

## Whitefield Charity SK Corporation Safeguarding Policy

Whitefield Charity SK Corporation is referred to in this document as the Soup Kitchen

Other related Soup Kitchen policies:	Health and Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Complaints Policy
Date of last review and approval of the Safeguarding Policy by the Board of Trustees:	<b>September 2024</b>
Date of next review of the Safeguarding Policy by the Board of Trustees:	<b>September 2025</b>

### 1. Safeguarding Statement

The Soup Kitchen is committed to ensuring that its working practices protect people's rights to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect, and to abide by legislation relating to Safeguarding, such as The Care Acts and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act.

The Soup Kitchen's Safeguarding Policy sets out how the organisation:

- protects people from harm, including potential harm from members of the Soup Kitchen staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors),
- makes sure people can raise safeguarding concerns,
- handles incidents or allegations, and
- responds, including reporting to the relevant authorities.

The Safeguarding Policy has been developed to help the staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors) in their practices and clarifies responsibilities, processes for escalating safeguarding concerns, the organisation's expectations and definitions used.

### 2. Vulnerable people using the Soup Kitchen's services

The Soup Kitchen comes into daily contact with vulnerable adults who use its services to receive food and other support or counselling funded by the Soup Kitchen.

It is important to note that Soup Kitchen guests do not register or sign-in to use its services. Guests may not use the services regularly and no one-to-one sessions are held between guests and staff members except as otherwise specified in this policy.

One-to-one counselling sessions can be requested by guests, to be held on Soup Kitchen premises. These are conducted by a partner organisation with its own Safeguarding arrangements, as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement between the partner organisation and the Soup Kitchen.

The Soup Kitchen does not come into direct contact with young people and children under the age of 18, but disclosures may be made about family members or acquaintances, therefore relevant procedures for children are also covered in this policy.

**Note on AIC:** Our landlord, the Thames North Synod of the United Reformed Church and building manager, the American International Church, require safeguarding measures. However, Soup Kitchen London follows its own agreed-upon safeguarding policy.

### 3. Definitions

- a) **Definition of a vulnerable adult:** A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who is elderly and frail, has a mental illness including dementia, has a physical or sensory disability, has a learning disability, has a severe physical illness, is a substance misuser, is homeless.
- b) **Definition of a child:** A child is a person under the age of 18.
- c) **Definition of abuse:** The Camden Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board defines and categorises abuse as follows:

Abuse is mistreating someone in a way that denies them their human rights. Abuse and neglect can occur in your own home or a public place, while you are in hospital or in a college or care home. You may be living alone or with others. The person causing the harm may be a stranger, but more often than not the person is known.

There are several types of abuse:

- i. **Physical abuse** - hitting, pushing, shaking, spitting, pulling hair, inappropriate use of medication or restraint, or other physical harm.
- ii. **Domestic abuse** - Controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour or violence between people who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members. It can include psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse, and so called 'honour' based violence.
- iii. **Sexual abuse** - any sexual activity where an adult at risk cannot or does not consent, including rape, sexual assault or being forced to look at sexual images.
- iv. **Psychological or emotional abuse** - such as shouting or swearing at or ignoring an adult at risk, name calling, harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying, threats and intimidation. It can also include cyber bullying.

- v. **Financial or Material abuse** - fraud, theft, forcing an adult at risk to pay for other people's things, not allowing an adult at risk access to or control of their money or property, or using it without their permission. This also includes internet and telephone scamming, as well as pressures over property and inheritance.
- vi. **Neglect** - where a person allows an adult at risk to suffer by failing to care for them or by ignoring their needs, for example with regard to food, medication, heating and personal care.
- vii. **Self-Neglect** - not looking after yourself, for example, by not taking care of your personal hygiene, health or surroundings. It can include the collecting of a large number of items with little value to others (e.g. newspapers) that make it difficult to live in your home.
- viii. **Modern Slavery** - slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude where people are forced into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment.
- ix. **Discriminatory abuse** - suffering harassment, bullying or ill-treatment because of your age, disability, ethnic origin, sexuality or gender.
- x. **Organisational abuse** - repeated poor care of an adult at risk through neglect or poor professional practice in a paid or regulated care setting.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and they affect one person or more.

