

Safeguarding policy



Alexandra
Rose
Charity



Policy Date: 26th Sept 2024

Review Date: 26th Sept 2025

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, and at-risk adults (this includes people ARC may engage with for the purpose of consultation or evaluation research), from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with ARC. This includes harm arising from:

The conduct of staff or personnel associated with ARC.

The design and implementation of ARC's programmes and activities.

The policy lays out the commitments made by ARC and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

While ARC is not routinely engaged in face-to-face activities with vulnerable people, examples of activities in which staff and volunteers may encounter vulnerable people include Children's Centre visits, community projects, and fundraising activities.

ARC will ensure that all partner agencies have appropriate safeguarding policies in place at the commencement of the partnership and will review them at regular intervals.

What is Safeguarding ?

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults, and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

For the purpose of this policy the terms 'adult at risk' and 'vulnerable adult' are interchangeable.

Scope

All staff contracted by ARC.

Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to ARC, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including

journalists, and photographers.

This policy does not cover:

Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under ARC’s Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by ARC, partner organisations, or associated personnel.

The Board has adopted this Safeguarding Policy, which states ARC’s policy on preventing and reducing harm to vulnerable people when they are in contact with ARC staff or anyone acting on behalf of ARC. ARC expects everyone working or volunteering at ARC to support the Safeguarding Policy and comply with it.

Policy Statement

The majority of our work is office-based or working with and through partner organisations. On occasion, Alexandra Rose Charity may work directly, under supervision, with children’s centres and other community organisations and services working with children and adults at risk. Should we be required to work with children or adults at risk directly and unsupervised, Alexandra Rose Charity staff and/or volunteers would be required to assume a position of trust.

To ensure the protection of children and adults at risk, and justify public trust and confidence, Alexandra Rose Charity is required to ensure that only suitable staff and/or volunteers are allowed to undertake work that brings them into regular contact with children and adults at risk. Alexandra Rose Charity will assess the suitability of such staff and volunteers and use the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), if it is assessed that any regulated activities will be carried out with children or vulnerable adults.

Alexandra Rose Charity will also ensure that all children and family centres run by local authorities for project areas we work within have their own safeguarding policies and reporting procedures, which, as a minimum, will meet the requirements of this policy.

Safeguarding is everyone’s business, so we should never ignore any concerns we witness during our work and always report any incident or risk of harm or abuse as described in this policy. Please see Appendix 1 for signs of possible harm or abuse.

Alexandra Rose Charity believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or adult to experience abuse of any kind. Alexandra Rose Charity recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and adults at risk, by operating within practice that protects them.

A child is defined as a person aged under 18. An adult at risk is defined as a person aged 18 or over who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect

themselves against significant harm or exploitation. An adult at risk may therefore be a person who, for example:

- is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment.
- has a learning disability.
- has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment.
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder.
- has a long-term illness/condition.
- misuses substances or alcohol.
- is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.
- is vulnerable and at risk of exploitation, radicalisation or being drawn into terrorism.

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

The purpose of this policy:

- To provide protection for the children and vulnerable adults who use Alexandra Rose Charity services including the children of adult service users.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event they suspect a child or vulnerable adult may be experiencing or be at risk of harm or abuse.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/vulnerable adult is paramount.
- All children & vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- All staff, volunteers, trustees & committee members of Alexandra Rose Charity have responsibility for the protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults in the delivery of our services.
- Working in partnership with children and vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

We will seek to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring that all necessary checks are made.
- Valuing and listening to children and vulnerable adults.
- Treating children and vulnerable adults fairly, with respect and dignity.
- Being excellent role models e.g., not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of service users.
- Adopting guidelines for protecting and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults through clear procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers, e.g., always working in an open environment and, where possible avoiding private or unobserved situations.
- Keeping written records of any injuries or incidents that cause harm (including verbal attacks) along with steps taken.

- Sharing safeguarding information and good practice with staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving children, parents, carers and vulnerable adults appropriately.
- Providing appropriate support to staff and volunteers through supervision and training.
- Assessing risk in relation to all our activities, focussing on prevention minimising risk and putting in place safeguards that protect the public using our services, e.g., clear evacuation procedures and securely locked storage for equipment.

What to do if you suspect abuse

2.1 Staff and volunteers should always first call 999 in an emergency, i.e., if someone is seriously ill or injured, and/or their life may be at risk.

2.2 Any member of staff or volunteer who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred to a child or vulnerable adult must report it immediately to the Designated Person for Safeguarding and Child Protection, At the date of the policy review (Sept 24), the Designated Persons are:

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Jonathan Pauling | Faith Holland |
| Chief Executive | Head of Operations |
| Alexandra Rose Charity | Alexandra Rose Charity |

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Alison Inglis Jones | Charles Clarke |
| Trustee | Trustee |
| Alexandra Rose Charity | Alexandra Rose Charity |

2.3 The Designated Person will complete the referral form, which can be found [here](#) and immediately inform the Local Authority Initial Response Team for the area where the incident occurred; contact details for all project areas can be found [here](#).

