



Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure

Purpose of the Policy:

This document sets out Tees Valley Women's Centre's approach to protecting adults at risk.

We believe that safeguarding vulnerable adults is everybody's business, with all staff, volunteers and Trustees playing a part in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse or inappropriate conduct.

This document sets out Tees Valley Women's Centre's (TVWC) Safeguarding Adults Policy.

This document is to be read alongside the following documents:

- Tees Valley Women's Centre Employee Handbook (Including Equal Opportunities and Valuing Diversity Policy; Confidentiality, Complaints, Data Protection)
- Tees Valley Women's Centre Health and Safety Policy and Procedure Employee Handbook (including Risk Assessment/ Risk Management; Lone Working Policy).

Safeguarding underpins all the work TVWC completes. Those employed or representing TVWC need to be aware of the following:

- The legislation, policy, and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.
- For Staff, Volunteers and Trustees to have their appointment completed in line with the relevant policies and procedure.
- How allegations raised regarding Staff, Volunteer or Trustee impropriety or harassment are dealt with.
- How the organisation will complete its duty of care towards Staff, Volunteers and Trustees.

Legislation and regulation that underpins this Policy

We encourage all staff to be aware of the following:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Children Act 1989/ Children Act 2004/ Protection of Children Act 1999/ Children and Families Act 2014/ Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005
- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (EU) 2016/679

TVWC aims to meet the requirements of the Tees-Wide Safeguarding Adults Board. To find out more, please visit [Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board \(tsab.org.uk\)](https://www.tsab.org.uk).

TVWC's Policy and Procedures are based on the general principles that all adults have the right to:

- To live life free from fear, violence, harassment, humiliation, degradation, abuse, and neglect.
- To be safeguarded from harm and exploitation
- To be protected from mistreatment and abuse
- To live an independent lifestyle and to make choices and have control over their care and support, even if some of those choices involve a degree of risk.

TVWC are committed to the following:

- To creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment and an open, listening culture where people feel able to share concerns without fear of retribution.
- We are committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity. All TVWC's Policies and Procedures have implicit in them a determination to challenge discrimination and promote positive action to achieve equality of opportunity.
- Everyone should be valued, safe and happy and we will promote good health and wellbeing for those who work for us and those who access the services.
- Actions taken by TVWC will be consistent with the principles of adult safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.
- To co-operate with and adhere to the Prevent Strategy, (published by the Government in 2011) to reduce the threat of terrorism.
- Providing opportunities for staff to complete regular training.
- We will safeguard adults by ensuring that our services and activities are delivered in a way which keeps all service users, staff, volunteers, and Trustees safe. This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, in the community.
- We want all involved with TVWC and those who access the centre to have confidence and recognise that we are a safe organisation.
- All staff will receive regular training and be aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding.

Roles and Responsibilities

The management team

All managers who are employed by TVWC are :

- Responsible for all staff, volunteers and trustees having access to this Policy
- Responsible for the removal of old versions of this policy and to produce correctly dated replacements.
- Responsible for cascading new versions of this policy to all staff, volunteers, and Trustees.
- Responsible for ensuring all staff, volunteers and trustees know what to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

- Responsible for all staff, volunteers and trustees having access to Tees Valley Women's Centre Code of Conduct/Equal Opportunities Policy/Lone Working Policy and for signing the Confidentiality Agreement.
- Responsible for all staff, volunteers and trustees know how allegations raised regarding Staff, Volunteer or Trustee impropriety or harassment are dealt with.
- Responsible for advising all staff, volunteers, and trustees on how the organisation will address its Duty of Care towards Staff, Volunteers and Trustees.

The centre manager is responsible for:

- implementing measures for recording and reporting concerns generated within the meaning of this policy and for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy. This policy and its associated protocols will be reviewed annually or if any significant incident should occur.
- Consultation and Communication with Trustees.
- Interagency / partnership working.
- Support plans, Risk assessment, Strategic Representation.
- Reviewing Health and Safety Procedures.
- Ensuring that all employee's/ Volunteers and Trustee's hold the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service paperwork (DBS).

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will maintain ultimate accountability for the implementation of this policy, although specific responsibility will be delegated to the Centre Manager who is the Safeguarding Lead.

Safeguarding Adults- Definitions concerning Abuse and Neglect:

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is defined in the Care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.
- people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being.

Abuse and Neglect includes but is not limited to: -

- Physical Assault
- Fabricated Illness
- Sexual Offences
- Domestic Abuse
- Organisational Abuse
- Psychological Abuse
- Coercive control
- False Imprisonment
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Financial or Material
- Self-neglect
- Harassment
- Neglect and Acts of Omission
- Modern Slavery and Human exploitation
- County Lines
- Hate Crime (any criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated by an offender hatred including:
 - ❖ Race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, national origins
 - ❖ Religion
 - ❖ Gender or gender identity
 - ❖ Sexual orientation
 - ❖ Disability

Allegations are inclusive of complaints, concerns generated by colleagues or grievances or others.

At Risk: An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as anyone over the age of 18 who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and because of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves.

Child relates to any individual aged under 18 years of age.

Conduct relates to how individuals behave in face-to-face sessions, on the phone, in meetings, group therapy sessions, and on visits to service users.

Protocols are the official procedure or system of rules governing how something is done.

