.

This includes:

- a) appropriate DBS checks where eligible;
- b) references and employment checks;
- c) identity verification;
- d) safeguarding interview questions;
- e) probationary supervision
- f) induction training;
- g) codes of conduct;
- h) volunteer vetting;
- i) safeguarding expectations for contractors and partners.

Staff, tutors and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Unsafe practices include:

- inappropriate relationships;
- private or secret communication;
- excessive personal disclosure;
- unsafe use of social media;
- discriminatory behaviour;
- intimidating or abusive conduct.

Training

All staff, volunteers and trustees must complete safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

Training includes as a minimum -

- safeguarding adults and children;
- prevent and radicalisation awareness;
- online safety;
- modern slavery awareness;
- trauma-informed practice;

- confidentiality and information sharing.

DSLs must undertake specialist safeguarding training refreshed every two years.

EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION

CONTEST: The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism (2011, updated 2023). The strategy is based around 4 key workstreams:

1. Pursue: to stop terrorists.
2. **Prevent**: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
3. Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack.
4. Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

We have a duty under the Prevent agenda to respond to and address the threat of radicalisation and this duty forms a core component of our safeguarding approach.

What is Prevent?

Prevent seeks to address the threat faced by the UK from domestic or international terrorism by tackling the factors that can cause people to become drawn into violent extremism and empowering individuals and communities to stand up to violent extremists.

Our responsibility in this is to protect our service participants and our staff from any forms of extremism and/or intent to cause harm or capability to cause harm by:

- Being alert to situations that could pose potential threat
- Challenging any extremist ideology
- Taking action to prevent people from being drawn in to extremist activity
- Reporting all incidents/concerns immediately

Extremist ideology includes:

- Racially motivated extremism
- Religious extremism
- Animal rights extremism
- Other forms of extremism

Our Prevent approach is the same as our overarching safeguarding approach of informed staff being aware, vigilant, creating the right environment and reporting all concerns.

RESPONDING TO SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

Immediate Danger

If a person is at immediate risk of harm or requires urgent medical attention:

- call 999 immediately;
- ensure immediate safety where possible;
- notify the DSL as soon as possible;
- record all actions taken.

If Someone Makes a Disclosure

DO:

- listen carefully;
- stay calm;
- reassure the person;
- explain that you may need to share information to keep them safe;
- use open questions only;
- record concerns accurately;
- report concerns immediately.

DO NOT:

- investigate;
- ask leading questions;
- promise confidentiality;
- show shock or disbelief;
- confront the alleged perpetrator;
- delay reporting.

- Reporting Concerns

All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the DSL immediately and on the same day.

The DSL will:

- assess risk;
- decide next steps;
- seek advice where necessary;
- make referrals to statutory agencies where required;
- maintain records and oversight.

Where a concern involves a child connected to an adult service user, community activity or disclosure, a referral may be made to children's social care.

As CHAWREC is not a direct children's service provider, concerns relating to children will usually arise indirectly through work with adults or community engagement activities. Where a concern involves an adult at risk, a referral may be made to adult social care.

Concerns relating to radicalisation may be referred to Prevent. Anyone can make a safeguarding referral if they believe a person is at risk.

Recording and Confidentiality

Safeguarding records must:

- be completed within 24 hours;
- use factual and objective language;
- record the person's own words where possible;
- include dates, times and actions;
- be stored securely;
- comply with UK GDPR and data protection requirements.

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where there are safeguarding concerns.

Managing Allegations Against Staff, Tutors & Volunteers

CHAWREC takes all allegations against staff, volunteers and trustees seriously.

Concerns may include:

- behaviour that harms or risks harm to a child or adult;
- inappropriate conduct;
- criminal behaviour;
- online misconduct;
- abusive or discriminatory behaviour;
- unsafe professional boundaries.

Any allegations must be reported immediately to the DSL or the Director.

If concerns relate to the DSL or Director, they must be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

CHAWREC may:

- consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- involve police or safeguarding authorities;
- undertake internal investigations;
- suspend staff where appropriate;
- refer individuals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Low-level concerns must also be reported and recorded.

Contact persons for all safeguarding reports internally– Phone 01244 40070

Sophie Freeman, DSL – sophie@chawrec.org.uk

Kelsie Shute, Deputy DSL– kelsie@chawrec.org.uk

Shaunagh Moss, Trustee Safeguarding Lead - shaunaghsmith@me.com

KEY CONTACTS

Emergency

Emergency Services: 999

Police (non-emergency): 101

Adult Safeguarding - West

Cheshire West and Chester Adult Social Care

Telephone: 0300 123 7034

Out of Hours: 01244 977277

accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Adult Safeguarding – East

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/staying-safe/community-safety/safeguarding-adults-at-risk.aspx>

Tel: 0300 123 5010

Adult Safeguarding – Warrington

<https://www.warrington.gov.uk/report-adult-safeguarding-concern>

Tel: 01925 443322

Adult Safeguarding – Halton

<https://adult.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/>

Tel: 0303 333 4301

Children’s Safeguarding West

iART (Integrated Access and Referral Team)

Telephone: 0300 123 7047

Out of Hours: 01244 977277

i-art@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Children’s Safeguarding – East

<https://cescp.co.uk/professionals>

Tel: 0300 123 5012 (option 3)

Out of hrs: 0300 123 5022

Children’s Safeguarding – Warrington

Tel: 01925 443322 – Option 1
Out of hrs: 01925 444400

Children's Safeguarding – Halton

iCART (Integrated Contact and Referral Team)

Tel: 0303 333 4302

Out of hrs: 0345 050 0148

Prevent / Radicalisation Concerns

Cheshire Prevent Team

Telephone: 01606 362121

Email: prevent@cheshire.pnn.police.uk

Quick Guide to Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

1 - RECOGNISE

Abuse comes in many forms and more than one type of abuse may be happening at the same time

You may suspect abuse because:

- You have general concerns about someone's well-being
- Someone tells you that something has happened or is happening to them, which could be abuse
- You may also have disclosures relating to personal distress including talk of self-harm and/or suicide. You still need to respond to these disclosures in the same way.

2 - RESPOND

Remember, it is not your role to investigate any concerns you may have – **just report it.**

✓ Where you suspect abuse or risk of abuse including the potential to be drawn into extremism, it is your role to pass on any concerns you may have even if the person has asked you not to.

- Make sure the person is safe.
- **If there is an immediate danger/threat or urgent medical attention is required seek medical help eg call 999 immediately.**
- Speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately for first line advice which may involve calling the police.
- Preserve any evidence.
- Do not discuss with alleged perpetrator.
- Do stay calm and try not to show shock.
- Listen carefully rather than question directly.
- If the person reports abuse/distress reassure them that they are doing the right thing in telling you.

3 - RECORD

- Write an account of what you have seen or heard as soon as possible using the template Disclosure Report
- Make sure the information is factual and accurate.
- Record what the person said, using their own words.
- Describe the circumstances and identify anyone else who was there at the time.
- Note any initial actions taken.
- Sign and date your report, noting the time and location.

4 - REPORT

- Step 1** Service participant makes a disclosure to a member of organisational staff eg Mentor/Tutor/other centre staff. The latter records the nature and details of this disclosure. This must be sent within 24hrs of the disclosure to the DSL or the Deputy DSL.
- Step 2** All disclosures on ESOL contracted provision must be reported to the DSL at the contracting local authority within 48hrs of the original disclosure.
- Step 3** Disclosure report actions are discussed between the report author and the DSL. Further actions are agreed which may include a formal safeguarding referral to the local authority social care team. For other disclosures a response will be agreed, recorded and monitored for completion by the DSLs.