

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Introduction

Safeguarding arrangements seek to prevent and protect individuals from harm or abuse, regardless of their circumstances.

Whilst Sue Ryder does not provide direct services to children or young people up to the age of 18, many young people and children will have contact with the charity, and there will be young people who may volunteer within our services. All Sue Ryder staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard human rights and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The statutory responsibility for the safeguarding of children and young people sits with the Local Authority Children's Social Care Office (Social Services) and not within Sue Ryder, and advice must always be sought in any situation where there is suspicion of an abuse of human rights.

Prevent Strategy (Prevention of Terrorism)

Prevent is about recognising when vulnerable individuals are being exploited for terrorist-related activities. Volunteers may face situations that give them cause for concern about the potential safety of service users, their family, staff, or others around them. Early intervention can re-direct a vulnerable individual away from carrying out an act of terrorism. Working closely with local authorities, social services, and the police, can improve the effectiveness of how they protect vulnerable individuals from harm or from causing harm.

Key principles

1. The welfare of children and young people is paramount.
2. Where there is a suspicion or serious concern, delay in taking action will often be detrimental to the child's or young person's welfare.
3. All those involved in health care must be aware of the principles of the protection of children and young people.
4. Those working with children and young people, (including those in fundraising and retail), must ensure that they know how to respond appropriately to suspected abuse.
5. The duty of confidentiality is overridden by the legal duty to protect children and young people from abuse of their human rights.
6. All health professionals will work in partnership with parents/carers unless it conflicts with the interests of the child or young person.
7. Accurate, legible records are important where there is suspicion of abuse. They must be dated, timed, and signed and fully reflect the situation at the time.
8. All staff or volunteers are able to seek advice from someone experienced in the protection of children and young people.

Categories of abuse

Children: Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child

by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Physical abuse: A form of abuse that may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

Sexual abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Responsibilities and Training

All volunteers need to have an awareness and an understanding of this procedure and the code of conduct for staff and volunteers. You can read about the roles and responsibilities of other team members across our services in Sue Ryder's full-length Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

Those working in healthcare need to be trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse, documentation, and sharing of information regarding concerns in the protection of children and young people. Refresher training must be completed every 3 years.

Procedure

- The recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers will ensure appropriate screening prior to employment, for example through the process of DBS checks.
- All Sue Ryder staff will work within relevant safeguarding policies set out by Sue Ryder, local authorities, and national guidance from the Department of Health.
- Within healthcare, all concerns about the welfare of a child or young person should be discussed immediately with the Care/Hospice Director, or Head of Care/Clinical Services. In retail and fundraising, all concerns should be alerted to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board as soon as possible/immediately.
- As soon as there is suspicion or evidence of the abuse or neglect of a child or young person, no attempt should be made to carry out an investigation or to ask any leading questions. A referral should be made to Social Services immediately.
- When referring to Social Services all action that is taken must be fully recorded. A verbal referral should be followed up with a letter within 48 hours. The Director of Nursing must be informed via email as soon as possible. You will not have to do this alone and will be supported by a member of staff.
- Where concerns arise as a result of information given by a child or young person, it is important to reassure them but not to promise confidentiality.
- Assist Social Services with any inquiries they need to make following a referral.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Do Not:

- Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting
- Smoke in front of any child
- Use recreational drugs or be under the influence of alcohol
- Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child, e.g. shouting · Use any racist, sexist, discriminatory, or offensive language

- Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times
- Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them
- Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay
- Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Rely upon good nature to protect you or believe “it could never happen to me”
- Give children presents or personal items* **Exceptions to this could be a custom such as buying children a small birthday token, this type of gift should come from the organisation and be agreed with the named person for safeguarding children and the child’s parent/carer. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations*
- Do not ask a child or young person to witness or sign any documents or “bank” money
- Where a young person is taking part in any fundraising activity ensure that the risk assessment details ratio of adults to a young person is specified and any age restrictions are specified
- Do not allow a child/young person to carry out prohibited activities, e.g. steaming clothes in retail, personal care activities in care centres, or activities which include working at heights or involve moving and handling activities

Do:

- Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker knows what you are doing and where you are
- Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child’s needs, e.g. for a hug when upset
- Talk explicitly to children about their right to be kept safe from harm
- Listen to children and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem
- Work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them about what behavior you expect from children/ young people and be consistent in enforcing it
- Make sure you have read the Safeguarding Children Procedure and Policy and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure, and how to report any concerns
- Seek advice and support from your colleagues and your designated champion for safeguarding children
- Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well-being of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself
- Seek opportunities for training and be aware of the flow chart with local safeguarding information
- Ensure that any photography or film used by Sue Ryder with images of children has the appropriate parental consent
- Remember it is the manager’s responsibility to review working arrangements for staff supervision and support