



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Ratified date: August 2025

Date of renewal: August 2026

SCL Registered Charity No: 116700

1. Statement

SCL is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk who come into contact with our services. We believe that everyone has the right to live free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

This policy follows the principles of:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**
- **Care Act 2014** (adults at risk)
- **Charity Commission safeguarding expectations**

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, trustees, and volunteers.
- Contractors, agency staff, and anyone working on behalf of SCL.
- All activities delivered by or through SCL, including online activities.

The Purpose of the Policy

- To protect children, young people and adults at risk who connect with SCL events or activities
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk and child protection
- All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of the charity have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of adults at risk, children and young people
- Staff, volunteers and trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe adults at risk or children who are at risk. This policy will enable staff/volunteers/trustees to make informed and confident responses to specific adult or child protection issues.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

- **Trustees** – hold ultimate accountability for safeguarding and will ensure compliance, resources, and reporting.
- **Lead Trustee for Safeguarding** – acts as Board-level safeguarding champion.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** – responsible for receiving and responding to safeguarding concerns.
- **Deputy DSLs** – provide cover and support.
- **All staff/volunteers** – must understand this policy and report concerns promptly.

4. Definitions

- **Child:** anyone under 18.
- **Adult at risk:** an adult with care/support needs who cannot protect themselves from abuse/neglect.

WHO IS INCLUDED UNDER THE HEADING 'ADULTS AT RISK?'

An adult (a person aged 18 or over) who 'is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.' (No Secrets – DH 2000 / Care Act 2014).

The main categories of abuse as recognised by the Care Act 2014 are:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological/emotional abuse
- Financial abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory abuse
- Institutional abuse
- Self-neglect

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

A basic definition of abuse is that it is abuse of power by a person who is developmentally and/or stronger than another, resulting in some distress, harm or neglect of necessary attention for the victim.

It is generally accepted that there are four main types of abuse.

The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (DoH, HO, DfEE, 2015):

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

5. Safer Recruitment & Conduct

- All staff/volunteers will be recruited in line with SCL's **Safer Recruitment Policy**, including **DBS checks** where appropriate.
- Staff must follow SCL's **Code of Conduct** at all times.
- Inappropriate relationships or abuse of power will not be tolerated.

6. Reporting Concerns

- **Immediate danger:** Call 999.
- **Children:** Report to Local Authority Children's Social Care.
- **Adults at risk:** Report to Local Authority Safeguarding Adults team.
- Internally: All concerns must be reported to the **DSL** (or Deputy if unavailable).
- Concerns must be recorded factually (who, what, when, where).
- Do not promise confidentiality.

PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE

It is important that adults at risk, children and young people are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that an adult at risk, child or young person has been abused.

Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information.

This must include information in relation to:

- the date
- the time
- the place where the alleged abuse happened
- your name and the names of others present
- the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult or child who has allegedly been abused
- the nature of the alleged abuse
- a description of any injuries observed
- the account which has been given of the allegation

RESPONDING APPROPRIATELY TO AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Senior Manager on that working day, or by calling 999 where an emergency situation arises.

Where a suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse involves a member of the SCL staff team, volunteer or Board Member, notification should be made directly to the Local Area Designated Officer (see below) or emergency services.

The nominated members of staff shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local social services duty social worker, if appropriate (see below).

A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made, and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. **The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority social services department within 24 hours.**

IN THE EVENT OF AN INCIDENT OR DISCLOSURE: DO

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
- Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Follow correct procedure
- Explain area of confidentiality; immediately speak to your manager/Designated Safeguarding Officer for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- Remember the need for on-going support – both for the individual making the allegation and the individual submitting the report (including post report de-brief and, for example, access to counselling etc.)

DON'T

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions
- Assume information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic

7. Allegations Against Staff or Trustees

- Concerns about staff must be reported to the DSL and escalated to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** (children).
- Trustees must also notify the **Charity Commission** as a serious incident where required.

8. External Reporting

Where appropriate, concerns may also be raised with:

- Police
- Charity Commission
- Ofsted / CQC (if regulated activities)
- HSE (if H&S risk)

- ICO (if data protection issue)

9. Training & Awareness

- All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding induction and **annual refresher training** appropriate to their role.
- Trustees will receive safeguarding training in line with Charity Commission guidance.

10. Review & Monitoring

- The policy will be reviewed annually or after any significant incident/change in law.
- Safeguarding practice will be monitored through incident reporting, audits, and trustee oversight.

11. Related Policies

- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- GDPR/Data Protection Policy

Policy Approved Date: August 2025

Signed:

Elizabeth Farley, Chair of Trustees _____

Trevor Palfreyman, Vice Chair of Trustees _____

CONTACT DETAILS

Trustee Board Lead for Safeguarding:

Name: Jon Grant

Phone: 07860 126599

Deputy DSO(s):

Name(s): Elizabeth Farley

Phone: 07576 010860

SANDWELL MBC SERVICES:

Reporting a Child at Risk (Non-emergency)

Sandwell Access Service: 0121 569 3100 (incl. outside office hours);

OR

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Reporting an Adult at Risk (Non-emergency)

Sandwell MBC: 0121 569 2266 (Mon-Thur: 9am-5.30pm / Fri: 9am-5pm)

0121 569 2355 (Out of Hours)

Reporting Concerns / Allegations against a Member of Staff/Trustee Board

Sandwell Local Area Designated Officer (LADO): 0121 569 4770

REFERENCES, INTERNET LINKS AND FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)

Social Services

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service)

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)

The Charity Commission has issued guidance notes about safeguarding in charities:

Policy Paper: Safeguarding Children and Young People

Charities: How to Protect Vulnerable Groups Including Children

Strategy for Dealing with Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Including Children Issues in Charities

A Summary Document – Strategy for Dealing with Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Including Children Issues in Charities

The Department of Health has issued statutory guidance and fact sheets about the Care Act 2014:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-2014-part-1-factsheets/care-act-factsheets>

Action on Elder Abuse (AEA) is a charity working to protect and prevent the abuse of vulnerable older adults.

<http://www.elderabuse.org.uk>

Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board <http://sandwellscb.org.uk/>

