

16.5 Safeguarding Policy

Date of issue:	9 th March 2011
Date of latest review/revision	19 th May 2025 & 21 st July 2025
This replaces any previous issue of a Safeguarding Policy	

Note: Where either 'children', 'young people' or 'vulnerable people' are mentioned all three are usually intended.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

South West Community Chaplaincy (SWCC) aims to help anyone who has been subject to criminal justice move forward to crime free lives. All who are seeking to make such a change are vulnerable and we may also be working with their families.

Recognising that we work in a sector where we come into regular contact with vulnerable adults and may from time to time come into contact with children, SWCC is concerned to ensure that all its clients remain safe and free from harm as far as it is within their ability to do so. SWCC is committed to playing a full and active part in the multi-agency response to child and vulnerable adult protection concerns. Through its Safeguarding Policy, SWCC will promote the well-being of children and vulnerable adults, and the enjoyment and protection of their health, safety and general welfare while in the company or care of staff or volunteers.

Staff, volunteers and clients can at times be vulnerable. The primary focus of this safeguarding policy is on those among our clients who would be classified as 'vulnerable'. Nevertheless, it should be seen as applying to good conduct of relationships within the whole of the charity.

INTRODUCTION

Vulnerable people are normally involved with SWCC as clients, but may be, from time-to-time volunteers or staff. In promoting this policy SWCC will take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of vulnerable individuals
- Keep them safe from harm while in the care of its staff or volunteers;
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements;
- Support and protect the interests of staff and volunteers who have contact with, or access to, children, young people and others who may be vulnerable.

This policy is intended as a practical guide for staff and volunteers involved with vulnerable people.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY AND THOSE AFFECTED

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers (including Board members), and others representing SWCC who have contact with vulnerable people.

In law a child is anyone under the age of 18. However, older children, for example, teenagers, may prefer to be called young people.

A vulnerable person is anyone with special needs who may need extra support, such as someone with a physical or learning disability, mental health problem, frailty due to old age, recovering from addiction, or disempowerment due to illness. See **Appendix 3** for a fuller definition, as set out within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

It should be recognised that people with special needs are able to cope in many situations, so sensitivity and common sense should be exercised.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The main contact between SWCC and children or vulnerable people will be via its employed Community Chaplains and its volunteers. It is therefore of paramount importance that SWCC recruits staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

SWCC will consistently apply fair and objective methods of selecting employees, volunteers and contractors. A thorough selection procedure for positions, both paid and unpaid, which could involve unsupervised access to any vulnerable groups is probably the most effective way of assessing a person's suitability, and may act as a deterrent to those with an increased potential to mistreat others. When recruiting:

- The need for any role will be properly evaluated.
- An ethos of equity, diversity and inclusion will apply.
- SWCC will advertise employed and volunteering roles through a range of appropriate channels including the press, online, posters, newsletters, faith communities and other relevant agencies.
- Potential candidates will be invited to apply by completing an application form.
- Each applicant will be required to attend an interview and to participate in appropriate assessment tasks, relevant to the role. This is to allow applicants and SWCC staff to assess whether or not the applicant has the requisite skills, attributes and potential, to fulfil the job's requirements.
- A probationary period will be agreed that is acceptable to both applicant and SWCC. As a guideline, it is expected that this would normally be 6 months.
- People who are not accepted are entitled to feedback from the Managing Community Chaplain.

References and screening

SWCC will ask for two written references, which cannot be from a relative, partner or spouse of the potential volunteer. One of these will normally be from someone who has experience of the applicant in a professional capacity, such as a current or recent employer.

Applicants will be required to undergo a DBS check. For all staff and volunteers whose role will bring them into contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, an enhanced DBS check will be required. DBS checks for all staff and volunteers whose role brings them into contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults, will be repeated at 3-yearly intervals.

The DBS Disclosure service offers organisations a means to check the background of volunteers to ensure that they do not have a history that would make them unsuitable for the post. Further information about Disclosure can be found at the website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>

Training and induction

SWCC seeks to ensure that it employs suitably trained and experienced workers, and to deliver an ongoing programme of appropriate training to staff and volunteers within a framework of continuous learning and improvement. All staff and volunteers will receive induction training that provides an overview of the organisation, its purpose, values services and structure. This will include Safeguarding training at a level appropriate to their role, to support this policy and good practice within the organisation:

Volunteer Mentors must undertake Safeguarding training at a minimum of:
Foundation Level

Community Chaplains must undertake Safeguarding training at a minimum of
Advanced Level

In addition, the **Designated Safeguarding Officer** must undertake:
Advanced Safeguarding Training for Designated Safeguarding Leads.

