

## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Policy Statement

### Who is a vulnerable adult?

'A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old and frail, or has some form of illness. Because of his or her vulnerability, the individual may be in receipt of a care service in his or her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential care home, nursing home or other institutional setting.'

### Vulnerable adult rights

The rights of vulnerable adults to live a life free from neglect, exploitation and abuse are protected by the Human Rights Act 1998. Specifically, a vulnerable adult's right to life is protected (under Article 2); their right to be protected from inhuman and degrading treatment (under Article 3); and their right to liberty and security (under Article 5).

### Our commitment to safeguard

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights; it can take many forms. The staff and volunteers at The Charity are committed to practice which promotes the welfare of vulnerable adults and safeguards them from harm. Staff and volunteers in our organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause vulnerable adults harm, and to establish and maintain a safe environment for them. We take a **zero-tolerance** approach to any form of abuse wherever it occurs or whoever is responsible. We are committed to promoting an atmosphere of inclusion, transparency and openness and are open to feedback from the people who use our services, carers, advocates, our staff and our volunteers with a view to how we may continuously improve our services/activities. We will endeavour to safeguard vulnerable adults by:

- Adhering to our safeguarding vulnerable adult policy and ensuring that it is supported by robust procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Implementing clear procedures for raising awareness of and responding to abuse within the organisation and for reporting concerns to statutory agencies that need to know, while involving carers and vulnerable adults appropriately; Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – A Shared Responsibility
- Ensuring general safety and risk management procedures are adhered to
- Promoting full participation and having clear procedures for dealing with concerns and complaints
- Managing personal information, confidentiality and information sharing; and
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults by implementing a code of behaviour for all involved with the organisation, including visitors



As an organisation working with vulnerable adults, we will reassure them and their carers and advocates that the Charity is committed to good practice. Good practice means a commitment to keeping vulnerable adults safe from harm and exploitation and to upholding their rights; that is, always acting in their best interests and with their consent. Below we have set out how we are going to do this:

### Values and Principles:

- **Access to information and knowledge** – all vulnerable adults will have access to information that they can understand to make an informed choice, including access to expert knowledge and advocacy, as required
- **Choice** – all vulnerable adults will have the opportunity to select independently from a range of options based on clear and accurate information
- **Confidentiality** – all vulnerable adults will know that information about them is managed appropriately and there is a clear understanding of confidentiality and its limits among staff/volunteers
- **Consent** – all vulnerable adults have the right to be supported to make their own decisions and to give or withhold their consent to an activity or service. Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service. It may be signalled verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing. No one can give, or withhold, consent on behalf of another adult unless special provision for particular purposes has been made for this, usually by law
- **Dignity and respect** – all vulnerable adults will be accorded the same respect and dignity as any other adult, by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs
- **Equality and diversity** – all vulnerable adults will be treated equally and their background and culture will be valued and respected
- **Fulfilment** – all vulnerable adults will be invited to engage in activities and offered services that enable them to fulfil their ability and potential
- **Independence** – all vulnerable adults will have as much control as possible over their lives whilst being safeguarded against unreasonable risks
- **Privacy** – all vulnerable adults will be free from unnecessary intrusion into their affairs; and there will be a balance between the individual's own safety and the safety of others
- **Safety** – all vulnerable adults will feel safe, and live without fear of violence, neglect or abuse in any form
- **Support** – all vulnerable adults will be supported to report any form of abuse and to receive appropriate support following abuse for as long as may be required

### Recognising Abuse

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014 outlines how abuse may take many forms and how individual circumstances should be considered. Exploitation is a particular theme in the following list of abuse:



- Physical
- Domestic violence, including "honour" based violence
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory
- Organisational or institutional
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Hate and "mate" crime

### **Mental Capacity**

We fully recognise and uphold the 5 key principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in all aspects of our work by:

- Presuming each adult at risk has capacity
- Supporting individuals to make their own decisions
- Recognising the right for individuals to make their own decisions, even if they may seem eccentric
- Making sure what we do for adults at risk (without capacity) is in their best interests
- Making sure that anything we do is the least restrictive action for the individual

### **Handling Disclosures**

A disclosure may be made verbally or communicated through play or behaviour by an adult at risk, or another adult in the organisation and it is important for everyone to remember the following:

If you are concerned about an adult at risk it is important that this information is communicated to the safeguarding lead.

You may become aware of suspected or likely abuse by:

- Your own observations and concerns
- Being told by another person that they have concerns about an adult at risk
- The adult at risk tells you
- The abuser tells you

Also remember that you may not always be working directly with the adult at risk but become concerned because of difficulties experienced by other adults, e.g.



