

## **EMMA HALL Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy**

All volunteers and trustees working on behalf of Emma Hall have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of adults at risk.

Volunteers and committee members may receive disclosures of abuse and observe vulnerable adults who are at risk. This policy will enable volunteers and committee members to make informed and confident responses to specific adult protection issues.

Emma Hall is committed to

- stopping abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- preventing harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- promoting the wellbeing of the adult(s) at risk in safeguarding adults' arrangements.
- safeguarding adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- promoting an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned.
- raising awareness of safeguarding adults to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- providing information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult;
- addressing what caused the abuse or neglect.

### **Legal Framework**

The policy follows international, national and local guidance, legislation, policy and guidance including, but not limited to –

- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Disclosure and Barring Service 2012
- The Care Act 2014
- The Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2018

A summary of legislation is available from: national

<https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/safeguarding-adults-legislation/>

## **What is an Adult at Risk?**

The policy and procedures relate to the safeguarding of adults at risk. Adults at risk are defined as individuals aged over 18 who:

- have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect;
- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect. (Care Act, 2014)
- are at risk of radicalisation (under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, where they are not defined as adult at risk under the Care Act 2014)

## **What is abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subject to it.

Under the Care Act 2014, the following types of abuse are recognised:

### **Physical abuse:**

Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, burning, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (all acts of FGM are a crime in the UK and the girls and women subjected to FGM are victims of this crime).

### **Domestic abuse:**

Including an incident or a pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse, by someone who is, or has been, an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

### **Sexual abuse:**

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

**Psychological or emotional abuse:**

Including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber-bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

**Financial or material abuse:**

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, exploitation, 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.

**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.

It is often difficult to know the extent or presence of care and support needs in such cases because the victims are often unknown to services. Therefore, safeguarding adults' referrals are encouraged for all adult victims of modern slavery in order that their needs can be explored further as part of a safeguarding adult's enquiry, rather than initially excluding cases because of the lack of an appearance of care and support needs.

**Discriminatory abuse:**

Discriminatory abuse may involve race, gender, disability, or any of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

Examples of discriminatory abuse might involve harassment, slurs, or similar treatment based on the difference or perceived difference.

**Organisational abuse:**

Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in a person's 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.

### **Neglect and acts of omission:**

Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to access appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

### **Self-neglect:**

Includes a person neglecting to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings; or an inability to provide essential food, clothing, shelter or medical care necessary to maintain their physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing and general safety. It includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Full details and additional categories of harm can be found at: [Types of Harm - ACT](#)

### **How to Recognise Signs of Abuse**

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is being abused or neglected, these include but are not limited to:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries.
- Person has belongings or money going missing.
- Person is not attending / no longer enjoying their sessions. You may notice that a participant has been missing from sessions.
- Someone losing or gaining weight / an unkempt appearance.
- A change in the behaviour or confidence of a person. For example, a participant may be looking quiet and withdrawn when their brother comes to collect them from sessions, in contrast to their personal assistant whom they greet with a smile.
- They may self-harm.
- They may have a fear of a particular group or individual.
- They may be overly secretive about online viewing.
- They may tell you / another person they are being abused – i.e. a disclosure.

### **Procedure in the event of a disclosure (Including When the Allegations of Abuse are Against Someone Working or Volunteering at Emma Hall)**

It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

If you witness abuse, or abuse has just taken place, the priorities will be *(the sequence of priorities will depend on the circumstances)*:

- To call an ambulance if required.
- To call the Police if a crime has been committed.
- To preserve evidence.

- To keep yourself and others safe.
- To inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- To record what happened in name of place/file/log where safeguarding adults concerns will be recorded.

All situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. **Helen Biggs 01914136061**

If anyone feels unable to raise their concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead then concerns can be raised directly with Adult Social Care Direct (see below).

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 will be made to the Adult Social Care Direct team. If the individual experiencing abuse does not have mental capacity to consent to a referral, a best interest decision will be made on their behalf.

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information. This should include:

- information relevant to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened
- your name and the names of others present
- the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused,
- the nature of the alleged abuse,
- a description of any injuries and/or signs observed,
- the account which has been given of the allegation.

Emma Hall will ensure that any allegations made against a trustee or volunteer will be dealt with swiftly.

If you hear any allegation against a trustee or volunteer, you should refer the matter immediately to the Emma Hall's Safeguarding Lead named person.

Where a trustee or volunteer 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 on 999.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the service whilst the investigation is undertaken.

### **Responding to an allegation.**

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to **Helen Biggs, Emma Hall Management Committee. 01914136061**

The nominated trustee shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local adult social services duty social worker. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made, and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority adult social services department within 24 hours.

Reports can be raised via an online form available here: [Report concerns about an adult - Safeguarding in Gateshead](#) or you can reach Adult Social Care Direct on 0191 433 7033 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Non emergency police number is 101

## **Making Safeguarding Personal**

The legislation recognises that adults make choices that may mean that one part of our well-being suffers at the expense of another. Adults can choose to risk their personal safety; for example, to provide care to a partner with dementia who becomes abusive when they are disorientated and anxious.

None of us can make these choices for another adult. If we are supporting someone to make choices about their own safety, we need to understand what matters to them and what outcomes they want to achieve from any actions agencies take to help them to protect themselves.

In line with Making Safeguarding Personal principles, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should try to seek the views from the adult (or an appropriate representative) about what they would like to happen as result of the concern. This will help to inform the multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Enquiry.

## **Responding appropriately to an allegation of abuse:**

In the event of an incident or disclosure.

### **Do:**

- Make sure the individual is safe
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
- Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Follow correct procedure
- Explain areas of confidentiality; immediately speak to the Committee's designated Safeguarding Trustee for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
- Remember the need for ongoing support

**Don't:**

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions
- Assume information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies, following a referral from the designated volunteer or trustee.

**Confidentiality.**

Information about concerns of abuse includes personal data. It is therefore important to be clear as to the grounds for processing and sharing information about concerns of abuse.

Emma Hall is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around safeguarding adults' issues should be shared only with those who need to know.

Importantly, personal information can be shared without the consent of the adult concerned. However, the adult may not always want information to be shared. This may be because they fear repercussions from the person causing harm or are scared that they will lose control of their situation to statutory bodies or because they feel stupid or embarrassed. Their wishes should be respected unless there are over-riding reasons for sharing information.

The circumstances when we need to share information without the adult's consent include those where:

- It is not safe to contact the adult to gain their consent – i.e. It might put them or the person making contact at further risk
- You believe they or someone else is at risk, including children
- You believe the adult is being coerced or is under duress
- It is necessary to contact the police to prevent a crime, or to report that a serious crime has been committed
- The adult does not have mental capacity to consent to information being shared about them

- The person causing harm has care and support needs

When information is shared without the consent of the adult this must be explained to them, when it is safe to do so, and any further actions should still fully include them.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded.

The information recorded should be factual and not based on opinions, record what the person tells you, what you have seen, and record witnesses if appropriate. The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with GDPR. **For further information, please see the Emma Hall's GDPR policy.**

Any decision to share or not to share information with an external person or organisation must be recorded together with the reasons to share or not share information.

### **Training, induction and support**

Emma Hall will provide effective management for volunteers through induction, support and training.

All personnel, through this document and the chosen local authority e-learning course, will receive information and basic training in safe conduct and what to do if they have concerns about an adult, where to get advice and what to do if no-one seems to have taken their concerns seriously.

The trustees will be required to complete safeguarding training every 3 years.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

**Policy approved .....SEP 2025 AGM.....HBiggs AAshburner.....**

**Review date.....Sep 2026.....**