All staff and volunteers should receive regular (annual) refresher Safeguarding training.

For the most part, and wherever practicable, Safeguarding training will be sourced externally, however, in the event that Safeguarding training is delivered in-house, trainers should be suitably qualified.

Identifying abuse

Abuse is behaviour towards a person that either deliberately or unknowingly causes a vulnerable person harm or endangers their life or their human or civil rights. It can be passive, e.g. failing to take action to care for someone, or failing to raise the alert about abuse; or active, e.g. hitting, stealing or doing something that causes harm. Abuse can be a one-off or something that is repeated. Abuse will usually fall within one or more of the following categories (detailed definitions can be found at **Appendix 2**):

- **Physical**
- **Psychological and Emotional**
- **Sexual**
- **Domestic Violence**
- **Neglect and acts of omission**
- **Financial/Material Abuse**
- **Institutional/Organisational Abuse**
- **Discriminatory Abuse**
- **Modern Slavery**
- **Significant Harm**
- **Issues of Spirituality**
- **Self-Neglect**

Common sense should be relied upon to recognise the warning signs. However, it is essential to rely on facts rather than opinions and not jump to conclusions.

In welcoming and working with people who are vulnerable SWCC will:

- Provide a friendly welcome for them and promote their general welfare, which must always be paramount.
- Recognise their rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect.
- Plan activities involving vulnerable people with care to minimise risks to their health and safety.

Employees and volunteers should:

- Remember they are role models and provide an example for those they work with to follow
- Bear in mind that some actions, no matter how well-intentioned, may be easily misinterpreted and so leave all parties vulnerable
- Be alert to any potential harm or inappropriate behaviour towards people who are vulnerable
- Respect individuals' rights to privacy
- Provide opportunity for vulnerable people to discuss any concerns they may have
- Speak to their line manager if they have concerns about an individual's safety

Employees and volunteers should not:

- Arrange to see vulnerable clients or their friends/family members, in circumstances unconnected with their work
- Be unnecessarily left alone for substantial periods of time with anyone who is vulnerable. Where one-to-one work is necessary they should inform another staff member where they are going, with whom and for how long
- Permit abusive behaviour by others or engage in it themselves

- Show favouritism to or become too closely associated with an individual. Nor should they get drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour (e.g. crushes)
- Allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching of a kind which could be misunderstood
- Promise to keep secrets
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Do anything which might undermine a good reputation for providing a safe environment
- Hesitate to share concerns on any of these matters with the appropriate representative

PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED HARM

If a person who may be vulnerable has talked about harm, or harm is suspected, or where there is significant concern that a child or vulnerable adult may be abused, the following procedure should be followed:

Receive

- What is said calmly
- Accept what you are told – you do not need to decide whether or not it is true
- Listen without displaying shock or disbelief
- Be aware that the individual may have been threatened not to disclose

Reassure

- The client
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Acknowledge their courage in disclosing, that they are right to talk about it and what they say is accepted
- Remind them they are not to blame – avoid criticising the alleged perpetrator
- Do not promise that “everything will be alright now” (it might not be)

Respond

- Respond but do not interrogate
- Avoid leading questions but ask open ended ones
- Clarify anything you do not understand
- Explain what you will do next, i.e. inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer

Record

- Make notes as soon as possible – during the interview if you can
Include: time, date, place, the client’s own words. Do not assume, but do ask, e.g. “Please tell me what xxxxx means”. Consider using the pro-forma found at **Appendix 1**
- Describe observable behaviour and appearance
- Cross out mistakes – do not use Tippex
- Do not destroy your original notes – they may be needed later on and must be given to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Support

- Consider what support is needed for the individual – you may need to give them a lot of your time or they may need to be referred

- Ensure you are supported – such interviews can be extremely stressful and time consuming
- Once reported to them, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will take responsibility for the matter and will take the necessary actions. However, if you have questions or need additional support then do ask

Notify

- A Designated Safeguarding Officer, giving them the completed pro forma/written information.