- Domestic Violence incidents
- Mental Health issues
- Substance and Alcohol Abuse Incidents
- Radicalisation
- FGM

Remember:

- Do not delay
- Do not investigate
- Seek advice from the lead or deputy for adult safeguarding
- Make careful recording of anything you observe or are told

## Responding to Concerns

### *Reporting Allegations/Incidents.*

- Any concerns or allegations should be brought to the attention of the designated safeguarding lead either to their mobile phone number or to the dedicated email address [safeguarding@readfoundation.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@readfoundation.org.uk)
- The designated safeguarding lead will discuss your concerns and provide the relevant advice on how to respond appropriately. You will be asked to complete an incident report form (if you haven't done so already)
- All staff/volunteers and other representatives should document concerns, facts, allegations and actions in the case record.
- The completed Incident Log must be signed by the staff member and designated safeguarding lead
- The designated safeguarding lead will be responsible for storing any report in a safe and secure environment.
- Ensure confidentiality - only "need to know basis" Inform parents, unless to do so may put the child at further risk
- A copy of the Incident Log will also be kept in the client record.

Whilst it is not the role of individual staff members to investigate allegations, all staff and volunteers must bear in mind that it is their responsibility to take any safeguarding concerns seriously. **A failure to do so could result in disciplinary procedures being implemented against them.**

### *Designated Safeguarding Leads*

The Designated Safeguarding Leads within **READ Foundation**, is:

**Mohammed Iqbal**

Tel: +44 (0) 7831 807390



The Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Safeguarding Coordinator) is:

**Alifya Akberali**

Tel: +44 (0) 7758 456568

Concerns can also be sent to our dedicated safeguarding email address:

**[safeguarding@readfoundation.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@readfoundation.org.uk)**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the Safeguarding Lead at Board Level of reports made concerning anyone working with or for Read Foundation or with or for our partner organisations, within acceptable confidentiality boundaries. This will be in the form of incident reporting and not disclosing case details, in order to preserve confidentiality and enabling trustees to hear appeals subsequently (if one is made in response to disciplinary actions).

The Chair of Trustees will also be fully informed and therefore would not be able to hear an appeal as a result of any disciplinary action.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will keep the Safeguarding Lead at Board Level and the Chair of Trustees informed of progress in any investigation. Disciplinary actions that may result from an internal audit or investigation will be decided by the CEO, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Chair of Trustees.

We ensure and emphasise that everyone in our organisation understand and know how to share any concerns immediately with the adult safeguarding lead. We do this by staff handbook, training, internal communications and staff briefings.

#### **How to respond:**

- If possible, speak to the adult at risk without putting them or yourself at further risk
- Reassure them that what they say will be taken seriously
- Use open ended questions e.g. 'Tell me /Explain/ Describe what has happened' (remember 'TED')
- Do not probe: this is a preliminary conversation only about the safeguarding issues and the adult's views and wishes
- If possible, support the person to make immediate decisions, including whether they want a Safeguarding Concern to be raised
- Look out for any signs that the person may lack mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety
- Explain to the adult what you will do next
- Consult with the Safeguarding Lead, or if it available their deputy, for advice and support



### **Views and wishes of the Adult at Risk**

Always consider the adult's views and wishes and act upon them, if possible. However, the adult's wishes may be overridden in some circumstances for example:

- In the public interest e.g. if there is a risk to others, a member of staff or volunteer is involved or it relates to a care setting
- In the person's vital interests – to prevent serious harm or distress or in life threatening situations
- If the person is subject to coercion or undue influence to the extent that they are unable to give consent
- If the person lacks mental capacity and it is in their best interests

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding lead and/or Safeguarding Coordinator to ensure that these procedures are rigorously adhered to. In the case that the lead person is implicated, the deputy / Coordinator should be informed. In the exceptional circumstances that both are involved, it is the duty of the person concerned to contact the Chair of Trustees, social care services directly, or the police if a crime has, or may have been, committed under "Whistleblowing." Record all incidents reported or observed on an Incident Report form, which must be fully completed. **See Appendix 1.**

Whilst it is not the role of individual staff members to investigate allegations, all staff and volunteers must bear in mind that it is their responsibility to take any safeguarding concerns seriously. **A failure to do so could result in disciplinary procedures being implemented against them.**

### **Record Keeping**

All records will be securely kept. Only the safeguarding lead and/or coordinator will have access and records will only be kept as long as necessary.

Normally these records will be passed to social care services as soon as possible. All records will be written by the person with the concern within 24 hours, on headed paper or incident sheets and will be factual, non-judgmental.

It is helpful to record any known details of the adult at risk(s) involved e.g. name, address, date of birth etc. It is equally important to record the reasons for making the decision not to refer to social care services as when the decision is taken to refer. Always sign, date and time these records, include name and job role

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## Appendix 1

### Adult Safeguarding Incident/Concern Reporting Form

Section 1: Clients Details		
<b>Full Name:</b>		
<b>Gender:</b> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Age:</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Ethnicity:</b>	<b>Religion:</b>	<b>First Language:</b>
<b>Full Postal Address:</b>		
<b>Communication needs (interpreter/signer/other):</b>		
<b>Special needs:</b>		
<b>Other:</b>		
Section 2: Your Details		
<b>Your name:</b>	<b>Your position:</b>	<b>Date &amp; time of Incident:</b>
<b>Section 3: Your report</b>		
<b>Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns  <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else	<b>If responding to concerns raised by someone else, please provide their name and position within the organisation:</b>	
<b>Please provide full details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates or other relevant background information (such as a description of any injuries, whether you are recording fact, opinion or hearsay):</b>		



The person's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how (*when asking, think of 'TED' Tell me, Describe, Explain*):

Please provide details of the person alleged to have caused the incident/injury including, where possible, their name, address and date of birth (or approximate age):

Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident(s)

Next steps (please note here what you will do next/have done).

