

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

The Relationships Service (TRS)

PURPOSE OF POLICY

To protect children and young people whether or not they either directly or indirectly use TRS's services.

To lay out TRS's commitment to child protection and safeguarding children and young people and the overarching principles which guide it.

To give confidence to clients, everyone involved in delivering services for TRS, and other stakeholders, in what to do if they feel there may be something which could affect the safety and welfare of a child or children.

To outline a proactive approach which ensures this policy is made real.

WHO THIS POLICY IS FOR

All staff and volunteers, including Trustees regardless of their role within TRS.

Partner organisations to TRS.

Clients (past, present and future) of TRS services.

Children and young people under the age of 18 who may or may not come into contact, either directly or indirectly, with TRS services.

ASSOCIATED POLICIES

TRS policies on whistleblowing; equality and diversity; adult safeguarding; confidentiality; data protection; use of social media; safer recruitment; information sharing; supervision; allegations policy; disclosure and barring; lone working.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- We understand, that as a provider of relationship support, we will come across things which affect the welfare and safety of children and young people.

- We also understand that we may often be the first agency to become aware of these issues. As such we take our duty to act on these concerns extremely seriously.
- We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989.
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective, every person involved in TRS should play their full part.
- We will take a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.
- We will ensure that our approach is child centred in terms of language and style.
- For our approach to be truly effective, working together with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies, is essential in particular to liaise with the Local Authority and follow the Local Area Child Protection Procedures.
- All concerns are shared as soon as practicably possible with an appropriate senior member of staff, and recorded and dealt with appropriately.
- For our approach to be truly effective, we must always seek to support an open, transparent and supportive culture.

In Summary – Key Safeguarding Actions for Charity Trustees:

1. Safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities.
2. Ensure your charity has an adequate safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures. Regularly review and update the policy and procedures to ensure that they are fit for purpose.
3. Identify possible risks, including risks to your beneficiaries or to anyone else connected to your charity and any emerging risks on the horizon.
4. Consider how to improve the safeguarding culture within your charity.
5. Ensure that everyone involved with the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report, and record a safeguarding concern
6. Ensure everyone knows how to raise a safeguarding concern.
7. Regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant.
8. Review which posts within the charity can and must have a DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
9. Have a risk assessment process in place for posts which do not qualify for a DBS check, but which still have contact with children or adults at risk.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

This policy is based on laws as they apply in England and Wales, and guidance which aims to protect children, in particular:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2004 & Protection of Children From Sexual Offences Act 2012
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- Charities Commission guidance on Safeguarding and protecting people for Charities and Trustees (updated June 2022)
- Information Sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2018)
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government 2018, updates made 2019, 2020 and 2022)
- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act (2014)
- All Wales Child Protection Procedures

TYPES OF HARM

There are various forms of harm that can be evidenced by physical and behavioural indicators:

- Physical harm
- Neglect
- Emotional harm
- Sexual harm
- Financial and material harm
- Discriminatory harm
- Radicalisation

EQUALITY STATEMENT

In our approach to keep children and young people safe, we will make sure that all children and young people have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. We understand

The Relationships Service is the trading name of
The Relationships Counselling, Therapy and Mediation Service
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that for any of these considerations, we may need to tailor our approach accordingly.

OUR APPROACH

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

1. At the local level, Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and their equivalent in Wales co-ordinate, and ensure the effectiveness of, work to protect, and promote the welfare of children. Each local board includes local authorities, health bodies, the police and others, including the voluntary and independent sectors. The LSCBs are responsible for local child protection policy, procedure and guidance, which each TRS service will have subscribed to.
2. As such, in all instances of concern regarding the safety of a child or young person, every effort should be made to work alongside Local Safeguarding Children Boards or their equivalent in Wales wherever possible.
3. In order to reflect statutory guidance on safeguarding children and young people, TRS will have arrangements in place which address the following areas:
 - a. A clear line of accountability designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
 - b. A designated Board member to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements, but it does remain the overall responsibility of the whole Board of Trustees. The responsibility of Trustees is that they are expected to take responsibility to ensure things are put right if things go wrong.
 - c. A culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services.
 - d. Clear whistleblowing procedures.
 - e. Arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other professionals and with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

A designated safeguarding lead to support staff working across TRS to recognize the needs of children, including rescue from possible abuse or neglect. This role is specifically defined in their job description. They will be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively.
 - f. Safe recruitment practices for individuals we permit to work

regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check.

- g.* Appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training.
- h.* Ensuring that our staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role.
- i.* Giving our staff a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection and young people’s safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child’s safety or welfare.
- j.* Regularly review all staff practice to ensure they improve over time.
- k.* Have clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

4. To ensure this policy is properly implemented we will have an associated action plan for use across the organisation and reviewed at regular intervals.

VERSION CONTROL

Previous version Issued	May 2024
Reviewed & Updated for TRS	Oct 2025