Where the Designated Safeguarding Officers are unavailable, and the vulnerable person is in imminent danger, the worker should contact the relevant authorities themselves (see contact numbers listed at the end of this policy). They should then inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible on their return.

Dealing with incidents of harm is difficult for any individual so employees and volunteers **should not:**

- Act alone;
- Start to investigate; or
- Make any assumptions about the persons involved.

Any employee or volunteer who is involved in a disclosure of any kind may feel that they need to speak to a child care professional to reassure themselves that they have done the right thing. The NSPCC operates a 24-hour help line for anyone concerned about a child or young person. It is primarily for use by adults and can be used anonymously: **0808 800 5000**.

Where it is suspected that an employee or volunteer may be involved in the abuse, employees and volunteers should let their line manager know as soon as possible. The employee or volunteer should be immediately removed from access to vulnerable individuals but be assured that no presumptions have been made and that the allegation will be fully investigated by the relevant authorities.

If gross misconduct is reasonably suspected, it may be appropriate to ask them not to attend the office or property at all while the matter is under investigation (suspended on full pay if an employee). Once the relevant authorities' enquiry has concluded, the line manager should decide what further action is appropriate in conjunction with other relevant policies.

Full and accurate notes (i.e. **word for word**) must be written as soon as possible, using pro forma if available (**Appendix 1**). Records should be as accurate as possible as they may be invaluable to the investigation and used as evidence in court.

When dealing with personal and emotive details of this nature, confidentiality must be maintained at all times since the allegations or suspicions may prove to be unfounded. Notes and records should be kept in a secure place and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation (See Confidentiality Policy).

No assumptions of guilt should be made unless and until an actual conviction has been obtained in the proceedings. Impartial contact will be maintained by a nominated staff member during this process.

INTERNAL CONTACT DETAILS:

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)
Cathy Jerrard (Managing Community Chaplain)
Mobile: 07816 428 470
Email: cathy@southwestcc.org.uk

Designated Deputy Safeguarding Officer (DDSO)
Alli Clear (Supporter and Volunteer Co-ordinator)
Mobile: 07984 640 233
Email: alli@southwestcc.org.uk

Trustee Lead for Safeguarding
John Wiseman (Deputy Chair)
Mobile: 07827 926497
Email: john.wiseman@circlessw.org.uk

EXTERNAL CONTACT DETAILS

DEVON

Devon Local Authority boundaries:
Email: csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk
To report Safeguarding concerns - Care Direct: 0345 155 1007 (Mon – Fri 8am - 8pm, Sat 9am - 1pm)
Care Direct – Out of hours: 0345 6000 388
Alternatively, you can email: adultsc.safeguardingadultservices-mailbox@devon.gov.uk (Devon Safeguarding Adults Service)

Torbay Local Authority boundaries:
Email: safeguarding.alertstct@nhs.net
To report Safeguarding concerns – Single Point of Contact Team: 01803 219700 (Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm)
Emergency Duty Service – Out of hours: 0300 4564 876

Plymouth Local Authority boundaries:
<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/report-adult-abuse-neglect-or-safeguarding-concern>
To report Safeguarding concerns – 01752 668000

Devon **Children & Families** Partnership
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
To report Safeguarding concerns - MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub): 0345 155 1071

or Email: mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk

CORNWALL & ISLES OF SCILLY

Adult Safeguarding Triage Team: 01872 326433

To report Safeguarding concerns: 0300 1234 131 (Option 3)

Email: adultsafeguardingconcerns@cornwall.gov.uk

Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Safeguarding **Children** Partnership

To report Safeguarding concerns (children) in Cornwall and IOS, contact the Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU)

0300 1231 116

Email: multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk

SOMERSET

Somerset Safeguarding **Adults** Board

All enquiries: 0300 123 2224 (Mon – Fri 8:30am – 5:30pm)

Email: adults@somerset.gov.uk

Somerset Safeguarding **Children** Partnership

Early Help Advice Hub: 01823 355803

Childrens Social Care: 0300 123 2224

Email: childrens@somerset.gov.uk

This policy shall be reviewed annually.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees:

