



Safeguarding Policy

Introduction and Intent

Reflect aims to provide a safe space where individuals can come and talk through their experiences, feelings and options when they are faced with an unplanned or complicated pregnancy, pregnancy loss or are post-abortion. We are committed to maintain the highest degree of ethical conduct amongst our volunteers.

We recognise that all have a right to be protected from harm and any form of abuse, which would include physical, emotional and sexual harm. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to 'all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.'

The aim of this policy is to help all our volunteers, including trained advisors, schools' workers and anyone else involved in the work of Reflect to adopt safe working practices with young people or adults at risk, and respond appropriately when abuse is disclosed or concerns are raised.

Policy Statement

Reflect is committed to:

Treating all young people or adults at risk with respect and dignity befitting their age and understanding regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality and religion.

Promoting young people or adults at risk's welfare and protection, including the opportunity for them to express their concerns

Seeking good communication with parents and carers

Providing written procedures in regard to recruitment, supervision and training of all workers

Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse

Recognising that local authorities have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate services are provided for young people or adults at risk who are 'in need' and to protect children or investigate situations where a child is suffering or at risk of significant harm

Informing young people or adults at risk of our policies and procedures as appropriate

Information

Safeguarding Co-ordinator: Jenni Joyes

Deputy Co-ordinator: Erika Matthews (Centre manager)

Procedure

The following procedures are put in place at Reflect to ensure that young people and adults at risk of harm are kept safe and we are operating in a way that protects both them, as well as our volunteers.

Selection of staff and volunteers:

All volunteers are to be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the recommendation set out in the government guidelines 'Safe from Harm' (HMSO 1993) code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults in voluntary organisations in England and Wales

All volunteers who come into contact with young people or adults at risk at the Centre or in schools work must:

Undergo a DBS check at Enhanced Disclosure Level which will need to be reviewed every 3 years.

Have a written reference provided by someone outside of Reflect to confirm the suitability of the person to their role.

Read and agree to adhere to the safeguarding policy and to re-read the policy annually.

Provide a safe environment to young people and adults at risk. This includes both face to face or online meetings.

Treat all people fairly with dignity and respect in attitude, language, actions, listening and responding appropriately, whether on the phone or being seen in person.

To treat young people and adults at risk with the same respect shown to all our clients and ensure their vulnerable position is not exploited in any way. As with all our clients, to aim to avoid manipulating or directing their decisions, but seek to provide impartial support and help.

Not arrange to meet any young person or adult at risk of harm alone, whether face-to-face or online.

Not be under the influence of alcohol or use or be in possession of illegal substances whilst working or providing services for Reflect.

To follow all Reflect's policies and procedures, including the safeguarding policy and to report all safeguarding concerns, following the steps laid out in the safeguarding policy.

Safeguarding Concerns:

Where there are Safeguarding concerns, any volunteers must follow these steps to protect the client:

Assess the situation and contact emergency services if required.

Remain calm, trying not to show any shock or disbelief.

Listen carefully and demonstrate understanding. Do not ask leading questions or try to steer or control the conversation.

Ensure the safety and wellbeing of the individual.

Establish what the individual's views and wishes are about the safeguarding issue.

Inform the person that you are required to share the information with the relevant authorities, explaining what information will be shared and why.

Report the safeguarding issue to the Reflect Safeguarding lead within 24 hours.

Make a detailed, written record of what you have been told. Keep this factual without interpretation and use the own words of the young person as much as possible. Include a record of any injuries disclosed and where on the body and include your actions within the report. Record this within an hour of the disclosure.

Jenni Joyes (safeguarding Lead) can be contacted on 01323 843105 and Erika Matthews (Deputy) on 07855 776669. It will be their responsibility to decide on appropriate action, which may involve contacting 31:8 and if appropriate the statutory authorities.

If neither Jenni nor Erika are available, then this should be reported to East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership through the single point of contact (SPOA) on the details below. Where suspicions in any way involve either Co-ordinator, then report should be made to the SPOA directly.