Patterns of abuse vary and include:

- serial abuse, in which the perpetrator seeks out and 'grooms' individuals. Sexual abuse sometimes falls into this pattern as do some forms of financial abuse,
- long-term abuse, in the context of an ongoing family relationship such as domestic violence between spouses or generations or persistent psychological abuse, and
- opportunistic abuse, such as theft occurring because money or jewellery has been left lying around.

#### 4. Responsibilities

All staff team members (employees, volunteers and contractors) have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the processes outlined in this policy. They are expected to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

The Board of Trustees has a responsibility to ensure that the policy is in place, is appropriate and that sufficient resources are available to effectively implement the policy. Trustees are

also responsible for ensuring that the policy is regularly reviewed and verifying there has been no breach of practice. The Soup Kitchen Director reports on any breaches of practice to the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees delegates day-to-day management of Safeguarding to the Soup Kitchen Director.

The Soup Kitchen Director is the Safeguarding Lead in the organisation and has a responsibility to:

- promote the welfare of adults and children,
- keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and Disclosure and Barring Service,
- ensure that the policy is accessible to the staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors) and that appropriate training and support is provided, and
- investigate and report any policy breaches to the trustees, and take appropriate action.

If the Safeguarding Lead /Director is not available any queries should be taken to the Soup Kitchen Head Chef and Manager.

If the Safeguarding Lead / Director is the focus of the Safeguarding concern, any queries should be taken to the Chair of Trustees or the Senior Pastor of the American International Church, who is also a trustee. Contact details are:

- Soup Kitchen London Chair of Trustees, 79a Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 4TD
- Senior Minister of the American International Church, 79a Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 4TD

## **5. Safe recruitment and appointment**

No staff team member (employees, volunteers and contractors) will usually work alone with guests. However as many Soup Kitchen guests may be vulnerable adults, safe recruitment processes are followed such as interviewing candidates, taking up references for all positions and carrying out disclosure and barring checks.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks**

All employees and contractors will undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check prior to working with the Soup Kitchen.

People who directly contact the Soup Kitchen to volunteer will also undergo a DBS check and references will be taken up. Corporate volunteering schemes have their own processes for selecting those who volunteer at the Soup Kitchen through their own organisations.

It should be noted that having a criminal record does not, in all circumstances, prevent someone from being recruited as a staff team member (employee, volunteer or contractor). Each case will be individually considered and the Director will have the final say.

