

Adult Safeguarding Policy

Sandwell Visually Impaired (SVI) CIO

1 Policy aims

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff/volunteers working on behalf of Sandwell Visually Impaired in relation to safeguarding adults at risk.

All adults have the right to be safe from harm and must be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2 Objectives

Everyone who participates in SVI's activities is entitled to do so in a safe and enjoyable environment.

We are committed to helping everyone involved in any activities to accept their responsibility to safeguard adults at risk, from harm and abuse.

We are a Hate Crime Reporting Centre and seek to proactively challenge abuse and discrimination wherever it occurs.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

Staff and volunteers working with adults at risk have a responsibility to report concerns to an appropriate member of staff.

3 Adults at risk

The Care Act 2014 says that specific adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

An adult with care and support needs may be, but is not limited to:

- an older person

- a person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment
- someone with mental health needs, including dementia or a personality disorder
- a person with a long-term health condition
- someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.

This is not an exhaustive list. In its definition of who should receive a safeguarding response, the Care Act 2014 also includes people who are victims of sexual exploitation, domestic abuse and modern slavery.

People with care and support needs are not inherently vulnerable, but they may come to be at risk of abuse or neglect at any point due to:

- physical or mental ill-health
- becoming disabled
- getting older
- not having support networks
- inappropriate accommodation
- financial circumstances
- being socially isolated.

4 Responsibilities and communication

Sandwell Visually Impaired's Safeguarding Policy will be available to all members, carers, relatives, staff, volunteers and participants.

It is important that adults at risk are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. SVI will pass information to the appropriate local safeguarding board and inform the appropriate individuals where relevant.

SVI has responsibility for ensuring that the policy and procedures are implemented, including referring any appropriate disciplinary action to the Board of Trustees. SVI's Safeguarding lead on the Board of Trustees is Kiran Patel.

5 The role of key individual agencies

5.1 Adult Social Care (Sandwell Council)

There will be a safeguarding enquiry by the local authority where it has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there):

- (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs)
- (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multi-agency work aimed at protecting and safeguarding adults at risk.

Local authorities also have safeguarding responsibilities for carers and a general duty to promote the wellbeing of the wider population in the communities they serve.

5.2 The Police

The police play a vital role in safeguarding adults with cases involving alleged criminal acts. It becomes the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and gathering evidence.

Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

6 Types of abuse

Abuse or neglect may be the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance. Exploitation can be a common theme in the experience of abuse or neglect. Whilst it is acknowledged that abuse or neglect can take different forms, The Care Act 2014 guidance identifies the following types of abuse and neglect. For more information, including indicators of each type of abuse, see West Midlands Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures available at

<https://www.sandwellsab.org.uk/safeguarding-policy-and-procedures/>.

6.1 Physical abuse

Physical abuse includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, being locked in a room, inappropriate sanctions or force-feeding, inappropriate methods of restraint, and unlawfully depriving a person of their liberty.

6.2 Domestic violence

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

6.3 Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

6.4 Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse includes 'emotional abuse' and takes the form of threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, rejection, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, indifference, harassment, verbal abuse (including shouting or swearing), cyber bullying, isolation or withdrawal from services or support networks.

6.5 Financial or material abuse

This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

6.6 Modern slavery

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced and compulsory 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.

6.7 Discriminatory abuse

This includes discrimination on the grounds of race, faith or religion, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation and political views, along with racist, sexist, homophobic or ageist comments or jokes, or comments and jokes based on a person's disability or any other form of harassment, slur or similar treatment. Hate crime can be viewed as a form of discriminatory abuse, although it will often involve other types of abuse as well. It also includes not responding to dietary needs and not providing appropriate spiritual support. Excluding a person from activities on the basis they are 'not liked' is also discriminatory abuse.

6.8 Organisational abuse

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, or where care is provided within their own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

6.9 Neglect and acts of omission

These include ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, and the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating. Neglect 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 for themselves.

6.10 Self-neglect

Self-neglect covers a wide range of behaviour, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Self neglect is also defined as the inability (intentional or non-intentional) to maintain a socially and culturally accepted standard of self-care with the potential for serious consequences to the health and wellbeing of the individual and sometimes to their community.

7 Reporting a concern

7.1 Do you have a concern?

Any safeguarding concern must be raised with a member of SVI staff and/or the relevant organisation representative. SVI's Safeguarding Lead email is safeguarding@sandwellvisuallyimpaired.org.uk.

If you have contact with adults at risk – as a carer, volunteer, personal assistant, or through working in health and social care – you should report your concerns on the Adult Safeguarding Concern Form PAN 1 available at www.sandwellsab.org.uk/safeguarding-policy-and-procedures/. If you have any difficulties completing the online form, contact Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board (see paragraph 7.4 below)

7.2 Is it an emergency?

When someone is distressed or hurt they need immediate help. Make sure the person is safe. Call 999 for police or other emergency services.

7.3 Not an emergency?

If you are worried about someone, or know or suspect abuse, act now.

7.4 Report it


Call Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) on 0121 569 2266 or email Sandwell_enquiry@sandwell.gov.uk. They are open from 9am - 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9am - 5pm on Fridays. Outside of these hours call 0121 569 2355.

Action may need to be taken against the abuser, and the circumstances investigated to prevent further harm.

8 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the SVI Board of Trustees one year after being introduced and then every three years or in response to significant new legislation and amended as appropriate. Guidance from Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board will be sought as necessary.

The policy will be monitored in partnership with the Board of Trustees.


.....
Signed by Anthony Averis
for and on behalf of **SVI CIO**

Dated:16 October 2023.....