

The Relationships Centre Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Relationships Centre is committed to promoting the wellbeing and safety of all individuals who engage with our services. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard adults who may be at risk of harm or abuse and ensure that our staff, volunteers, and trustees understand their roles in promoting a safe and supportive environment.

2. Purpose of the policy

This policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding adults at risk and provides a framework for identifying, responding to, and reporting concerns. It applies to all employees, volunteers, trustees, students on placement, and contractors associated with The Relationships Centre.

3. Definitions

Adult at Risk

As defined by the Care Act 2014, an "adult at risk" is someone who:

- Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs),
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

At The Relationships Centre Leicestershire:

- The CEO has overall responsibility for this policy
- Line managers, supervisors and employees are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy.
- The Clinical Lead and DSL/DSO are responsible for reviewing this policy once a year to ensure it is implemented with the clinical team.
- All staff know and follow this safeguarding policy.

5. Key Principles

As a counselling and psychotherapy service, we recognise that our organisation and its staff may become aware of issues affecting the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of adults at risk. It is our duty to respond with care, professionalism, and integrity.

1. **We recognise and acknowledge** that we may be the first people to become aware of concerns affecting adults at risk, and we have a duty to act on such concerns seriously, promptly, and appropriately.
2. **We recognise and acknowledge** that the wellbeing, wishes, and rights of the adult are central to safeguarding practice, as set out in the Care Act 2014. Where possible, adults should be supported to make their own choices and decisions.
3. **We recognise and acknowledge** that safeguarding adults is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers, and trustees must be aware, informed, and engaged in safeguarding processes to ensure an effective and consistent approach.
4. **We recognise and acknowledge** that we will take a person-centred and empowerment-based approach: where appropriate, adults at risk will be involved in decisions that affect them, and their views will be respected and prioritised.
5. **We recognise and acknowledge** the importance of using inclusive, accessible, and non-judgemental language that respects an individual's identity, culture, communication needs, and life experience.
6. **We recognise and acknowledge** that effective safeguarding requires collaborative working with other professionals, carers, and agencies. We will maintain open and transparent communication and engage with the Local Authority in accordance with local Safeguarding Adults Board procedures.
7. **We recognise and acknowledge** that all concerns or disclosures should be reported as soon as practicably possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), accurately recorded, and handled in line with our safeguarding procedures.

6. Key Safeguarding Summary and Actions for Charity Trustees:

1. Safeguarding should be a key governance priority for our organisation and will be an agenda item at all board and committee meetings.
2. Ensure the charity has a sufficient safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures.
3. The charity will review its policy annually to ensure it is fit for purpose.

4. Identify possible risks, including risks to service users or to anyone else connected to the charity.
5. Consider how to improve the safeguarding culture within the organisation, ensuring everyone involved knows how to recognise, respond to, report, and record a safeguarding concern.
6. Ensure everyone knows how to raise a safeguarding concern.
7. Regularly evaluate our safeguarding training annually, ensuring it is current and relevant.
8. Ensure all practitioners have an enhanced DBS check (with child and adult barring) from the Disclosure and Barring Service. To review all employees who are not practitioners to ensure they have the relevant level of check in line with the Adult and Barring Service.

7. Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy, and guidance that seeks to protect adults at risk, including:

- The Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Group Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR)
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Disclosure and Barring Service 2013
- Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding

8. Types of Abuse

Abuse may take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect or acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Discriminatory abuse

- Organisational abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Modern slavery
- Cyber bullying
- Forced marriage

9. Reporting Concerns

Anyone working for or with The Relationships Centre who has a safeguarding concern must:

1. **Respond** calmly and listen carefully. Do not promise confidentiality.
2. **Record** the concern using the organisation's Safeguarding Form.
3. **Report** the concern immediately to the DSL/DSO and Risk Case Management.
4. **Refer** – If the DSL/DSO is unavailable and the risk is immediate, contact the local authority adult safeguarding team or the police.

Local Authority Safeguarding Contact:

Leicester City Council Adults Safeguarding Board

Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (LRSAB)

Police (non-emergency): 101

In emergencies: 999

10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

We recognise that confidentiality is important, but safeguarding takes precedence. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with GDPR and safeguarding legislation.

11. Clinical Supervision

- Safeguarding is a standard discussion item in supervision.
- Concerns raised in supervision must still be reported per procedure.

12. Whistleblowing

- Clear whistleblowing policy in place.
- Staff may raise concerns anonymously without fear of retribution.

13. Equality statement

We will make sure that all adults that access our services have equal protection regardless of age, disability, race, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation.

We recognise and acknowledge that for any of these considerations, we may need to adapt our approach accordingly.

14. Training and Awareness

- All staff and volunteers must complete safeguarding training during their induction and continue to complete this annually.
- The DSL/DSO will undertake advanced safeguarding training appropriate to their role.

15. Safer Recruitment

We follow safer recruitment procedures to ensure that all those who work with us are suitable and appropriate. This includes:

- DBS checks where applicable.
- References.
- Interview screening for safeguarding attitudes.

16. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- There is a change in legislation or guidance.
- There is a safeguarding incident or concern.
- New best practices emerge.

17. Contacts and Resources

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** The Relationships Centre, Leicestershire CEO
- **Local Safeguarding Adults Board:**
Leicester City Council Adults Safeguarding Board.
Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board (LRSAB)
- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000



- **Local Mental Health Advise line for urgent support (CAP – Central Access Point): 111 Option 2**