2.4 The Designated Person should record:

- The child or vulnerable adult’s name, age and date of birth

- The child or vulnerable adult's home address and telephone number
- What was said or seen
- By whom
- Date, time and location
- All records should be signed and dated and include the contact details for the referrer.

2.5 Confidentiality must be maintained, and information relating to individual children, vulnerable adults and their families should only be shared with staff on a strictly need-to-know basis.

Alleged Abuse by Staff or Volunteers

3.1 When an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then the allegation must be passed to the Designated Person for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

3.2 The Designated Person should contact the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Lead Officer for consultation.

3.3 The Local Authority Safeguarding Lead Officer will record a note of the consultation and advise on the appropriate action to be taken.

Consent and Involvement of Parents/Carers

4.1 Service users, parents & carers will be able to access this policy via Alexandra Rose Charity's website.

4.2 Consent issues – child. Consent from the child or parent/carer to refer to the Local Authority is not required. However, it is good practice to inform the parent/carer of a decision to refer, unless to do so could place the child at increased risk of harm.

4.3 Consent issues – vulnerable adult without capacity to consent. If concerns arise and the individual is unable to give consent to information being shared, a referral should be made to the Local Authority. Family/carers should be informed if they are involved in the individual's life and not implicated in any way in the alleged abuse.

4.4 Consent issues – vulnerable adult with capacity to consent. Information about an individual should not be given to family or carers without consent of the individual and complying with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Consent must be obtained from the individual concerned before a referral is made to the Local Authority. However, a referral can be made without consent if one of the following exceptions apply:

- If other people appear to be at risk of harm (adults or children)

- ii. If there is a legal restriction or an overriding public interest
- iii. If the person is exposed to life threatening risk & they are unreasonably withholding their consent
- iv. If the person has impaired capacity or decision making in relation to the safeguarding issues and the withholding of consent

A 'legal restriction' in this context means that there may be exceptional circumstances where a service user makes a decision or intends to act in a way that is unlawful or where their care needs to be addressed under the Mental Health Act 1983. An 'overriding public interest' refers to a situation where it is essential to share information in order to prevent a crime or to protect others from harm, e.g., 'Hate Crime' – which we have a statutory responsibility to report. This is supported by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

4.5 What to do if consent is withheld. In all cases, where an adult at risk is withholding consent and there are concerns about his/her welfare, the Designated Person's opinion should be sought on the best way to proceed. This may include taking legal advice where consent has been withheld and where one of the exceptions (4.4 i-iv) seem to apply.

Training

5.1 The Designated Person and at least one other from the Alexandra Rose Charity must receive training every two years in Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk.

5.2 All staff and volunteers should have access to appropriate Safeguarding training on a regular basis - at least every three years.

Funders & Partnerships

Alexandra Rose Charity will report (as appropriate) to and work collaboratively with funders where there are potentially serious concerns or disclosures about the safeguarding or protection of any Child or Adult at risk,

Alexandra Rose Charity will ensure that only relevant and necessary information is shared with funders, in accordance with its confidentiality and GDPR policies and if instructed to do so by other professionals involved.

Alexandra Rose Charity will ensure that all operational partners have an up-to-date safeguarding policy in place and will review this on a regular basis.

Related Legislation

Mental Health Act 1983

Mental Capacity Act 2005

Crime and Disorder Act 1993 & 1998

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Human Rights Act 1998

Data Protection Act 2018

Adoption and Children Act 2002

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Serious Crime Act 2015

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

Children and Social Work Act 2017

Children Act 1989 & 2004

Related Guidance, Good Practice and Policy

Information Sharing Guidance, Department of Health 2018

Prevention in Safeguarding, Social Care Institute for Excellence 2011

Protecting Adults at Risk: Good Practice Guide, Social Care Institute for Excellence 2012

Statement of Government Policy on Adult Safeguarding 2013

Safeguarding – Roles and Responsibilities in Health and Care Services 2013

Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to multi-agency working to help protect and promote the welfare of children 2023

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners 2015

Procedures of Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Adults Boards in areas where Alexandra Rose Charity operates

Department for Education: Stable homes built on love: strategy and consultation 2023

Review

This policy will be reviewed every year and immediately updated where appropriate, e.g., following new or updated legislation and/or guidance.

Definitions

9.1 "Project delivery partners" and "Operational partners" refers to "Children's Centres, Early Years providers, and any other organisations who register families on to the project and distribute Rose Vouchers."

9.2 "Designated Person" refers to the staff member responsible for safeguarding issues. In the case of Alexandra Rose Charity this is the Chief Executive, the Head of Operations and two trustees as specified in section 2.2.

