

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY

1. Purpose

The aims of the policy are

- to enhance the dignity of service users participating in the activities of Open Country.
- to ensure the safety of all adults that work with Open Country and through demonstrating the commitment of Open Country to providing a safe environment to give service users and their carers confidence in using the service.
- to act appropriately and effectively in dealing with allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse or potential abuse.
- to implement processes which enable Open Country to meet the requirements of the '*Joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and York*'.

2. Scope and Definition

This Policy and Procedure is for all trustees, employees, volunteers, carers and service users associated with Open Country. It also applies to any suppliers or partners of Open Country.

The Policy and Procedure is associated with the promotion of effective Safeguarding practice and associated promotion of dignity for Adults at Risk (formally referred to as Vulnerable Adults).

“Adults at risk of harm”

The Care Act 2014 makes it clear that abuse of adults, links to circumstances rather than the characteristics of the people experiencing the harm. Labelling groups of people as inherently ‘vulnerable’ is seen to be disempowering. Therefore, the terminology of ‘vulnerable adults’ has moved towards ‘adults at risk of harm’, usually shortened to ‘adults at risk’ in policies and procedures. There may also be reference to an ‘adult with a care and support need’.

Under the Care Act 2014, the safeguarding duties apply to an adult who;

- Has needs for care and support
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

3. Policy

Open Country is committed to zero tolerance of abuse and neglect within the organisation. The Policy Statement and Procedures have been drawn up in order to enable it to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm, abuse and coercion occurring.
- Ensure that any allegations, disclosures of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse is supported.
- Stop that abuse occurring.
- Implement processes which enable it to meet the requirements of the '*Joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and York*'.

In order to implement the policy the Open Country will work:

- To manage services in a way which promotes safety and prevents abuse and enables staff, volunteers and service users to live free from abuse and coercion.
- To promote the freedom and dignity of the person who has or is experiencing abuse.
- To ensure the safety and well being of people who do not have the capacity to decide how they want to respond to abuse that they are experiencing
- To ensure that all trustees, staff, volunteers and service users are familiar with this policy.
- To ensure all trustees, staff and volunteers are appropriately trained in safeguarding and kept up to date with statutory and organisational developments relating to preventing abuse and promoting the welfare of adults.
- Will seek to gain permission from service users before sharing information about them with another agency. However where a person is in danger, or a serious crime has been committed, then a decision may be taken to pass information to another agency without the service user's consent.

- With other agencies within the framework of the '*Joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and York*'.
- Will ensure that the named person understands his/her responsibility to refer incidents of adult abuse to the relevant statutory agencies (Police/Adult Social Care).

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Trustees are responsible for

- Assessing the safeguarding risks that might arise from the charity's activities and operations.
- Ensuring that suitable policies and procedures are in place to handle allegations and incidents.
- To regularly monitor the implementation of policies and procedures.
- To ensure that the board and people working with the charity respond properly when allegations and incidents arise.
- Reviewing policies and procedures periodically and following serious incidents.

4.2 The Chief Officer is the **Designated Person** with overall responsibility for dealing with safeguarding issues and responsible for:

- Ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken prior to planned activities.
- Recommending policies and procedures are in place to prevent and to handle allegations and incidents.
- To ensure staff and volunteers are trained in safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Following up any referrals and ensure the issues have been addressed.
- Reinforcing the utmost need for confidentiality and to ensure that staff and volunteers are adhering to good practice with regard to confidentiality and security.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers working directly with service users who have experienced abuse, or who are experiencing abuse, are well supported and receive appropriate supervision.
- Ensuring that disciplinary procedures are co-ordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of any allegation.
- Ensuring that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded and referred to Adult Social Care following the '*Joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and York*' and to co-operate with any investigations. Where necessary, incidents should be informed to the Board of Trustees.

- Where the named officer decides not to pursue an alert, a person who raises a concern can refer to the Open Country Chair on appeal, and if they still feel their treatment is unsatisfactory, they have the right to take the matter directly to the appropriate council officer. Contact lists are shown in Appendix C.

