

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

Policy Owner: **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)**

Next review date **August 2025** (with annual interim reviews by Haci Ozdemir)

1. Policy Statement **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** acknowledges that:

- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everybody's responsibility
- Doing nothing is not acceptable
- Working in partnership with relevant agencies, in conjunction with local safeguarding procedures, has demonstrable results.

2. Scope, roles and responsibilities

Scope

This policy applies to all children and vulnerable adults in **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** accommodation and support services, applicants and visitors to our services. It supports the safeguarding processes of local authorities in whose areas we work.

The policy and its accompanying procedure and guidelines outline the responsibilities of **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** Board, colleagues and volunteers in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults using our services.

The policy recognises that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of all colleagues and volunteers.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all colleagues to support the organisation's commitment to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and attend training as required. It is the responsibility of **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association's (RWCA)** Board, Executive, Strategic Leadership Team and all managers to ensure compliance and the effectiveness of the procedure accompanying this policy.

It is the responsibility of the manager that all frontline colleagues to ensure that they understand the importance of this policy and related procedures.

Failure to report suspected harm or abuse in line with the procedure that accompanies this Policy may be regarded as colluding with the harm or abuse and be in breach of the code of conduct.

All colleagues working with children or vulnerable adults are responsible for familiarising themselves with this policy and its associated procedures.

Definitions

Safeguarding is the right of every child and vulnerable individual accessing our services to be protected from any form of abuse. Abuse occurs when the child's or vulnerable adult's rights are not respected. Abuse is any behaviour towards a person that deliberately or unknowingly causes them harm, endangers life or violates their rights. It includes not only physical, emotional and psychological ill treatment but also neglect (including self-neglect), financial or sexual abuse, and the impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development. It concerns the misuse of power, control and /or authority and can be perpetrated by an individual, a group or an organisation.

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. An adult is anyone aged 18 or above. An Adult at Risk is someone of 18 years or over 'who is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness' and 'who is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' No Secrets' Guidance 2000.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework to empower and protect vulnerable people who are not able to make their own decisions. It makes it clear who can take decisions, in which situations, and how they should go about this.

The definition of abuse includes Domestic Abuse and forced marriage. Domestic Violence is 'any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between adults who are, or have been intimate partners or between family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Some incidents of abuse could also be relevant to our domestic violence policy and procedures, and we will be clear how we propose to manage any such incident. Forced marriage is one in which one or both of the spouses do not consent to the marriage and some element of duress is involved, including the use of physical and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is not sanctioned within any culture or religion.

3. Principles

- The welfare of the child or Adult at Risk is the paramount consideration.
- We will not tolerate abuse in any circumstances. Doing nothing is not an option.
- All children and Adults at Risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs and sexual identity have a right to protection from abuse.
- Adults have the right to be in control of their life, make decisions, be treated with respect and consideration and have their confidentiality respected.
- All children and Adult at Risk have a right to intervention, support and/or information which could make life better and/or safer for them and be involved in decisions that are made about them.
- We will promote the empowerment, wellbeing, security and safety of children and adults at risk of abuse consistent with their rights, mental capacity and personal choices.
- We aim to minimise the risk of abuse by being sensitive to cultural, gender and individual needs in our service delivery.
- We will maintain a culture and standards that prevent the development of poor care and support practices.
- **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** recognises that inter-agency co-operation is essential if children and vulnerable adults are to be protected effectively from abuse. We will work

closely in partnership with key agencies and professionals, sharing information and developing appropriate strategies to respond to the needs of our tenants and clients.

- All colleagues will be aware of, and comply with, local guidelines in relation to reporting concerns about children or vulnerable adults at risk. Where no such local procedures exist externally, we will provide our own.
- We will report every instance of disclosed or suspected abuse to the appropriate social services contact in line with each Local Authority safeguarding procedures alerting the police or other emergency services as required. Where appropriate, we will report concerns to the Disclosure Barring Service or the Care Quality Commission.
- **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** actively encourages and supports reporting of concerns and will protect colleagues disclosing malpractice from the risk of victimisation provided the disclosure is made in good faith.
- We comply with relevant legislation and regulation, including:

-Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) regulations	- Mental Capacity Act 2005
-Care Quality Commission (CQC) Registration regulations	- Safeguarding vulnerable groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012	- Guidelines in “No Secrets” publication

We will review new legislation as it arises and continually review our procedures in line with good practice.

4. Application

We deliver the principles of this policy through the application of processes which clearly distinguish between the requirements to safeguard Adult at Risk and the safeguarding of children. Each has a specific, named, lead officer within **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)**. Both recognise that we have responsibilities as an employer of colleagues who work with children and with Adult at Risk. Both also recognise that any colleague may identify potential abuse in their daily work.

Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) recruitment and selection procedure requires references, proof of identity and in our care and support services enhanced disclosure and 3 yearly re-checks for every colleague who works with Adults at Risk. Our employment policies prevent barred persons from being employed in any position that involves working with Adults at Risk.