East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership replaces the local safeguarding board. Referrals, advice and all other forms of contact are made through the single point of contact (SPOA).

The Single point of Contact number is: 01323 464222 (Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm).

Out of hours, with serious concerns that can't wait till the next working day, contact the Emergency Duty Service. 01273 335905 or 01273 335906– (Monday to Thursday 5pm to 8.30am, after 4.30pm on Fridays, weekends and bank holidays).

Email: 0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk

The Police telephone number is 999 in an emergency and 101 for non-emergency calls.

[Pregnancy in Under 18s and Adults at Risk of Harm](#)

It remains unlawful for children under the age of 16 years to have sexual intercourse and volunteers should bear this in mind to ensure they do not become desensitised to the issues.

When considering the pregnancy disclosure of any young person under 16, or adult at risk of harm, it is essential to look at the specific detail of the relationship between those involved. Power imbalances are very important and can occur through differences in size, age and development and where gender, sexuality, race and levels of sexual knowledge are used to exert such power. The possibility of child sexual exploitation should always be considered (see appendix 2 for more information).

Adults at risk of harm may not be able to communicate easily to someone that they are being or have been exploited or subjected to abusive behaviour. Volunteers need to be aware that the Sexual Offences Act recognises the rights of people with a mental disorder to a full life, including a sexual life. However, there is a duty to protect them from abuse and exploitation.

Young People Aged 13 & Under: Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, children 13 and under are by law deemed incapable of giving consent to any form of sexual activity. Therefore, if any child ages 13 or under were to refer themselves as a client this is very serious and must be taken to indicate a risk of significant harm to the child. This must be reported to the Safeguarding Lead who would have a duty to report this.

Young People Aged 14-15: Any pregnancy disclosure of a 14-15 year old should be reported to the safeguarding lead who has a duty of care to report this through SPOA. Generally, when the relationship leading to pregnancy has been consensual it is recognised that it is not always investigated as a criminal activity, but consideration must be given to the physical health of the young adult relating to their pregnancy.

Young People Aged 16-17: Young people aged 16 and 17 can still be subject to sexual abuse and so consideration needs to be given to issues of child sexual exploitation through the abuse of power (see Appendix 2 for more information). Young people, of course, can still be subject to offences of rape and assault and are not deemed able to give consent if the sexual activity is with an adult in a position of trust or a family member. *(It is recognised that the modern family unit is often complex and has therefore defined family relationships to take into account situations where someone is living within the same household as a child and assuming trust or authority over that child, as well as relationships defined by blood ties, adoption, fostering, marriage or 'common law' partnerships.*

Client Sessions

In the case of young people, with the client's consent, our aim is to involve the parent(s) or carer(s) whenever possible. We want to empower the client to tell their parent(s) or carer(s) that they are seeking help. In the case of adults at risk of harm, the practitioner should encourage them to bring a carer/supporter to every session, whether face to face or online.

Practitioners should never meet with a young person or adult at risk alone. If they do not bring a carer/parent or supporter with them then they may see the client with another Reflect practitioner observing in the room (or online session) or in an accompanying room with the door left ajar.

Confidentiality

Reflect actively protects the information of their clients, using the client's code (not initials or name) on all session notes, documents and calendar appointments. All data is stored electronically on SharePoint with limited access where soft copies and all hard copies of data are stored in a locked filing cabinet.

While we generally assure confidentiality for our clients, there are exceptions relating to safeguarding. If there is any concern that the client or another person may be at serious risk of harm, and/or we learn the identity of an abuser and young people and/or adults at risk may still be at risk, then we have a legal duty to respond. Responsibility for the protection of young people and adults at risk of harm will outweigh duties of confidentiality to a client.

Limits of confidentiality will be explained to all clients before the beginning of any sessions.

In a classroom situation, warn the child that the Safeguarding Officer of the School will have to be told, unless the child comes to the Centre at a later date to disclose.