Vulnerable Adults

Adults with additional needs are defined as anyone over the age of 18 who:

- requires care and support (whether the local authority is meeting any of these needs)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect.

- because of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Responsibility - All Staff and Volunteers are to:

- Be aware of and adhere to relevant Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policies and procedures.
- Ensuring staff, volunteers and student placements receive an induction and appropriate training to their role and in line with national standards.
- Be aware of the different types of abuse and possible indicators.
- Ensuring staff have access to timely and consistent advice and support both internally and externally.
- To be aware of the importance of not allowing their own ethical or moral beliefs to intrude into their professional practice, and of not imposing their own values and standards onto their service users or colleagues and that staff act in accordance with the adults wishes, balanced with their judgment of their mental capacity, their best interests, and a duty of care to others.
- Ensuring that they share information within legal and ethical constraints for the purpose of safeguarding vulnerable adults, responding to concerns and allegations in a timely, considered, and proportionate manner.
- To ensure that everyone accessing the centre has read and signed the confidentiality statement. (July 2024).

TVWC is committed to ensuring that all manager, staff, volunteers, and trustees undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs & symptoms of abuse. TVWC will ensure that the designated Safeguarding lead and any other key members of staff will have access to higher levels of training according to their role.

Training should be refreshed as a minimum every three years.

Abuse & neglect can take many forms an TVWC will always consider the circumstances of an individual case. It is not for those involved with TVWC to investigate.

This policy will be reviewed yearly.

Responding to People who have Experienced or are Experiencing Abuse:

TVWC recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It also acknowledges that acting in cases of adult abuse or neglect is never easy.

Responding to an allegation:

We ask those representing TVWC to consider the following:

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying do not interrupt.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.

- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously.
- Ask questions to ensure you gather the full facts but do not start to investigate, ask detailed or probing questions.
- Use the vulnerable adult own words where possible.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Tell them what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep them safe.

Priorities:

- Call an ambulance if required.
- Call the Police if a crime has been committed.
- Preserve evidence.
- Keep yourself and others safe.
- Inform management.
- Record your evidence, making notes of any times or dates of interest.

Allegations made against a member of Staff

TVWC will respond to any allegation against anyone associated with TVWC. A report should be made to their line manager with concerns regarding staff if they have witnessed another person:

- a) Behaving in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a vulnerable person.
- b) Possibly committed a criminal offence against a vulnerable person.
- c) Behaved towards a vulnerable person in a way that has indicated they are unsuitable to work with vulnerable persons.

If the allegation is made about their line manager, the staff member must inform the centre manager. The centre manager will log the concerns and will in turn inform the Trustees.

Please also review the complaints procedure for further information.

How to seek advice:

As mentioned, guidance can be found on the Tees-Wide Safeguarding board website. The website holds lots of useful information.

Reporting safeguarding concerns can also be submitted in the following ways:

Police- 999 should be contacted if person/persons are thought to be at risk of immediate harm. Less urgent information can be passed through on 101 or through the Cleveland Police Website.

Contacting the local Safeguarding Team

The following advises who can be contacted, depending on what area the adult is from. TVWC are advised to call the number to explore the concern and seek advice on how best to progress with a referral should it be required.

Redcar and Cleveland Council	01642 771500	AccessAdultsTeam@redcar-cleveland.gov.uk
Middlesbrough Council	01642 065070	adultaccessteam@middlesbrough.gov.uk
Stockton Council	01642 527764	FirstContactAdults@stockton.gov.uk
Hartlepool Council	01429 523390	ispa@hartlepool.gov.uk
Darlington Council	01325 406111	ssact@darlington.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officers

LADO provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations that have concerns about a person working or volunteering with children, young people, or vulnerable adults who may have behaved inappropriately or if information has been received that may constitute an allegation.

LADO's are based within the Local authority teams and can be contacted on the numbers above.

Support for Staff

TVWC recognises that where Staff and Volunteers are dealing with vulnerable individuals, they may require assistance support.

Staff and Volunteers dealing directly with service users will be given an opportunity to explore the impact of the work on them via 1:1 meeting with the Centre Manager.

All volunteers, Employee's and Trustee's will be offered regular training opportunities. Volunteers and Employees' will also receive regular supervision.

Whistle Blowing

If you believe that the company is involved in any form of wrongdoing such as:

- committing a criminal offence.
- failing to comply with a legal obligation.
- endangering the health and safety of an individual.
- environmental damage; or
- concealing any information relating to the above

Employees in the first instance report your concerns to your line manager who will treat the matter with complete confidence. If you are not satisfied with the explanation or reason given to you, you should raise the matter with the Centre Manager.

TVWC recognises that the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make. If what you are saying is true, you should have nothing to fear because you will be doing your duty to your employer and those for whom you provide a service.

TVWC will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation (including informal pressures) and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

For further guidance, please read the Whistle Blowing Procedure that can be found in the Employee handbook. The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 prevents you from suffering a detriment or having your contract terminated for 'whistleblowing'. TVWC will take seriously any concerns which you may raise under this legislation.

Review completed by:

Safeguarding Lead – Donna Middleton The Centre Manager 01642 296166

Safeguarding Advisor – Kathryn Coates – Management Trustee 01642 296166

Policy Date July 2025

Reviewed July 2025

Donna Middleton

Donna Middleton

.....

Centre Manager

Date 02.07.25

Next Review Date: July 2026