All colleagues will work within the procedures that accompany this policy and all front-line colleagues will receive training on this policy at induction and in their on-going personal development training. The procedures that deliver this policy complement local authority safeguarding procedures and will ensure that

all colleagues engaged in delivering our services:

- Are alert to the possibility of abuse of a vulnerable adult in our services.
- Are alert to abuse of a tenant, client or applicant to any **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** service
- Know how to recognise abuse

- Understand the need to share information about concerns with agencies that need to know
- Understand professional boundaries
- Identify risks associated with lone working by staff they manage
- Know and use local authority guidelines (or **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** guidelines in their absence)
- Know how and where to report concerns
- Are aware of good practice

Serious incident reporting procedures ensure that the Board is made aware of serious allegations involving members of **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** staff.

The application of this policy recognises the key principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 which sets out the right for everyone covered by the Act to make decisions and for any decision made on their behalf to be in their best interests. Colleagues will always act in accordance with the principles of that Act when they believe that someone is being abused and in determining how to report that abuse.

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) will provide customers of services for vulnerable adults with information about how and with whom they can share any concerns, complaints and anxieties.

We will inform customers of our services for vulnerable adults of our policy and procedures on Adults at Risk through the sign-up procedure, induction meetings with supported housing officers and in our service handbooks.

Safeguarding is a standard agenda item for service delivery team meetings and operational management team meetings. Our procedures ensure that colleagues know the arrangements and contact details for reporting concerns to local authority safeguarding teams. We will work with relevant agencies, on individual cases and reviewing best practice and new legislation so that we develop appropriate strategies for responding to the needs of our tenants and clients.

Safeguarding children and Recruitment

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) recruitment and selection procedure requires references, proof of identity and in our care and support services enhanced disclosure and 3 yearly re-checks for every colleague who works with children.

Our employment policies prevent barred persons from being employed in any position that involves working with children.

All colleagues will work within the procedures that accompany this policy and all front-line colleagues will receive training on this policy at induction and in their on-going personal development training. Training includes the recognition of potential child sexual exploitation, online grooming and missing persons protocols. It is provided in a way that is appropriate for each colleague's level of engagement with children in their day to day work.

The procedures that deliver this policy complement local authority safeguarding procedures and will ensure that all colleagues engaged in delivering our services:

- Are alert to the possibility of abuse of a child in our services or of a child of an applicant or visitor
- Are alert to abuse of a tenant, client or applicant to our services
- Know how to recognise abuse
- Understand the need to share information about concerns with agencies that need to know
- Understand professional boundaries
- Identify risks associated with lone working by staff they manage
- Know and use local authority guidelines (or Perfecting Potential guidelines in their absence)
- Know how and where to report concerns
- Are aware of good practice

Serious incident reporting procedures ensure that the Board is made aware of serious allegations involving members of **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** staff.

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) will provide customers of services for children with information about how and with whom they can share any concerns, complaints and anxieties. We will inform customers of our services for children of our policy and procedures on safeguarding children through the sign-up procedure, induction meetings with supported housing officers and in our service handbooks.

Safeguarding is a standard agenda item for service delivery team meetings and operational management team meetings. Our procedures ensure that colleagues know the arrangements and contact details for reporting concerns to local authority safeguarding teams.

All leaders of operational teams are aware of and read local child safeguarding board websites. We will work with relevant agencies, on individual cases and reviewing best practice and new legislation so that we develop appropriate strategies for responding to the needs of our tenants and clients.

Safeguarding children

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) recruitment and selection procedure requires references, proof of identity and in our care and support services enhanced disclosure and 3 yearly re-checks for every colleague who works with children.

Our employment policies prevent barred persons from being employed in any position that involves working with children.

All colleagues will work within the procedures that accompany this policy and all front-line colleagues will receive training on this policy at induction and in their on-going personal development training. Training includes the recognition of potential child sexual exploitation, online grooming and missing persons protocols. It is provided in a way that is appropriate for each colleague's level of engagement with children in their day to day work.

The procedures that deliver this policy complement local authority safeguarding procedures and will ensure that all colleagues engaged in delivering our services:

- Are alert to the possibility of abuse of a child in our services or of a child of an applicant or visitor
- Are alert to abuse of a tenant, client or applicant to our services
- Know how to recognise abuse
- Understand the need to share information about concerns with agencies that need to know
- Understand professional boundaries
- Identify risks associated with lone working by staff they manage
- Know and use local authority guidelines (or Perfecting Potential guidelines in their absence)

Serious incident reporting procedures ensure that the Board is made aware of serious allegations involving members of Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) staff.

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA) will provide customers of services for children with information about how and with whom they can share any concerns, complaints and anxieties. We will inform customers of our services for children of our policy and procedures on safeguarding children through the sign-up procedure, induction meetings with supported housing officers and in our service handbooks.

Safer Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

Our organization is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals who come into contact with our services, particularly vulnerable adults. As part of this commitment, we have established this Safer Recruitment Policy to ensure that our recruitment processes are designed to prevent unsuitable individuals from engaging in activities that could potentially harm children and vulnerable adults, including cases related to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and domestic violence.