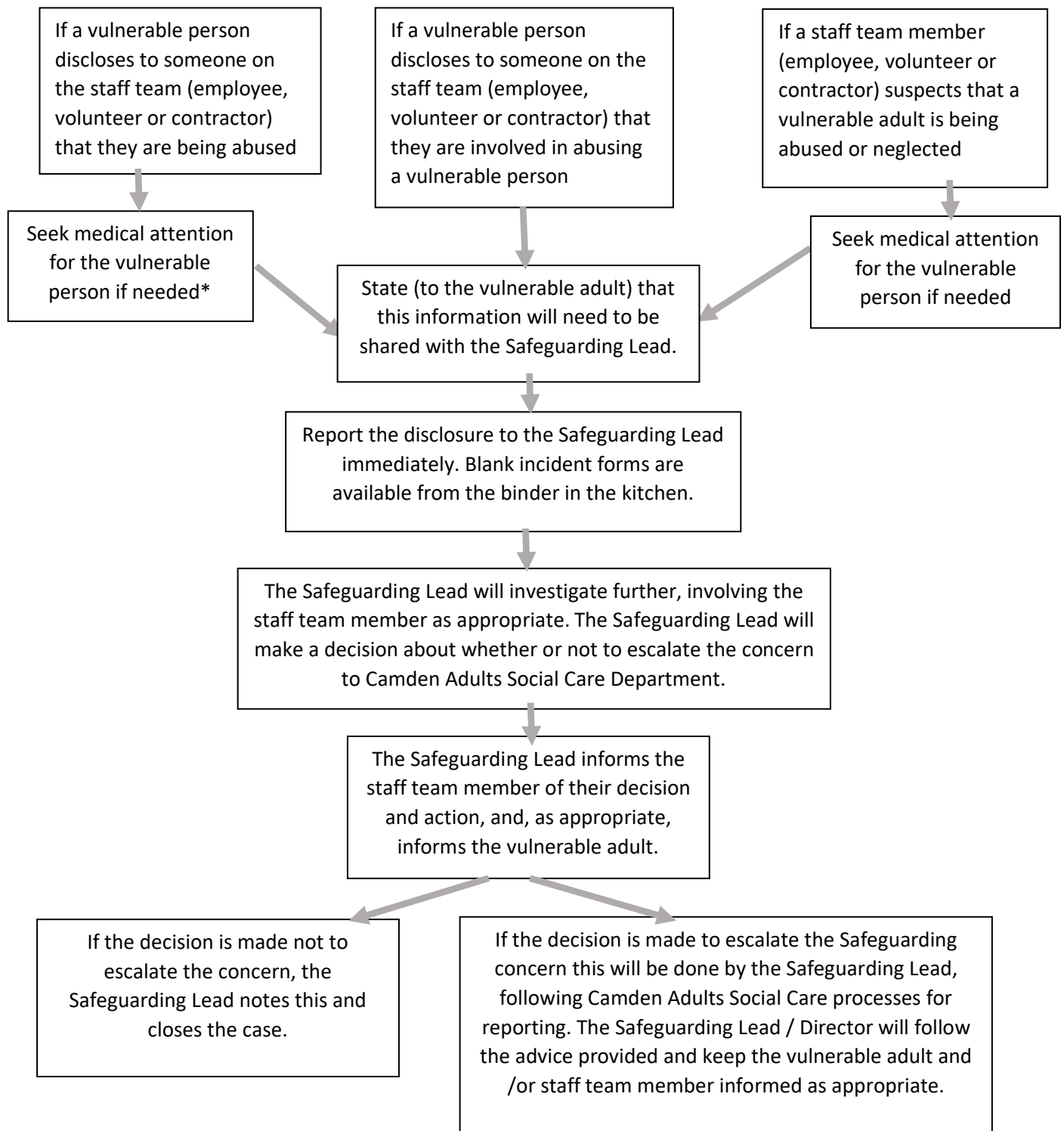
### **Service delivery and subcontracting**

- There will be systematic checking of safeguarding arrangements of partner organisations.
- Safeguarding will be a fixed agenda item on any partnership reporting meetings.
- Contracts and memorandums of agreement for partnership delivery work will include clear minimum requirements, arrangements for safeguarding and non-compliance procedures.

## **6. Safeguarding Process and Principles**

The process in the flow chart below outlines the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns about vulnerable adults at the Soup Kitchen. It is followed by a list of principles which apply in all cases.

## SAFEGUARDING PROCESS FLOW CHART



### **The following principles apply in all cases**

- All actions to protect a vulnerable adult must proceed without delay.
- All members of the staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors) must be aware that there is a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard vulnerable adults and children. The public interest in safeguarding vulnerable adults and children overrides confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need-to-know basis only, as judged by the Safeguarding Lead / Director.
- Staff team members (employees, volunteers and contractors) must be aware that they cannot promise service users or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets. If necessary, the Director will also remind the guest that the charity cannot guarantee confidentiality where a vulnerable person is at risk of abuse, or further abuse.
- If the Safeguarding Lead / Director is not available any queries should be taken to the Soup Kitchen Head Chef and Manager.
- If the Safeguarding Lead / Director is the focus of the Safeguarding concern, any queries should be taken to the Chair of Trustees or the Senior Pastor of the American International Church, who is also a trustee. Contact details are:
  - Soup Kitchen London Chair of Trustees, 79a Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 4TD
  - Senior Minister of the American International Church, 79a Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 4TD

In the remainder of this policy, these are referred to as alternative contacts.