4.3 Employees are responsible for

- Familiarising themselves with and implementing the Open Country policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- Investigating any allegations or incidents that occur during an activity and informing the Chief Officer immediately.

4.4 Volunteers are responsible for

- Familiarising themselves with and implementing the Open Country policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- Advising the activity leader of any allegations or incidents that occur

4.5 Carers are responsible for

- Ensuring that service users have appropriate clothing and are appropriately provisioned before and during an activity.
- Ensuring that Open Country staff are equipped with enough information about their service users to be able to carry out their role efficiently and safely.
- Being familiar with the policies and procedures of Open Country.

5. Procedure

5.1 Introduction

Open Country provides a countryside activities service to people with disabilities and these procedures have been designed to ensure the welfare and protection of any adult who accesses the services provided.

The organisation is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the services it offers and that all those involved will be treated with dignity and respect.

These procedures are cross-referenced with and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Staff and Volunteer and Trustee recruitment policies
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Disciplinary and Grievance

- Whistle blowing
- Complaints
- Equality and Diversity
- Data Protection
- Training

These procedures are divided into the following sections

- Preventing and minimising abuse
- Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse
- Named person for safeguarding adults
- Responding to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse
- Managing allegations made against a member of staff or volunteer(s)
- Recording and managing confidential information
- Disseminating/Reviewing policy and procedures

5.2 Preventing and minimising abuse

5.2.1 Recruitment

Open Country is committed to safer recruitment policies and practices for paid staff, volunteers and trustees. This includes enhanced DBS disclosures for staff and volunteers, ensuring two references are taken up and adequate training on Safeguarding Adults is provided for staff and volunteers. This also applies to Trustees participating in countryside activities.

People coming out on corporate events and activities will not have close contact or supervision of adults at risk, so will not require a DBS check, as the nature of their role does not permit us to do so. On such events it is important that Open Country staff and the corporate members are clear about what their volunteering role is; as outlined in the '*Corporate Volunteering Agreement*', signed by the company prior to their event.

5.2.2. Communication

Service users and Carers are encouraged to become involved with the running of the organisation through the Advisory Group. Information will be made available about abuse and the Complaints Policy and Safeguarding Adults Policy Statement will be available to service users and carers. This information will be in a form that can be easily understood. This will include simple and straightforward ways for service users and or carers to report concerns.

5.2.3 Training

All staff, volunteers and trustees will be provided with training and information to enable them to develop the awareness, skills and abilities appropriate to their

role within the organisation regarding Safeguarding. A record of training will be maintained by the Chief Officer.

All staff, volunteers and trustees will be provided with information regarding the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures during their induction period and all the organisations procedures will form part of their handbooks.

Staff will be provided with opportunity to discuss Safeguarding issues during their supervision and appraisal.

5.3 Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

Open Country is committed to ensuring that all trustees, staff and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse and will ensure that the named person and other members of staff and volunteers have access to training around Safeguarding Adults. Information on this can be found in the 'Open Country Guide to Adult Safeguarding'

5.4 Named person for safeguarding adults

The named person is responsible for dealing with any Safeguarding Adults issues that might arise. The named officer is the Chief Officer, David Shaftoe. In the absence of the Chief Officer, the deputy named person is Kate Leggett.

5.5 Responding to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse

5.5.1 Open Country recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. Anyone who has contact with vulnerable adults and hears disclosures or allegations or has concerns about potential abuse or neglect has a duty to pass them on appropriately and should advise the named officer or his deputy.

Detailed guidance on how to respond to a disclosure can be found in the Open Country Guide to Safeguarding.

5.5.2 All situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be discussed with the named person. The alleged victim will be told that this will happen. This stage is called the **alert**.

5.5.3 The named person can then take advice from the Safeguarding Adults Team and/or other advice giving organisations.

5.5.4 If it is appropriate and there is consent from the individual, or there is a good reason to override consent, such as risk to others, a referral to the

appropriate safeguarding team will be made, using the '*Joint Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures for West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and York*' referral process.