Your signature:

Nominated Safeguarding Person received information

Date:

Time:

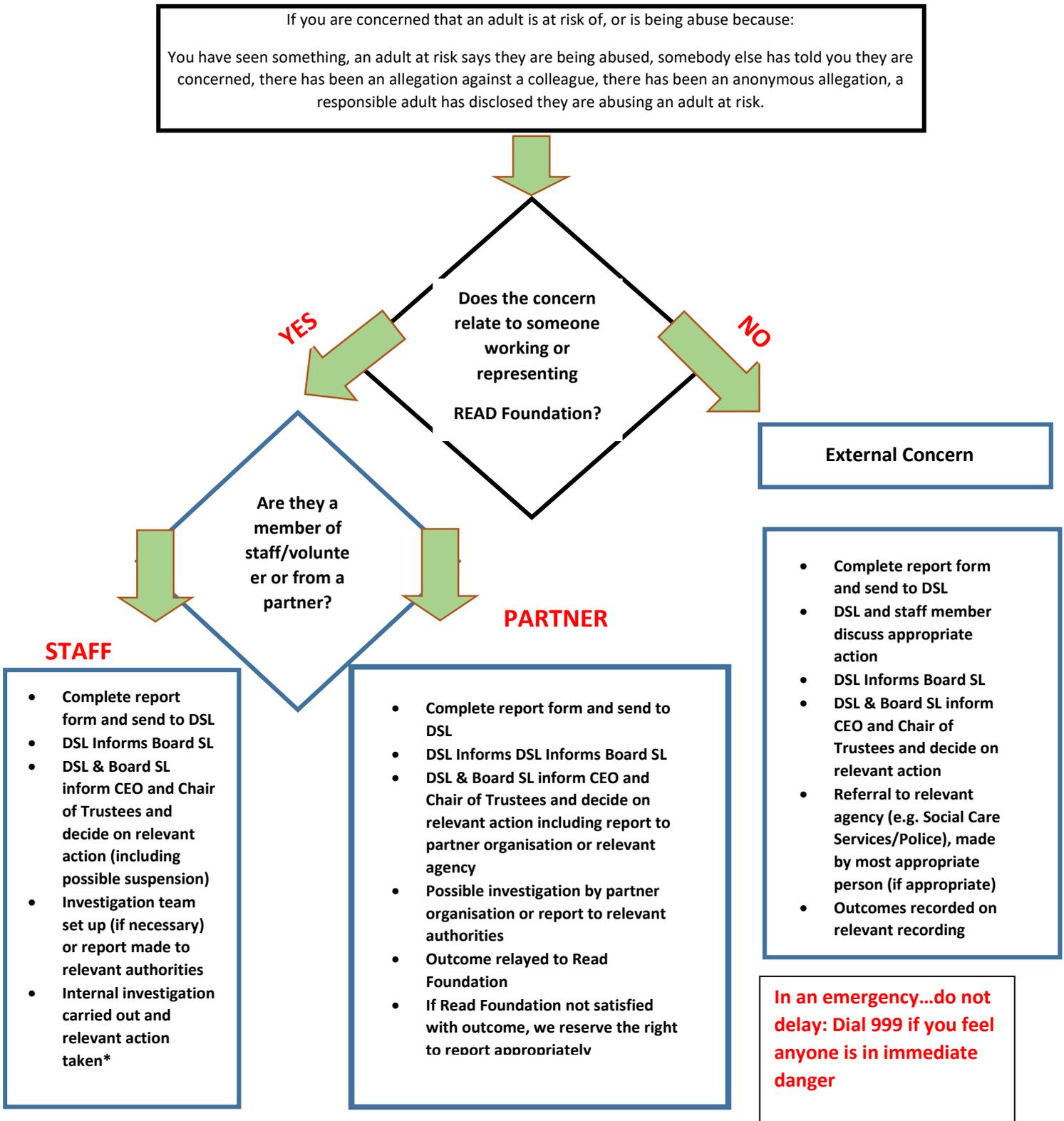
NSP's signature:

**A copy of this MUST be submitted to the Safeguarding Lead within 24 hours.**



## Appendix 2

Everyone including both the safeguarding lead and safeguarding coordinator will deal with concerns using the following Flowchart:



**In an emergency...do not delay: Dial 999 if you feel anyone is in immediate danger**

<b>Policy Number</b>	RF/POL/022	<b>Version</b>	VD0.1
<b>Responsible Dept.</b>	Operations		
<b>Approved By</b>	BOT	<b>Approval Date</b>	27.01.2022
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