- Staff team members (employees, volunteers and contractors) have a responsibility to be aware of, and alert to, signs that all is not well with a vulnerable person. However, they are not responsible for diagnosing, investigating or providing a therapeutic response to abuse or other safeguarding issue. Not all concerns relate to abuse - there may well be other welfare issues. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what is known about the vulnerable person and their circumstances. No action should be taken without discussion with the Soup Kitchen Safeguarding Lead / Director, or in the absence of the Director, or in the case of concerns about the Director, with one of the alternative contacts.
- Full written records must be maintained of all disclosures and actions following disclosure.
  - Always record in writing concerns about a vulnerable adult's welfare, whether or not further action is taken. (This may include notes plus, if appropriate, sketches of sites and sizes of injuries). All notes must be dated and written as soon as possible following the disclosure.
  - Always record in writing discussions about a vulnerable adult's welfare with staff team members (employees, volunteers and contractors) and with the vulnerable person, where applicable. If making notes of a conversations with the vulnerable adult, use the same language they use, especially names used for body parts, sexual acts or other abusive acts.
  - At the close of discussion with the Safeguarding Lead / Director, clear and explicit decisions should be made and recorded about who will be taking what action, or that no further action will be taken.

- All safeguarding information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the Soup Kitchen's Data Protection Policy and regarded as highly sensitive information with the highest degree of protection.
- The Adult Social Care Team at Camden Council receives communications and co-ordinates responses to safeguarding queries, on behalf of the Camden Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.
- The Soup Kitchen Safeguarding Lead / Director has the responsibility of informing the relevant social services department of safeguarding concerns over the abuse or neglect of vulnerable adults. (However any member of the staff team (employee, volunteer or contractors) may report a safeguarding concern to social services irrespective of the opinion of others in the organisation, e.g. if they disagree with the Soup Kitchen's Safeguarding Lead / Director's conclusion about not escalating a concern).
- The Soup Kitchen Safeguarding Lead / Director should work within the following timescales for reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse:
  - Immediate, if the vulnerable person is at risk of serious physical harm, or a serious criminal act has taken place, and evidence will need to be kept safe.
  - Within 24 hours if it relates to a specific incident which is, or may be still going on, or may happen again.
  - Within 7 days if it is a more general concern, which does not indicate immediate harm.
- It can be distressing to suspect abuse or to have abuse disclosed. The Soup Kitchen will support staff team members (employees, volunteers and contractors) who raise safeguarding concerns, offering them opportunities to discuss their concerns and their own welfare.

## **7. Processes for dealing with allegations about a member of the staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors)**

The Soup Kitchen recognises its duty to investigate and report concerns or allegations against any of its staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors), or against a professional from another organisation.

It may be very hard to report a concern about a colleague, but the safety and protection of a vulnerable person must be the priority in any decision that is made.

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

- Staff team member (employees, volunteers and contractors) reports their concern to the Safeguarding Lead (or to one of the alternative contacts if the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable or if the concern is about the Safeguarding Lead).
- The Safeguarding Lead (or alternative contact if unavailable) will contact the local authority for advice and will follow the advice provided.



If a member of the staff team (employee, volunteer or contractor) is subject to abuse allegations, the Soup Kitchen will offer support in these circumstances, but the social services department, and as necessary the police, will be assisted in their investigations.

If the investigation concludes that the member of the staff team (employees, volunteers and contractors) has abused a vulnerable adult, employees will be subject to the Disciplinary Process, while contractors will have their contract terminated and the volunteer's agreement with the Soup Kitchen will end. Criminal proceedings may follow.

## **8. Safeguarding children**

Although the Soup Kitchen does not work directly with children (under the age of 18 years), a guest may disclose that a child is being abused or neglected or a staff team member (employees, volunteers and contractors) may suspect that a child is being abused or neglected. The same basic process and principles as for vulnerable adults will be followed. If a decision is made to escalate the matter, the Safeguarding Lead/Director will contact Camden Council's Children and Families Contact Centre and follow their advice.

## **9. Monitoring and reviewing the policy**

As with all policies at the Soup Kitchen, the Board of Trustees will conduct an annual review of this policy. The evaluation will encompass an examination of any alterations in legislation, an assessment of the policy's practical effectiveness and a discussion on whether any changes should be implemented.

The Safeguarding Lead / Director will:

- report to Trustees any Safeguarding issues raised and the outcome,
- check that DBS checks are being conducted, and
- monitor whether concerns are being reported and actioned.