



SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH

EATING DISORDERS

ACROSS THE SOUTH & WEST

## Safeguarding Policy (Protection of Children and Young People)

|                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |          |   |                                                      |            |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---|------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Owner:                 | Sam Best – Chief Operating Officer                                                                                                                                                                   |          |   |                                                      |            |
| Date:                  | 25/09/2025                                                                                                                                                                                           | Version: | 7 | CEO/Trustee approved:                                | 22/09/2025 |
| Review date:           | 25/09/2027                                                                                                                                                                                           |          |   | Website publication:                                 | Yes / No   |
| Type of policy:        | Clinical                                                                                                                                                                                             |          |   |                                                      |            |
| Company contract type: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employed staff<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freelancer<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteer<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trustee |          |   | Notes:<br>This policy supersedes v6 dated 04/01/2022 |            |

At SWEDA we are committed to delivering a service that promotes good practice and protects our clients from harm. We will seek to protect the safety of the children and young people (CYP) we work with and provide a safe environment for them.

This policy applies to all SWEDA employees, trustees, agency staff, casual employees and volunteers and should be read in conjunction with the SWEDA Safeguarding and Self Harm Handbook.

### Policy Statement

SWEDA is committed to making sure that CYP are protected and kept safe from harm while they are receiving services from SWEDA. It will:

- Take appropriate action to respond to issues of child protection, which affect a CYP who uses SWEDA services whether the incident has taken place at SWEDA or in another context i.e. at school or at home.
- Take appropriate action to respond to issues of child protection, which occur on SWEDA's premises, or involve its employees or volunteers. Where an allegation against a member of staff who works with children is received, SWEDA will invoke its complaints procedure and will report the incident to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for further advice and escalation if appropriate.
- Ensure all children are treated with care, respect and dignity.
- Ensure communication with CYP is open and clear.
- Work in line with current legislation and ensure that the welfare and safety of the individual is paramount.
- Ensure that if a complaint is made, or criminal proceedings are brought against a SWEDA worker and involve a third party, the situation is treated with the utmost seriousness and urgency.

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## Responsibility and Authority

SWEDA has 4 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) who hold a level 3 Advanced Child Protection qualification. Concerns can be raised to any one of them and they will discuss and agree the most appropriate course of action for a client with the clients key worker. The Clinical Lead (also DSL) will have the overall say on how an incident is dealt with, if an agreed course of action cannot be agreed between the key worker and the DSL.

For an up to date list of DSLs please see Annex A.

The DSL is responsible for:

- Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to social services or police.
- Providing advice and support to other staff on issues relating to safeguarding.
- Maintaining a proper record of any safeguarding referrals, complaints or concerns (even where that concern does not lead to a referral).
- Ensuring that users of the service are aware of SWEDA's Safeguarding Policy.
- Liaising with the Local Authority, Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and other appropriate agencies.
- Reporting concerns and trends to SWEDA's SLT and board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and will ensure that the arrangements for protecting our clients are effective, robust and reviewed on a regular basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee is responsible for overseeing the liaison between the Police and Children's Social Care in connection with allegations against the CEO or any of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. This process will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and provision of recorded information to assist enquiries.

## Definitions:

### Definition of a Child

Child Protection Procedures apply to CYP who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. (Procedures also apply to young people with additional support needs, which may place them at increased risk, up to 25 years).

### Definitions of Child Abuse

Child abuse is when a child is harmed by an adult or another child – it can be over a period of time but can also be a one-off action. It can be physical, sexual or emotional and it can happen in person or online. It can also be a lack of love, care and attention – this is neglect. (NSPCC, 2024)

There are several different categories of abuse officially defined by the [NSPCC](#), please click on the links below to better your understanding of each category:

1. [Bullying and Cyber Bullying](#)
2. [Child Sexual Exploitation](#)
3. [Child Trafficking](#)
4. [Criminal Exploitation and Gangs](#)
5. [Domestic Abuse](#)
6. [Emotional Abuse](#)
7. [Female Genital Mutilation](#)
8. [Grooming](#)

9. [Neglect](#)
10. [Non-recent abuse](#)
11. [On-line abuse](#)
12. [Physical Abuse](#)
13. [Sexual Abuse](#)

## **Causes for Concern (things to look out for)**

May include:

- Signs of physical abuse e.g. bruising
- Signs of sexual abuse or concerns with Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Signs of Emotional abuse or concerns
- Suspicions of abuse or radicalisation due to changes in behaviour
- Disclosure by a CYP where a member of staff believes the CYP to be at risk of radicalisation
- Use of inappropriate language
- Signs/suspicions of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Signs/suspicions of Fabricated Illness (FI)
- Inappropriate behaviours displayed by other members of staff or volunteers.

## **Dealing with safeguarding concerns**

If a member of staff or a volunteer has concerns about a CYP they should discuss this with either their Line Manager or one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. It is not the responsibility of the employee/volunteer to deal with suspected abuse (unless there is immediate danger to the individual), but it is their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person. Reporting a safeguarding concern is mandatory. Failing to report a safeguarding concern is a serious matter and could result in disciplinary action.

