

Safeguarding Policy

Summary

This document sets out DEBRA's policy on Safeguarding Adults at Risk and Children. Within this document there is an explanation of what safeguarding is and what responsibility our employees, volunteers and trustees have with regards to safeguarding. A clear reporting procedure is set out along with detailed of mandatory training to be undertaken by employees, volunteers and trustees.

Document control

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Policy Statement

DEBRA is committed to promoting the welfare of, and safeguarding, all children, young people and adults at risk with whom we come into contact during our work.

We believe that all children, young people and adults at risk have an equal right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, race, religion, ability, gender, language, background or sexual identity; we consider the welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult to be of paramount importance.

We will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people and adults at risk are protected in our working environment and that beneficiaries of DEBRA are protected whilst being supported by the charity.

All reported allegations of abuse will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly and appropriately reported by trained personnel, recognising the sensitivity of safeguarding issues as well as the importance of confidentiality and data protection.

We commit to ensuring that all employees, trustees and volunteers are sufficiently informed about safeguarding to speak up and report suspicions of abuse, and we expect all employees, trustees as well as any volunteers who have supervisory responsibilities to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and related procedures.

DEBRA's Safeguarding Policy requires staff to follow the 'ABC' approach:

- A) Accept that it is your responsibility – be aware.**
- B) Be knowledgeable – do your online training.**
- C) Contact the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead), or, if unavailable, a DSO (Designated Safeguarding Officer) by phone – 07979 6839836, or report via the Assure system using the QR code (Appendix 1) or through the Intranet**

Note of abbreviations used in this document:

- i. The 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (used in England) is abbreviated to 'DBS'; the equivalent in Scotland, 'Protection of Vulnerable Groups' is abbreviated to 'PVG'.
- ii. Designated Safeguarding Officer is abbreviated to 'DSO', and Designated Safeguarding Lead is abbreviated to 'DSL'.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a) Protect children, young people and adults at risk who are beneficiaries of DEBRA (receiving support/care/guidance), or who work with DEBRA on a paid or voluntary basis and may be regarded as vulnerable adults or aged under 18.
- b) To clarify what safeguarding means and provide guidance on what an employee or volunteer should do if they are concerned about the welfare of a child, young person or adult at risk
- c) Set out the difference between safeguarding and general welfare
- d) Inform all staff of the principles that guide DEBRA's approach to safeguarding';
- e) State DEBRA's commitment to providing adequate safeguarding training to all employees, trustees and volunteers;
- f) Ensure that DEBRA complies with safeguarding legislation, observes best practice in this area, and monitors the instances reported in order to update the policy appropriately and maintain its relevance.

What is safeguarding?

- Safeguarding is defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' as:
 - protecting children from maltreatment;
 - preventing impairment of children's health and development;
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- Safeguarding is defined for adults at risk in the 'Care Act 2014' as:
 - Protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
 - It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.
 - It must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

What forms of harm should we look out for?

- Physical abuse.
- Domestic violence or abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Psychological or emotional abuse.
- Financial or material abuse.
- Modern slavery.
- Discriminatory abuse.
- Organisational or institutional abuse.

What's the difference between Safeguarding and a Welfare concerns?

Safeguarding only relates to adults or children who are at risk. If someone does not fall into either of these categories then any form of mistreatment, abuse or native treatment would be termed a “welfare concern”.

It is still important to report a welfare concern in the workplace. If you are concerned that a colleague, volunteer, or peers is experiencing abuse, discrimination, negative treatment or wellbeing challenges please contact the Human Resources team via email at HR@debra.org.uk.

It is always better to report your concerns and gain the support you need from Human Resources.

Responsibilities

1. It is the responsibility of **all employees, trustees and volunteers** to undertake the training provided in safeguarding, to be aware of the procedures to be followed if they are concerned that a child or adults at risk is being abused, and to immediately refer any child or vulnerable adult protection concerns to the DEBRA DSL or relevant DSO, or alternative authority.
2. DEBRA has a team of trained **DSOs** and a **DSL** to coordinate safeguarding activities. It is the responsibility of the DSL (or DSO in his/her absence) to report suspected abuse or risk of abuse to the

appropriate authority/professional. (It is DEBRA's practice for a DSO to discuss any concerns with the DSL or another DSO prior to reporting, unless the DSL/DSOs are unavailable and an immediate risk has been identified).

3. The DSL is responsible for leading safeguarding within the organisation, and reporting the findings of the Quarterly Safeguarding Committee to the SMT, and indirectly to the trustees.

Guidance

DEBRA recognises that:

- The welfare of the child and adults at risk is paramount, as enshrined in the Care Act 2014, and therefore DEBRA ensures that tasks are planned and carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults.
- All children and adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. DEBRA has a zero tolerance approach to any form of potentially harmful behaviour.
- Some children and adults are at risk because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs, physical ability and other issues.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, adults, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of young people.
- Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and therefore all staff and volunteers must be aware of the safeguarding policy and associated procedures, and undertake appropriate training.
- Appropriate action will be taken immediately where it is believed a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk or it is alleged that a child or an adult at risk is suspected of being abused.
- Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child and vulnerable adult protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults and protect them from harm.

Online Safety Policy Statement

DEBRA works with children, young people, and families as part of its activities. These include members, volunteers and supporters.

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

The policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers, children and young people and anyone involved in DEBRA's activities.