If the individual experiencing abuse does not have the mental capacity to understand what is happening to them, a referral will be made without that person's consent.

5.5.5 Once it is established that there is an allegation of abuse, the named officer will make a referral to the safeguarding officer in the appropriate council. Contact lists are shown in Appendix C.

Prior to making a referral, the named person will gather information about the allegation, and complete as much of the **Inter-agency Safeguarding Adults Alert/Referral Form** as possible. Lack of access to necessary information should NOT delay the referral.

A referral will then lead to the implementation of the next stages of the investigation. The named person should have an overview of this process so they can explain it to the person concerned and offer all relevant support to the process. This could be practical support e.g. providing a venue, or information and reports and emotional support.

Information should be provided to the individual. This could be about other sources of help or information that could enable them to decide what to do about their experience, enable them to recover from their experience and enable them to seek justice.

5.5.6 Where the named person considers it inappropriate to refer an alert to the safeguarding authority and a reportee wishes the issue to be referred, the reportee should appeal to the trustee responsible for safeguarding.

If the trustee considers it inappropriate to refer the alert to the safeguarding authority and the reportee still wishes the issue to be referred they can contact the safeguarding authority directly. (See Appendix D for guidance)

5.6 Managing allegations made against member of staff or volunteer

The process of responding to such an allegation has been developed in conjunction with:

- Whistle blowing
- Complaints
- Disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Open Country will ensure that any allegations made against members or member of staff, volunteer or trustee will be dealt with swiftly.

Where a member of staff/volunteer/trustee is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

Where the allegation involves alleged abuse of a vulnerable adult, a referral should be made following the process in section 4.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount and it should be ensured that they are safe and away from the person(s) who are the alleged perpetrators.

The named person will liaise with the Safeguarding Manager to discuss the best course of action and to ensure the Open Country Disciplinary Procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation. The named person will advise the Chair of Trustees.

5.7 Recording and managing confidential information

The information should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen and witnesses if appropriate.

Reassure that this information will be kept in a secure location and only shared with those who need to know should be included. If an adult has capacity and no other person is at risk, then if they do not want to take the matter further, it will remain confidential. The person should be reassured and provided with information about possible sources of help, should they decide to do something at a later date.

However there will be occasions when confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Open Country is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around Safeguarding Adults issues should be shared only with those who need to know. For further information, please see *Open Country Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy*.

The information that is recorded will be kept securely and will comply with data protection.

5.8 Disseminating/Reviewing policy and procedures

5.8.1 Chief Officer (the named person)

The Chief Officer will review the policy at least annually, in the light of changes in law or good practice.

The Chief Officer will submit an annual monitoring report regarding Safeguarding including a review of the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures to the Board of Trustees.

The Chief Officer will ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to staff, volunteers and service users.

5.8.2 Carers and Service Users

Carers and Service Users can be part of review of any policies and procedures via the Advisory Group. Outside of this mechanism they can approach the Chief Officer or Chair of Trustees.

5.8.3 Trustees

Trustees will

- Appoint a trustee to have ongoing oversight and review of safeguarding
- Assess the safeguarding risks that might arise from the charity's activities and operations as part of the annual review of the risk register and with any new activities.
- Annually review those policies and procedures to ensure that the handling of allegations and incidents is effective and efficient
- Review practices and procedures periodically and after serious incidents.
- Review the training, procedures and practices for the promoting safeguarding.

Appendix A **[Inter-agency Safeguarding Adults Alert/Referral Form](#)**

This form should be used for making any referral. It provides a useful guidance as to the information that should be collected when a concern is apparent

This form should be completed in accordance with the Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures which can be found at www.nypartnerships.org.uk/sab

You should complete this form with as much detail as possible. Lack of access to the necessary information should NOT delay reporting the alert.

Appendix B The Prevent Duty

From 1st July 2015 the Prevent Duty became law. Initially this placed a duty on all schools, including FE providers, to have due regard to preventing people being drawn into terrorism. Since then it has broadened out to require all organisations to have an awareness of potential conditions encouraging terrorist attitudes and behaviours. If a member of Open Country staff or a volunteer has a concern, they should follow normal safeguarding procedures. In Prevent priority areas, the local authority will have a Prevent lead who can also provide support.