2. Policy Statement

Our organization is dedicated to maintaining a safe environment for all participants, volunteers, and staff. We are committed to preventing the appointment or engagement of individuals who pose a risk to the well-being and safety of children and adults at risk, including those who may have experienced or are at risk of experiencing any kind of abuse, VAWG or domestic violence.

3. Safer Recruitment Procedures

3.1 Job Descriptions and Role Profiles

All job descriptions and role profiles will accurately reflect the duties, qualifications, and experience required for the position. These documents will clearly outline the responsibilities related to safeguarding and working with children and vulnerable adults.

3.2 Selection Criteria and Person Specification

Our selection criteria will be based on the person specification and the requirements of the role. We will define the criteria, qualifications, and skills necessary for each position, including those related to safeguarding and dealing with children and vulnerable adults.

3.3 Application Process

Applicants will be required to complete a written application form that includes a declaration with regards to criminal convictions. The application form will also inquire about the applicant's understanding of and commitment to safeguarding principles.

3.4 Identification and Qualifications

Applicants will be asked to provide identification with a photograph as part of the application process. Original copies of relevant qualifications and certifications will be verified, and copies will be retained for our records.

3.5 Interviews

Interviews will be conducted with at least two representatives present. Questions related to safeguarding, working with children, vulnerable adults, and understanding of VAWG and domestic violence will be included in the interview process.

3.6 References

At least two references, including the most recent employer, will be requested and checked for all prospective employees and volunteers. Reference checks will include questions about the individual's suitability to work with adults at risk and their understanding of safeguarding principles.

3.7 Criminal Record Checks

All individuals working with adults at risk will undergo appropriate background checks, including Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. These checks will identify any relevant criminal history that might affect their suitability for the role.

3.8 Induction and Training

Successful candidates will receive a comprehensive induction, which will include familiarization with our safeguarding policies, procedures, and training related to recognizing and addressing VAWG, domestic violence, and children and adults at risk safeguarding concerns.

4. Reporting Concerns

All staff and volunteers are expected to report any concerns or suspicions related to children and vulnerable adult safeguarding, VAWG, or domestic violence immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. A clear procedure for reporting and responding to concerns will be provided to all employees and volunteers.

5. Ongoing Training and Development

All staff and volunteers will undergo regular training to ensure they are up-to-date with the latest guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and VAWG. This training will be refreshed at least every three years, and additional training will be provided in response to new developments or changes in legislation.

6. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Any updates or changes to legislation will be promptly incorporated into the policy. Our organization will maintain records of all recruitment processes and safeguarding training.

7. Conclusion

Our organization is dedicated to creating a safe and supportive environment for children and adults at risk, including those who may have experienced or are at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect, VAWG or domestic violence. Through strict adherence to our Safer Recruitment Policy, we aim to prevent any harm that may arise from inappropriate or unsuitable appointments and contribute to the well-being of all individuals we serve.

What would you do if a child make a disclosure?

Listen carefully

2. Give them the space to talk
3. Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you and reassure them.
4. Say you'll take them seriously
5. Don't confront the alleged abuser
6. Explain what you'll do next
7. Report what the child has told you as soon as possible

Steps to take after an incident or concern:

Staff should report concerns, as soon as possible to safeguarding lead report abuse or neglect to local authorities/ police. (If staff can not reach to safeguarding lead staff can start the process or inform another lead or manager.)

2. If child need in immediate danger: call emergency line: 999

If not in immediate danger, call non-emergency, 24/7 number: 101 or:

visit a police station to speak to an officer in person

contact the NSPCC to speak to a professional practitioner

contact the children's social care team at your local council

Provide a complete, honest account of what you observed that led you to suspect the occurrence of child abuse or neglect. Any reasonable suspicion is sufficient.

3. Record what you see, hear, or what is said to you. Make sure you save them as soon as possible.
4. Sign, date and pass your notes to the Safeguarding Officer
5. The person making the report should be able to follow up and question whether the manager or leader reported abuse and what actions were taken.
6. Try to ensure no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise
7. If safeguarding lead or manager didn't report abuse, staff who detect abuse should notify the police or local authority directly.
8. After reporting, a social worker should ask questions to determine if the children are safe. As RWCA we should stay informed about the child.

Safeguarding is a standard agenda item for service delivery team meetings and operational management team meetings. Our procedures ensure that colleagues know the arrangements and contact details for reporting concerns to local authority safeguarding teams.

All leaders of operational teams are aware of and read local child safeguarding board websites. We will work with relevant agencies, on individual cases and reviewing best practice and new legislation so that we develop appropriate strategies for responding to the needs of our tenants and clients.

This policy is for the sole use of **Refugee Workers' Cultural Association (RWCA)** and up to date as of **August 2023**.

Name: Haci Ozdemir Signed: _____ Dated: August 2023

Refugee Workers' Cultural Association

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