Nick Day



Date of approval by the Board of Trustees:	9 March, 2011
Date of 1st Review	24 January, 2013
Date of 2nd Review	25 June, 2014
Date of 3rd Review	25 November, 2015
Date of 4th Review	25 September 2017
Date of 5th Review	17 September 2019
Date of 6th Review	22 March 2021
Date of 7th Review	16 May 2022
Date of 8th Review	15 May 2023
Date of 9th Review	20 May 2024
Date of 10th Review	19 May 2025/21 July 2025

Appendix 1:
Pro forma for recording disclosures or signs of abuse witnessed

To be completed by person receiving disclosure or witnessing signs of abuse

Name of person disclosing or displaying signs of abuse:

Date and time disclosure received/signs of abuse witnessed:

Day	Month	Year	Time

Gender of the person disclosing:

Date of birth

Day	Month	Year

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City/Town

Post Code

Please detail what the person said (word for word) or signs of abuse witnessed:
(Continue on separate numbered sheets if necessary)

Sheet 1 of

Any other relevant information:

Name of person completing this form:

Signed:

Dated:

APPENDIX 2: Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is the physical ill treatment of an adult or child, which may or may not cause physical injury and causes harm to the individual's person. It may involve pushing, slapping, pinching, punching, hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating, force feeding, improper administration of medicines or denial of prescribed medicines, forced isolation and confinement, including a person being locked in a room or inappropriate sanctions or restraint, or inappropriate manual handling. It may be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

Psychological and Emotional Abuse

Psychological abuse may involve the use of harassment, bullying, intimidation, indifference, hostility, rejection, threats, humiliation, name-calling, other degrading behaviours, shouting, swearing, discrimination or the use of oppressive language, mobile phone texting abuse, email, emotional abuse and all forms of Cyber abuse. It can result in feelings of low self-worth. Some level of psychological or emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves an individual participating in, or watching, sexual activity to which they have not consented or were pressured into consenting, or to which they cannot give informed consent. It is not necessary for the individual to be aware that the activity is sexual. The activities may include: physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, e.g. rape, buggery, indecent assault or inappropriate touch, incest, and situations where the perpetrator touches the abused person's body (e.g. breasts, buttocks, genital area); Non-contact activities, e.g. exposing genitals to the abused person, or coercing the abused person into participating in or watching pornographic videos or photographs.

Domestic Violence

Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.

Neglect and acts of omission

Neglect is the deliberate withholding or unintentional failure to provide help or support, which is necessary for the individual to carry out activities of daily living. It also includes a failure to intervene in situations that are dangerous to the person concerned or to others, particularly when the person lacks the mental capacity to assess risk. Neglect may involve: failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing; failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment; neglect of basic emotional needs

Financial/Material Abuse

Financial/Material Abuse is the exploitation, inappropriate use or misappropriation of a person's financial resources or property. It occurs when the individual is deprived of their own financial assets, for example, by holding money back from the individual, obtaining money by deception, or stealing money. It includes the withholding of money or the improper use of a person's money or property, usually to the disadvantage of the person to whom it belongs.

Institutional/Organisational Abuse

Institutional abuse can be defined as abuse or mistreatment by a regime as well as by individuals within any building where care is provided. Examples include lack of flexibility and choice, lack of consultation, public discussion of personal matters, inadequate or delayed responses, staff overly controlling service users' relationships and activities.

Discriminatory Abuse

Repeated, ongoing or widespread discrimination on the grounds of age, race, disability, religion, sexual preference or gender, slurs, harassment, name-calling, breaches in civil liberties, unequal access to health or social care.

Modern Slavery

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Significant Harm

Sometimes, a single traumatic event may constitute significant harm, e.g. violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events, both acute and long-standing, which interrupt, change or damage the individual's physical and psychological development.

Issues of Spirituality

Within faith communities harm may be caused to vulnerable adults by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include:

- The misuse of the authority of leadership or potential discipline
- Oppressive teaching
- Obstructive healing and deliverance ministries
- The denial of the rights to faith and religious practice

Any concerns in relation to these matters should be dealt with via the procedures outlined in guidance in this policy.

