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| <b>Safeguarding Policy</b> |  |
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| Policy Owner        | Chief Executive   |
| Policy Lead         | Finance Executive |
| Approved by         | Board of Trustees |
| Date effective from | January 2021      |
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| Version             | 3                 |

| Version Control | Comments |
|-----------------|----------|
|                 |          |

**Demonstrating Organisational Values:**

| Which values are demonstrated in this paper?              |   |
|---|---|
| To be client centred                                      | X |
| Deliver services with compassion                          | X |
| Value staff and volunteers                                | X |
| Be inclusive and embrace equality and diversity           | X |
| Develop trust in our services                             | X |
| Everybody working together to achieve the same objectives | X |

**1. Introduction**

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees recognises that every older person has the right to live free from abuse. Therefore, the charity has a duty of care to all its service users and to protect them wherever possible from any form of abuse. This policy defines the charity's method of responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse, whether by Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees staff or volunteers, or by external organisations, family, or carers.

This policy applies to all Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees activities, staff and volunteers

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees has legal responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. This states that certain activities in relation to vulnerable adults are regulated. These activities are specified as those which involve frequent, intensive and/or

overnight contact including training, care, supervision, advice, treatment and transportation of vulnerable adults.

Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees completes Disclosure and Barring Service checks when recruiting staff for roles which will be, or volunteers who will be in regular contact with vulnerable older people. Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees is also required to make a referral to the Local Authority Adults Safeguarding Board whenever a worker or volunteer is reasonably considered to be guilty of misconduct that has harmed a vulnerable adult, or placed such a person at risk of harm. Referrals must also be considered if staff or volunteers suspect a client to be at risk from a family member, carer, etc., external to our organisation.

## **2. Purpose**

The policy is designed to:

- provide mechanisms to help safeguard older people from abuse and/or exploitation.
- provide a framework for effective working.
- reduce and prevent incidences of abuse.
- respond quickly and sensitively to suspicions or disclosed incidents of abuse.
- ensure that abuse of a client does not occur as a result, either directly or indirectly, of any of the services offered by Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees.
- increase awareness of issues concerning the abuse of older people
- provide a process for staff who have issues of concern with respect to suspected, disclosed or observed abuse.
- ensure that older people are empowered to speak out for themselves.

## **3. Responsibilities**

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees' Safeguarding Policy. The Chief Executive will fulfil, or will delegate tasks to fulfil, the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that all information in respect of safeguarding vulnerable adults is stored securely.
- Provide support to colleagues wherever practicable to discuss any queries, prior to, during and after a Safeguarding Adult Protection concern.
- Oversee training and specialist support for Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees staff and volunteers.
- Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees Executives will report to the statutory authorities cases of abuse, will document all actions, conversations and reasons for decisions made.

- Ensure that all team members, paid and volunteers, are familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

#### 4. **What is abuse?**

Abuse can take many forms. It might be:

- something that happens once or repeatedly
- a deliberate act or something that was unintentional, perhaps due to a lack of understanding
- a crime

There are many different kinds of abuse, these are just examples:

**Physical abuse**, such as being hit, kicked, being locked in a room or inappropriate restraint;

**Sexual abuse**, such as being made to take part in a sexual activity when the adult has not, or is not able to give their consent;

**Psychological abuse**, such as being shouted at, ridiculed or bullied, as well as being made to feel frightened;

**Financial or material abuse**, such as stealing someone's money or belongings, or misusing them for someone else's benefit;

**Neglect** involves the failure to provide care or support which results in someone being harmed;

**Discriminatory abuse** involves treatment or harassment based on age, gender, sexuality, disability, race or religious belief;

**Modern slavery** includes human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude;

If any of these forms of abuse are caused by an organisation, it is sometimes called **organisational abuse**.

When abuse occurs between partners or by a family member, it is often called **domestic violence and abuse**.

**Self-neglect** covers a wide range of behaviours, such as neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.

A safeguarding response in relation to self-neglect may be appropriate where a person is declining assistance in relation to their care and support needs and the impact of their decision has, or is likely to have, a substantial impact on their overall individual wellbeing.

## 5. Action to be taken when abuse is known about or suspected

In order to simplify reporting a safeguarding issue, a Safeguarding Officer will be appointed at all sites. The officer will be qualified to Safeguarding Level 2 and will attend a safeguarding meeting every month to discuss any safeguarding issues or improvements to procedures. Notices will be displayed at all sites with details of the Safeguarding lead and the relevant Safeguarding Officer.

**Alerting.** Where an incident of concern is disclosed, suspected or witnessed, the person receiving the information must record as much detail as possible of what they know. They should notify their line manager as soon as practicable, both verbally and in a written document. Any person can raise their concerns with the local authority ([gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:gatewaytocare@kirklees.gov.uk) or [gatewaytocare@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:gatewaytocare@calderdale.gov.uk)). This means that the adult experiencing abuse or neglect can raise the concern themselves, but so can their friends, family members, unpaid carers, other members of the public, paid carers, professionals and organisations.

**Reporting.** When a concern of abuse has been raised, a member of the team is to discuss the issue with the person who raised the concern, in order to ascertain the particular circumstance of the incident. The Executive will then decide whether to make a report directly to the relevant local authority adult protection team (or equivalent) in accordance with Safeguarding Adults West and North Yorkshire Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures.

*(The Safeguarding Officer can consult with the Safeguarding lead person as a part of the decision-making process – Anthony Flowers, Trustee).*

Where suspected abuse is alleged to be malpractice by a staff member or volunteer, the whistle-blowing policy or internal disciplinary procedure will be invoked.

## 6. Confidentiality & Consent

A duty of confidence arises when sensitive personal information is obtained and / or recorded in circumstances where it is reasonable for the subject of their information to expect that the information will be held in confidence. Adults at risk provide sensitive information and have a right to expect that the information that they directly provide and information obtained from others will be treated respectfully and that their privacy will be maintained. challenges of working within the boundaries of confidentiality should not impede taking appropriate action. Whenever possible, informed consent to the sharing of information should be obtained. However - Emergency or life-threatening situations may warrant the sharing of relevant information with the relevant emergency services without consent. The law does not prevent the sharing of sensitive, personal information within organisations. If the information is confidential, but there is a safeguarding concern, sharing it may be justified. The law does not prevent the sharing

of sensitive, personal information between organisations where the public interest served outweighs the public interest served by protecting confidentiality – for example, where a serious crime may be prevented. It is good practice to try to gain the person's consent to share information, and should be gained if it is possible and does not put the individual at any increased risk. Consent should be recorded on Charity log, with full details of the concern and action taken.

Whether information is shared with or without the adult at risk's consent, the Information sharing process should abide by the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018. In those instances where the person lacks the mental capacity to give informed consent, staff should always bear in mind the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and whether sharing it will be in the person's best interest. The Data Protection Act 2018 should not be a barrier to sharing information. It provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.

## **7. Equality & Diversity.**

It is every person's human right to live a life free from abuse and neglect. Every adult at risk has an equal right to support and protection within the procedure regardless of their individual differences or circumstance.

This policy applies equally to;

- All adults at risk as defined within this policy
- All agencies
- All forms of abuse

Throughout safeguarding adults, due regard must be given to individual differences, including age, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, race or racial group, caring responsibilities, class, culture, language, pregnancy and marital or civil partnership status.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Chief Executive Officer not less than annually. The Chief Executive will also review the policy regularly (not less than annually) and recommend and implement action to ensure the policy is up to date and compliant with current legislation and guidance.

Safeguarding will be a standard Agenda item for each meeting of the Board of Trustees.