



Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy

'Safeguarding is everybody's business and means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect'

Policy Statement

We have a strong commitment for the care, welfare and safety of the vulnerable adults with whom we work in both regulated and non regulated activities. We have identified that many of RSM members fall into the category of 'vulnerable adult' (see additional information). We work with our members, relatives, carers, relevant professionals and our community to ensure the rights and safety of our members. Our safeguarding policy is based upon guidance and legislation from East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) www.eastsussexsab.org.uk and The Care Act 2014.

Our commitments:

- We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which our members are protected from abuse and harm.
- We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the local SAB and the Care Act 2014.

This policy sets out the procedures we follow if we suspect that:

- A vulnerable adult is at risk of being harmed or is being harmed
- An allegation is made against a member of staff/volunteer/trustee

This policy also details the steps we take to safeguard the vulnerable adults in our care through:

- Recruitment
- Training and induction

Safeguarding Children

In addition to the above we also have a duty of care to protect children that we meet during the course of our work. This may be students on work placements or children that we engage with via our intergenerational work. All staff are therefore also DBS checked to work with children (as well as vulnerable adults) and have a strong commitment for their care, welfare and safety. Staff are aware of how to deal with allegations and concerns and who to contact for further advice and/or action.

Safeguard Lead

It is a legal requirement to have a designated person to take the lead in safeguarding. This person will complete safeguarding training every two years and will stay abreast of all current safeguarding legislation. They will ensure that all other staff, trustees and volunteers complete training so that they are aware of how to spot signs of abuse and report concerns to them. They will refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies. They will ensure that all staff, trustees and volunteers are aware of how to refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations themselves, to promote an ethos of 'safeguarding is everybody's business'. Our safeguarding lead is **Vicky Cheeseman**.

Recruitment and Training

Due to the nature and ethos of RSM, all trustees, staff and volunteers are in a position of trust. In order to ensure that vulnerable adults are protected whilst attending RSM activities, we have robust safe recruitment procedures in place for trustees, staff and volunteers. To this aim we ensure that:

- *Our adverts/literature states that enhanced DBS checks will be required for the role
- Identity checks are carried out to establish that applicants are who they claim to be
- Professional and character references are obtained
- Application forms are completed and checked by two people and any gaps are accounted for

- Volunteers working on behalf of RSM in positions which do not qualify for a DBS check to be undertaken (for example serving refreshments as part of a team), will do so with agreement from the Safeguard Lead.
- Safeguarding training will be arranged for all staff, trustees and volunteers which will be renewed every five years. Training will include recognising possible signs of abuse and how to share information appropriately and how to respond to safeguarding concerns appropriately.

*NB: All volunteers will be required to register for the free DBS update system. All paid staff will have a DBS check every four years and will complete a 'suitability form' annually, to identify if their suitability to work with vulnerable adults has changed.

COVID – 19 - during this period of national pandemic, we find ourselves in exceptional circumstances. We have recruited additional volunteers (called Parish Pals) for the duration of the crisis. They have been vetted remotely by the Volunteer Co Ordinator and or our Charity Manager (via a 20 minute phone call and series of set questions, designed to assess suitability) and all staff have regular contact with these volunteers, via phone, Zoom or WhattsApp. They have all been identified as known in our community by a member of staff or long standing volunteer. Many have DBS checks for other volunteering roles or positions which they held prior to lockdown. Their role is a doorstep service and not entering a home, therefore they have not been DBS checked. For those volunteers who wish to become a permanent RSM Volunteer (beyond this crisis), they will be fully vetted in the usual manner. Any concerns raised relating to their conduct, will be fully investigated with appropriate action being taken.

Responding to suspicions of abuse

Employees and volunteers are not required to investigate suspicions. If someone believes that a vulnerable adult may be suffering from abuse they must refer their concerns to the safeguard lead, who will listen to these concerns and take appropriate action. The individual must record what they have seen, heard or know, accurately, at the time the event occurs. A standard form is provided for this purpose. The lead will act swiftly (no later than at the end of the working day in question. However if the concern is raised at the end of a working day and a vulnerable adult is not in immediate danger, the lead will act at the start of the

following day and make appropriate referrals. The safeguard lead will document all concerns in the Safeguarding folder. Low level concerns in isolation may not appear as a safeguarding risk. However, the entries are reviewed regularly by the safeguard lead to identify trends and patterns which could lead to a safeguarding referral being made.

NB: Although the safeguard lead is the first point of contact, if staff, trustees or volunteers feel that the lead does not take their concern seriously, they can make a referral themselves:

Making a referral – who to contact?

East Sussex Social Care:

Tel: 0345 60 80 191

Email: HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk

Out of hours (emergency) support

Monday – Thursday: 5pm to 8.30am

Weekends: Friday 4.30pm to Monday 8.30am

Public holidays: 24 hours

Tel: 01323 636399

Alternatively contact the Police on 101 or in an emergency 999

Allegations against staff, trustees and volunteers

All allegations will be taken seriously, and this may lead to the suspension of paid staff or the suspension of duties for trustees/volunteers. Suspension is deemed a neutral act, safeguarding both the vulnerable adult and the member of staff, trustee/volunteer. Suspension will occur when; a person is at risk; when the allegation is so serious that dismissal for gross misconduct is possible; where it is necessary to allow unimpeded investigation. The matter will remain confidential and information should be disclosed on a need to know basis only. We will follow advice from East Sussex SAB and will conduct all investigations within 28 days. We will offer appropriate pastoral support and refer the individual to ACAS for legal advice. If following an investigation an individual is removed

from the organisation (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to adults, we will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. For further information please refer to the ‘Whistleblowing within the Workplace’ policy.

This policy was written/reviewed by	Vicky Cheeseman – Safeguard Lead
Adopted by	Board of Trustees
Date	July 2018
Reviewed	July 2019
Reviewed	Jan 2021 - VC
Next review date	Jan 2022 or if legislation dictates

Additional Information

Definition of ‘Vulnerable adult’

A person is a vulnerable adult if they are 18 years or over and who have care or support needs because of their – age, physical or learning disability, mental health needs, or other illness and are, or may be, unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect because of their care and support needs. Other adults who may be at risk include people who are: unpaid carers, homeless, experiencing domestic violence, addicted to drugs or alcohol, badly treated and forced to work for little or no pay, or forced to marry.

Not all RSM members fall into all categories but all our members certainly fall into the first category (age), with the average age of our members being 80, it is therefore prudent to assume that our members are classified as vulnerable adults.

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse	Neglect	Domestic violence
Sexual abuse	Self neglect	Organisational abuse
Financial abuse	Psychological or emotional abuse	
Discriminatory abuse	Modern slavery	