Spiritual growth and well-being among vulnerable adults can be enhanced by:

- Making reasonable arrangements for them to attend acts of worship
- Providing for dietary, dress and other requirements of faith
- Enabling adequate and reasonable access to them by representatives of their faith community
- Accepting the integrity of the person's religious belief and spirituality

Self-Neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

APPENDIX 3: Definition of a Vulnerable Adult as defined under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act (2006). Please refer to the act here <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/47/contents>

The definition includes the following:

1	A person is a vulnerable adult when they have attained the age of 18 and:
a	he/she is in residential accommodation,
b	he/she is in sheltered housing,
c	he/she receives domiciliary care,
d	he/she receives any form of health care,
e	he/she is detained in lawful custody,
f	he/she is by virtue of an order of a court under supervision by a person exercising functions for the purposes of Part 1 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (c. 43),
g	he/she receives a welfare service of a prescribed description,
h	he/she receives any service or participates in any activity provided specifically for persons who fall within subsection (9),
i	payments are made to them (or to another on their behalf) in pursuance of arrangements under section 57 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 (c. 15), or
j	he/she requires assistance in the conduct of his own affairs.
2	Residential accommodation is accommodation provided for a person:
a	in connection with any care or nursing he requires, or
b	who is or has been a pupil attending a residential special school.
3	A residential special school is a school which provides residential accommodation for its pupils and which is:
a	a special school within the meaning of section 337 of the Education Act 1996 (c. 56);
b	an independent school (within the meaning of section 463 of that Act) which is approved by the Secretary of State in accordance with section 347 of that Act;
c	an independent school (within the meaning of section 463 of that Act) not falling within paragraph (a) or (b) which, with the consent of the Secretary of State given under section 347(5)(b) of that Act, provides places for children with special educational needs (within the meaning of section 312 of that Act);
d	an institution within the further education sector (within the meaning of section 91 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992) which provides accommodation for children.
4	Domiciliary care is care of any description or assistance falling within subsection (5) whether provided continuously or not which a person receives in a place where he is, for the time being, living.
5	Assistance falls within this subsection if it is (to any extent) provided to a person by reason of:
a	his/her age;
b	his/her health;
c	any disability he/she has.
6	Health care includes treatment, therapy or palliative care of any description.
7	A person is in lawful custody if he/she is:
a	detained in a prison (within the meaning of the Prison Act 1952 (c. 52));
b	detained in a remand centre, young offender institution or secure training centre (as mentioned in section 43 of that Act);
c	detained in an attendance centre (within the meaning of section 53(1) of that Act);
d	a detained person (within the meaning of Part 8 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (c. 33)) who is detained in a removal centre or short-term holding facility (within the meaning of that Part) or in pursuance of escort arrangements made under section 156 of that Act.
8	e The reference to a welfare service must be construed in accordance with section 16(5).
9	A person falls within this subsection if:
a	he/she has particular needs because of his age;
b	he/she has any form of disability;
c	he/she has a physical or mental problem of such description as is prescribed;

	d	she is an expectant or nursing mother in receipt of residential accommodation pursuant to arrangements made under section 21(1)(aa) of the National Assistance Act 1948 or care pursuant to paragraph 1 of Schedule 8 to the National Health Service Act 1977 (c. 49);
	e	he/she is a person of a prescribed description not falling within paragraphs (a) to (d).
10		A person requires assistance in the conduct of their own affairs if:
	a	a lasting power of attorney is created in respect of them in accordance with section 9 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (c. 9) or an application is made under paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to that Act for the registration of an instrument intended to create a lasting power of attorney in respect of him;
	b	an enduring power of attorney (within the meaning of Schedule 4 to that Act) in respect of them is registered in accordance with that Schedule or an application is made under that Schedule for the registration of an enduring power of attorney in respect of him;
	c	an order under section 16 of that Act has been made by the Court of Protection in relation to the making of decisions on their behalf, or such an order has been applied for;
	d	an independent mental capacity advocate is or is to be appointed in respect of them in pursuance of arrangements under section 35 of that Act;
	e	independent advocacy services (within the meaning of section 248 of the National Health Service Act 2006 (c. 41) or section 187 of the National Health Service (Wales) Act 2006 (c. 42)) are or are to be provided in respect of them;
	f	a representative is or is to be appointed to receive payments on their behalf in pursuance of regulations made under the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (c. 5).
11		The Secretary of State may by order provide that a person specified in the order or of a description so specified who falls within subsection (1) is not to be treated as a vulnerable adult.