If a disclosure or concern is raised this will in the first instance be discussed with the safeguarding lead or deputy, who may need to share with further professional agencies, such as East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership, through the single point of contact (SPOA), or Thirtyone:eight for advice.

As Reflect is an organisation operating under Hailsham Frontiers Charitable Trust, they may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern (for example the Chair of Trustees to log that a safeguarding concern is being dealt with, Insurance company to log that there is a possibility of a serious incident concerning safeguarding or a Designated Officer (LADO) if allegations have been made about a person who has a role with under 18s elsewhere).

Appendix 1:

Signs of Possible Abuse (Young People)

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child, young person or adult at risk of harm. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child/young person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may be in a family context or by an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child/young person(s)

The following signs could be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the young person's whole life.

Physical

Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them

Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc

Injuries that have not received medical attention

Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming

Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains

Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation*

Cuts/scratches/substance abuse*

Sexual

Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse

Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour

Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing

Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults

Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home

Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations

Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia*

Emotional

Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.

Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.

Nervousness, frozen watchfulness

Obsessions or phobias

Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration

Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults

Attention-seeking behaviour

Persistent tiredness

Running away/stealing/lying

Neglect

Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, Untreated illnesses,

Inadequate care, etc

*These indicate the possibility that a child or young person is self-harming. Approximately 20,000 are treated in accident and emergency departments in the UK each year.

Signs of Possible Abuse (Adults at risk of harm)

Physical

A history of unexplained falls, fractures, bruises, burns, minor injuries

Signs of under or over use of medication and/or medical problems unattended

Sexual

Pregnancy in a woman who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse

Unexplained change in behaviour or sexually implicit/explicit behaviour

Torn, stained or bloody underwear and/or unusual difficulty in walking or sitting

Infections or sexually transmitted diseases

Full or partial disclosure or hints of sexual abuse

Self-harming

Psychological

Alteration in psychological state e.g. withdrawn, agitated, anxious, tearful

Intimidated or subdued in the presence of the carer

Fearful, flinching or frightened of making choices or expressing wishes

Unexplained paranoia

Financial or Material

Disparity between assets and living conditions

Unexplained withdrawals from accounts or disappearance of financial documents

Sudden inability to pay bills

Carers or professionals fail to account for expenses incurred on a person's behalf

Recent changes of deeds or title to property

Neglect or Omission

Malnutrition, weight loss and /or persistent hunger

Poor physical condition, poor hygiene, varicose ulcers, pressure sores

Being left in wet clothing or bedding and/or clothing in a poor condition

Failure to access appropriate health, educational services or social care

No callers or visitors

Discriminatory

Inappropriate remarks, comments or lack of respect

Poor quality or avoidance of care

Institutional

Lack of flexibility or choice over meals, bed times, visitors, phone calls etc

Inadequate medical care and misuse of medication

Inappropriate use of restraint

Sensory deprivation e.g. denial of use of spectacles or hearing aids

Missing documents and/or absence of individual care plans

Public discussion of private matter

Lack of opportunity for social, educational or recreational activity

Appendix 2:

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is defined as a form of sexual abuse in which a person(s) exploit, coerces and/or manipulates a child/young person into engaging in some form of sexual activity in return for something the child needs or desires and/or for the gain of the person(s) perpetrating or facilitating the abuse.

Recognising CSE: A young person may not see themselves as a victim of CSE, but it doesn't mean they aren't. We have a duty to protect all those under 18 regardless of whether they see themselves as victims or not. It can involve peers or older adults and it most frequently impacts 12-15 year olds, although it can affect older or younger children too.

Socially isolated young people, those with low self-esteem, difficult domestic situations and many other causes can make a young person vulnerable to CSE. Some warning signs include the sudden acquisition of money/property without plausible explanations, secretive behaviour, going out without explanation and returning distressed, returning late or frequently going missing, substance abuse or self-harming.