At the date of the policy review (Sept 24), the contact details for the Designated Persons are:

9.3 "Physical Abuse" refers to when a child or vulnerable adult is hurt or injured by a child or an adult. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. It also includes giving a child or vulnerable adult harmful drugs or alcohol. Female genital mutilation is a form of physical abuse which is illegal in the UK. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or vulnerable adult they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention, they get through having an apparently sick child or vulnerable adult in their care.

9.4 "Emotional Abuse" is when adults deny children or vulnerable adults love or affection, or constantly threaten or humiliate them. Sarcasm, degrading punishments and ignoring a child or vulnerable adult are also forms of emotional abuse and undermine their confidence and sense of self-worth. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's or vulnerable adult's emotional development. It may involve serious bullying, causing children or vulnerable adults to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults. It could also involve a child or vulnerable adult witnessing domestic violence. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone. Racism and other types of discrimination can also be forms of emotional abuse.

9.5 "Sexual Abuse" is when a child or vulnerable adult is used sexually by an adult or another child. Sexual abuse can include kissing, touching the child's or vulnerable adult's genitals or breasts (or making the child or vulnerable adult touch the abuser), vaginal or anal intercourse and oral sex. Encouraging a child or vulnerable adult to look at pornographic magazines or videos is also sexual abuse. Sexual abuse includes sexual exploitation, such as forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child or vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. Children and vulnerable adults can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other children & young people.

9.6 “Neglect” is the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing for a child or vulnerable adult. Neglect may also involve failing to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical harm or danger, failing to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers), failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment and failing to respond a child's or vulnerable adult’s basic emotional needs.

9.7 “Financial abuse” is the mistreatment of someone in terms of their money or assets, such as their property. Financial abuse often occurs alongside other forms of abuse.

It can include money being stolen or misused, fraud or putting someone under pressure regards to their money or property.

9.8 “Modern Slavery” is the exploitation of people who have been forced, deceived, or coerced into a life of labour and servitude. It is a crime hidden from society where victims are subjected to abuse, inhumane and degrading treatment. Examples of enslavement include:

a person who is forced to work or serve – through fear and threats of violence is owned or controlled by an ‘employer’ who uses mental or physical abuse to exercise control dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as ‘property’.

being kept in substandard working/living conditions

physically constrained or has restrictions placed on his/her freedom of movement.

Modern Slavery is linked to Human Trafficking, but not all victims of modern slavery have necessarily been trafficked.

Appendix 1 - signs of possible harm or abuse

Signs of physical abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games.
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns.
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds

- Injuries which have not received medical attention.
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents or carers being approached for an explanation.
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched.
- Reluctance to get changed - for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour.
- Running away from home

Signs of emotional abuse:

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child or vulnerable adult puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g., in hospital or away from the care of their parents/carers.
- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Being unable to play
- Attention seeking behaviour.
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parents or carers being approached regarding their behaviour.

Signs of sexual abuse:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area.
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down.
- Pregnancy

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g., becoming withdrawn or aggressive.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares
- Running away from home
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money or expensive gifts
- Not being allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in an inappropriate sexually explicit way with adults

Signs of neglect:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time.
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments.
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Signs of financial abuse:

- unexplained money loss or a lack of money to pay for essentials such as rent
- credit cards being taken out or bills being put in the victim's name
- asking the victim to account for exactly what they spend money on
- inability to access or check bank accounts or financial service provider accounts
- isolation from friends and family
- being prevented from working, going to work, or going to college or university
- being asked to change a will

Changes in behaviour which can indicate financial abuse:

- Changes or deterioration in standards of living or appearance
- Isolation and withdrawal from friends and family
- Lack of things you'd expect someone to be able to afford e.g., TV, grooming items, clothing
- Lack of money to pay for essentials such as rent, bills, and food

Signs of modern slavery:

- They seem malnourished and tired
- If from overseas, they don't speak much English
- They wear unsuitable clothes for the work, or the weather
- They appear to be under the control of someone else and reluctant to interact with others
- They are reluctant to make eye contact or talk to people
- They work excessively long hours and seldom, if ever, have days off
- They appear fearful, uneasy, or anxious and distrustful of authorities

- They have untreated injuries
- They allow others to answer questions put to them
- They are confined to their workplace and there may be signs that they also sleep there
- They always appear scruffy and unwashed
- They lack personal possessions
- They are frequently dropped off or picked up at unsociable hours
- They don't know their home or work address
- They have limited social contact or contact with their family
- They never seem to have any or much money, despite working long hours
- They don't have possession of their passport, driving license or other identification documents
- You perceive that they are in debt to their boss or someone else
- If female, she has an unwanted or underage pregnancy
- They offer incoherent or changing accounts of events
- They repeat a story that you have heard elsewhere—as if they and others have been instructed to learn it

Data Protection



In the implementation of this policy, the Charity may process personal data and/or special category personal data collected in accordance with its GDPR and data protection policy. Data collected from the point at which this policy is invoked will only inform the Charity for the benefit of implementing this policy. All data is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of this policy. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Charity's GDPR and data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Charity's disciplinary procedure.