They can also contact the local police force or dial 101 (the non-emergency number), who can talk in confidence about any concerns and help us gain access to support and advice. The Department for Education has dedicated a telephone helpline (020 7340 7264) to enable us to raise concerns relating to extremism directly.

Concerns can also be emailed to counter.extremism@education.gov.uk. Please note that the helpline is not intended for use in emergency situations, such as a person being at immediate risk of harm or a security incident, in which case the normal emergency procedures should be followed. See the following for further details: www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

Appendix C Key Contacts

Open Country

Named Person for Safeguarding Adults: David Shaftoe
Work Telephone number: 01423 507227
Work Mobile Number: 07875 288605
Emergency Contact Number: 07974 873432

Name of Deputy Person: Kate Leggett
Work Telephone number: 01423 507227
Work Mobile Number: 07875 288605

Name of Safeguarding Trustee: Post vacant – contact Richard Firth, Chair
Mobile Number: 07768 645471

Safeguarding Board websites

Leeds: www.leadssafeguardingadults.org.uk

North Yorkshire: www.nypartnerships.org.uk

Wakefield: <http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/health-care-and-advice/adults-and-older-people-services/safeguarding>

York: www.safeguardingadultsyork.org.uk

Raising Safeguarding Concerns

Leeds

- Adult Social Care Contact Centre: 0113 222 4401
- www.leeds.gov.uk/adult-social-care/professionals-referrals-and-resources/professionals-care-referrals-and-safeguarding-reports
- Emergency Duty Team: 0113 378 0644 (outside contact centre times)

For additional information please visit: www.leadssafeguardingadults.org.uk

North Yorkshire

- Adult Social Care, Customer Services 01609 780780. Opening hours are 8am – 5.30pm Monday to Friday. This number will be answered by the Emergency duty team outside these hours.
- Talk to North Yorkshire County Council online at www.northyorks.gov.uk/contact-us-live-chat
- For general questions and enquiries about safeguarding adults, please email: nysab@northyorks.gov.uk
- For additional information please visit North Yorkshire County Council website: www.northyorks.gov.uk/safeguardingadults or North Yorkshire Partnerships website: www.nypartnerships.org.uk/sab
- To access and download an Interagency Safeguarding Adults Concerns form: www.northyorks.gov.uk/safeguarding-vulnerable-adults

Wakefield

- Social Care Direct: Telephone: 0345 8 503 503
- Email: social_care_direct@wakefield.gov.uk

For additional information visit <http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/health-care-and-advice/adults-and-older-people-services/safeguarding>

York

- Customer access and assessment team: Telephone: 01904 555111 (8.30- 5.00pm).
- Email: adult.socialsupport@york.gov.uk
- Out of hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team - Telephone: 01609 780 780
- For information/advice contact Safeguarding Adults Team: Tel: 01904 555 111 (ask for duty worker) or email: adult.socialsupport@york.gov.uk

Appendix D Guides for service users and carers (from NYCC website)

- [How to make sure you are safe from abuse \(pdf / 53 KB\)](#) tells you what abuse is and how to report it if you think you have been abused.
- [How to make sure you are safe from abuse \(easy read\) \(pdf / 973 KB\)](#) is an easy read version of the guide that tells you what abuse is and how to report it if you think you have been abused.
- [What happens after you have reported that abuse has happened \(pdf / 56 KB\)](#) tells you what happens when you report abuse.
- [What happens after you have reported that abuse has happened \(easy read\) \(pdf / 1 MB\)](#) is an easy read version of the guide that tells you what happens when you report abuse.

Policy prepared by:	Bob Curry
Approved by the Board on:	28 th September 2018, March 2021
Reviewed by the Chief Officer on:	1 st March 2024
Next review date:	31 st March 2025

Signed by: David Shaftoe, Open Country Chief Officer

Signature: 

Date: 01/03/2024