We recognise that:

- the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges
- we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online
- we have a responsibility to help keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe online, whether or not they are using DEBRA's network and devices
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety • all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

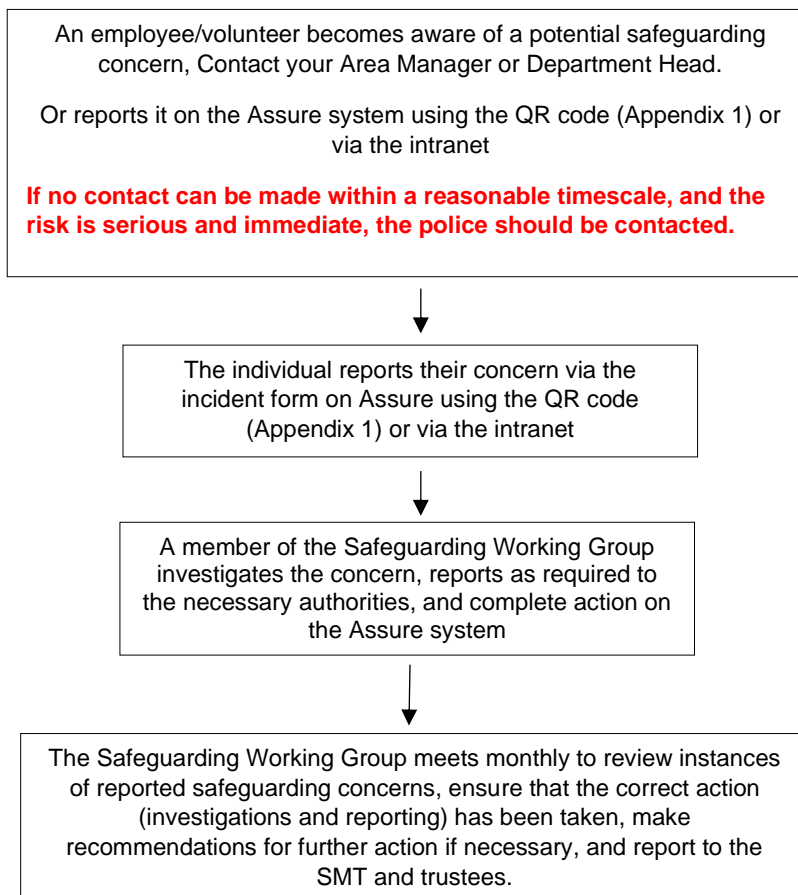
- appointing an online safety coordinator
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our behaviour code for adults (See Appendix 2).
- supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others

- supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly
- ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively
- ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
- providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online

Safeguarding Reporting Procedure

Safeguarding means protecting the health, wellbeing and human rights of children and adults at risk, enabling them to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. We all have a responsibility to ensure that we look after all those who we meet at DEBRA, colleagues, volunteers, members, customers, donors and stakeholders.

If you have concerns about the wellbeing of anyone you meet through your role at DEBRA and you feel there may be a safeguarding issue, please report it straight away following the procedure set out below.



The above procedure should be followed regardless of what level or designation an individual is within DEBRA. A high level of confidentiality will always be maintained, and all incident reported via the Assure system can only be viewed by a small group of specially trained individuals. All forms and documentation that is submitted will be stored in a secure folder that can only be accessed by members of the Safeguarding working group. In line with Child Protection and Adult safeguarding legislation documents and email will be retained for up to 7 years.

Training

As a minimum, all employees and trustees are required to undertake the online training about safeguarding and online safety, provided by DEBRA, details of which are issued to individuals by the Learning and Development Manager. Failure to complete this mandatory training within the specified timescale constitutes misconduct and disciplinary action will be initiated. Once the initial training has been undertaken a refresher module must be completed every 12 months.

Volunteers will receive training from their manager via a “toolbox talk” induction and will have a refresher session every year. Training completion will be monitored and tracked on the HR IT system.

For the majority of staff, this level of training is deemed to be sufficient, but enhanced safeguarding training will be provided for members of staff whose work constitutes a ‘regulated activity’, such as providing care/support/guidance to any of the charity’s beneficiaries, who may be regarded as vulnerable adults or children. As above, if provided, this training must be undertaken within the specified timescale, and failure to comply will ultimately lead to disciplinary action; recognising the importance of safeguarding, the disciplinary sanction in such instances will be dismissal.

Related Documents

- Statement of Main Terms of Employment (SMTE).
- Employee Handbook (includes Equal Opportunities policy, Grievance and
- Disciplinary policies, Whistleblowing policy, Professional Boundaries policy, Social Media Policy, Workplace Etiquette, Personal Harassment and Anti-Bullying policy
- References policy; Appraisals/Reviews policy, Confidentiality policy.
- Recruitment & Selection policy.
- DBS Policy.

- Induction policy.
- General Data Protection Regulations.
- Complaints & Compliments policy.
- Community Support Team Referrals policy.
- Lone Working policy.
- Health & Safety policy.
- Major Incident Reporting policy.
- Crisis Management policy.
- DEBRA Virtual Groups Procedure

Sign-off

Name	Date	Signature
SMT	July 2022	
Nominations & Governance	April 2022	
Board	July 2022	

Appendix 1

QR code for reporting



Appendix 2

Code of Conduct for Adults

Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- providing a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose o having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies and procedures o including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing and online safety
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- this includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.