



THE MEETING ROOM SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The protection and welfare of The Meeting Room clients, volunteers & staff is fundamental to the objectives of our charity. Everyone involved in the provision of services to our clients has a responsibility to be alert to the signs of any form of harm or abuse and to respond appropriately.

DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding is protecting those at risk from harm, abuse or neglect. Typically, vulnerable adults are in need of support as a result of economic situation, social isolation, having mental health related issues or problems related to disability, age or illness and maybe unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against harm or serious exploitation.

RECOGNITION

People who abuse are often well known to their victims but can be strangers. They might be a relative, partner, son or daughter, friend, or neighbour, a paid or voluntary worker, or a health or social care worker. They could be another vulnerable adult or service user and may not realise they are abusing and can sometimes act out of character.

The most common types of abuse are:

Physical abuse: This is usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include burns, bruising, scratches, or accidents that cannot be explained. Also included is misuse of medication or forcing someone, for example, to act in some way against their wishes.

Neglect: Neglect occurs when a vulnerable adult does not have their basic needs met, such as adequate food or warmth or help with personal hygiene. Signs might include deteriorating health, appearance, or mood.

Financial Abuse: This is when a vulnerable adult is exploited for financial gain. Often valuables will go missing or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained.

Sexual Abuse: This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not or could not consent or was pressurised or manipulated. Signs can include changes in behaviour or physical discomfort.



Psychological abuse: This might be emotional abuse such as threats or harm or abandonment, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour, or verbal and racial insults.

Discriminatory Abuse: This includes any sort of abuse based on a vulnerable adult's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health.

Institutional Abuse: This is poor professional practice, including neglect, and can take the form of isolated incidents right through to ill treatment or gross misconduct.

PRINCIPLES

To protect basic civil and human rights The Department of Health has identified key principles that are considered applicable to all work with vulnerable adults:

Privacy: The right of individuals to be left alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion or public attention into their affairs.

Dignity: Recognition of the intrinsic value of people regardless of circumstances by respecting their uniqueness and their personal needs; treating with respect.

Independence: Opportunities to act and think without reference to another person, including a willingness to incur a degree of calculated risk.

Choice: The opportunity to select independently from a range of options.

Rights: The maintenance of all entitlements associated with citizenship.

Fulfilment: The realisation of personal aspirations and abilities in all respects of daily life.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

The Meeting Room is committed to the safeguarding, care, and nurture of everyone with whom we come into contact in the provision of our range of services. This policy statement underpins all safeguarding activities within the charity, and the trustees, staff and volunteers will ensure that we will -

1. Fully adopt and implement the safeguarding policy.
2. Promote and publicise the policy, and ensure all staff & volunteers have access to it and are aware of contents.
3. Have a plan in place that sets out how the policy will be put into action.
4. Ensure that any person who works with vulnerable individuals is aware of and abides by all aspects of the policy.
5. Review the policy regularly (at least annually) to ensure best practice and that the policy fully reflects all of the services that we provide



The Meeting Room will:

- Create a safe and caring place for all individuals to whom we provide our services and who are involved in their provision
- Have a named Safeguarding Officer (SO) & Safeguarding Advisor (SA) to work with the board of Trustees to implement safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for vulnerable adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving vulnerable adults undertaken in the name of The Meeting Room.
- Display in The Meeting Room sites and on the website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- Listen to and take seriously all those who disclose abuse.
- Take steps to protect the victim when a safeguarding concern of any kind arises, following, including notifying The Meeting Room Safeguarding Officer (SO, The Meeting Room staff, trustees & statutory agencies immediately.
- Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.
- Following advice from the SO and other agencies, manage the safe involvement and interaction of any member of the community who may pose a risk to children (*) and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- Ensure that procedures and risk assessments are in place for all activities and that these are reviewed annually.
- Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, and associated policies and procedures at least annually.

Each person who works with or is involved with The Meeting Room will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by The Meeting Room.

* **Children** - The Meeting Room do not allow children under 18 to attend any of their drop-in centres. However, if concerns are raised or we believe any member of our community is posing a risk to children, it is still to be managed as per our policy and we will report to the appropriate agencies (C-SPA) and contact Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP) for guidance.



WORKING ENVIRONMENT

All trustees, staff or volunteers of The Meeting Room will provide a safe environment to our clients and to each other based on these principles:

- They do not engage in behaviour that could be misinterpreted.
- They need to be aware of the boundaries between themselves and vulnerable adults.
- They work in an environment where any concerns they may have about the abuse of a vulnerable adult can be passed on and feel confident that this will be acted upon.
- They will endeavour not to place themselves in potentially comprising situations with a vulnerable adult and that other trustees, staff or volunteers are present at all times.

SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

All trustees, staff and volunteers working directly and having regular, sustained contact with vulnerable adults are required to be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before any commencement of work or activity, the level of check is defined by the DBS dependant on the employee/volunteer role and contact with vulnerable adults.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

The Care Act 2014 states, "It is the responsibility of all staff members and members of the public to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect and to pass on their concerns to a responsible person or agency."

- If the vulnerable adult is in danger, first ensure they are safe and if immediate help is needed, call the emergency services on 999.
- If abuse is discovered or suspected, the abuse must in all cases be reported at the earliest opportunity to the Safeguarding Officer or a member of staff, trustees or direct to the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board.

The concern also needs to be reported and recorded so action can be taken to ensure the vulnerable person is protected in future. Where appropriate the police will always be informed.



REPORTING PROCEDURE FOR CASES OF ALLEGED / SUSPECTED ABUSE

- Only ask the person sufficient questions to establish what has happened, i.e. accident or possible abuse.
- If the person is seriously injured seek immediate medical treatment.
- If danger exists, ensure the person and any other vulnerable adults are protected.
- Be careful not to destroy or contaminate evidence.
- Inform the SO or one of The Meeting Room staff or trustees at the earliest opportunity.
- As soon as possible fill in a **Meeting Room Incident Report Form**.
- Allow the person to talk. Listen. Do not ask leading questions.
- Documentation is vital as evidence might be required for criminal proceedings at a later date.
- If the suspected abuser is a volunteer, staff or trustee they will be suspended until after the matter has been fully investigated. The police could be involved.

CONFIDENTIALITY

People have the right to expect that all staff and volunteers will deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information remains confidential, and that information should only be shared on a “need to know” basis.

Safeguarding Contacts	Name	Contact Details
Safeguarding Officer	Lisa Cullen	lisa.cullen@themeetingroom.org.uk Phone: 07525 168027
Safeguarding Advisor	Harriett Edgely	E-mail: harriet@foxglove.me.uk Phone: 07544 566850
Agencies	Police (If immediate danger)	Call 999
	Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board	
Children Only Agencies	Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership	Phone: 01372 833330 www.surreyscb.org.uk
	Childrens Single Point of access (C-SPA)	Phone: 0300 470 9100 Out of Hours: 01483 517898 cspa@surreycc.gov.uk



Reviews & Version Control

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