If a CYP wishes to disclose abuse, the member of staff or volunteer should:

1. Listen carefully and remain calm.
2. Take all allegations seriously.
3. Try not to show shock or disbelief.
4. Demonstrate empathy and non-judgement.
5. Ask just enough without asking leading or closed questions – use the TED Model – Tell, Explain, Describe.
6. Reassure the CYP by telling them they have done the right thing.
7. Inform the CYP that you must pass the information on, but only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them who you will be reporting the matter to.
8. Record the information accurately and as soon as possible using SWEDA's Safeguarding Concern Reporting Form (found in the Safeguarding and Self Harm Handbook. Write only facts and remember that the report may be required in the future for any legal action.
9. Staff/Volunteers should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves but contact their line manager or a DSL as soon as possible, who will be responsible for any onward referral.

## **Outcomes**

The DSL will refer information or seek advice from other relevant organisations as appropriate e.g. Police, Children's Social Care, Local Safeguarding partnerships. In the event of the concerns not being appropriate for

referral at that stage then the client will be monitored through the Key Worker and the Clinical Lead. Staff and Volunteers will receive support as required.

### **Working from Home**

Any member of staff who is working from home (providing online support) should raise any concerns in the same way as if they were working at SWEDA premises; all concerns should in the first instance be raised with the workers line manager and a DSL.

### **Allegations made against Staff, Volunteers or Trustees**

If an allegation is made against a member of SWEDA staff or a volunteer it should be reported immediately to the Clinical Lead\*. After initial investigation, the Clinical Lead will inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), if it is found that the allegation requires escalation. If the LADO decides if the matter is a child protection case, SWEDA will act upon advice given to ensure the investigation is not jeopardised. Any internal investigation should be carried out by a member of staff who has undertaken at least the "Working Together" Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership advanced interagency training.

\*The only exception to this is if an allegation is made against the Clinical Lead, in which case it should be reported to the Chief Operating Officer or the CEO, who will inform the LADO and the Lead Safeguarding Trustee.

### **Allegations made against another client**

If an allegation is made by a client against another client, this must be reported immediately to either the Clinical Lead or a DSL. They will then refer information to or seek advice from another relevant organisation as appropriate. There is an expectation that concerns should be shared with parents/carers unless by doing so the client might be placed at greater risk of harm.

### **Contextual Safeguarding**

As well as threats to the welfare of CYP from within their families, CYP may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These threats may arise from within the wider community including; exploitation by criminal gangs such as county lines, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremists leading to radicalisation. Assessments of children should consider whether wider environmental factors including on-line abuse are present in a child's life and are a threat to their safety and or welfare. Where we believe that a CYP may be affected by any of these factors, we will follow the same reporting procedures as other forms of abuse.

### **On-Line Safeguarding**

The online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges. We believe CYP should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

As part of our activities when working with CYP, we may use resources obtained via the internet, social media sites and downloadable apps. However, these will only be used in conjunction with our Children's Lead or appropriately qualified counsellor/psychotherapist and all SWEDA devices will have strict parental controls, together with password settings. No CYP will be left on their own to use SWEDA devices.

It is paramount that all staff and volunteers working with these mediums ensure the safety and wellbeing of CYP at all times. If any CYP reports they have been subject to any on-line abuse, then we will follow the same reporting procedures as other forms of abuse.

### **Training of Staff and Volunteers**

Four members of SWEDA staff will be trained to a minimum of level 3 in Advanced Child Protection, which will be renewed every 2 years in line with the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership requirements.

All other staff and volunteers including trustees will receive introduction to safeguarding training to support their understanding and awareness of safeguarding issues. This will be regularly updated.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee will attend the NCVO Safeguarding Training Essentials for Trustees. As part of their induction Trustees will receive a Safeguarding overview of the organisation based on the Charity Commissions 10 principles.

At least one member of the SMT will undertake the Governments online PREVENT training course and cascade necessary information to the team.

Trustees will receive an annual update based on the Charity Commissions 10 principles

### **Preventing unsuitable people from working with CYP**

SWEDA has a duty to ensure that people working with CYP are suitable to fulfil the requirements for their role. SWEDA will ensure that one member of the SMT will have completed safer recruitment training to inform our policies and will ensure all staff and volunteers who are working in a one to one situation with CYP will have an appropriate DBS check, references undertaken and qualifications are verified. Staff and volunteers are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with CYP.

Staff and volunteers who disclose or are found to have been convicted of any offence relating to CYP, or any related disciplinary sanction will not be permitted to work in any service, event or project which involves contact with CYP at SWEDA.

### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

All staff and volunteers are aware through our data protection and GDPR policies that they have a professional responsibility to share relevant and proportionate information with other agencies in order to safeguard CYP.

If a CYP discloses information that may indicate that they are at risk of abuse, the staff member will be clear that they cannot promise to keep the information a secret. The staff member will be honest with the CYP and explain that it will be necessary to tell someone in order to help them and keep them safe.

SWEDA will undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency, unless the circumstances may put the CYP at further risk of harm. Any discussions which take place between SWEDA and the parent/carer will be recorded

If appropriate we will inform the CYP and/or parent/carer of what information will be shared and with whom.

## Supporting CYP

We recognise that CYP who are abused or witness abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth and trust those around them. Where appropriate we will endeavour to continue to support the CYP through our activities to encourage self-esteem and motivation.

## Accidents and injuries

All accidents involving CYP must be recorded and the Chief Operating Officer must be notified. If the CYP is a client of another agency the accident must also be reported to their line manager/carer or parent. The First Aid Box can be located:

Harvest Court - Kitchen  
Highfield House - Main office  
Penny Brohn Main - Office

If using a room at another organisation, please ask a member of their team.

## Record Keeping

Workers will use the SWEDA Safeguarding Reporting Form (found in the appendix section of the Safeguarding and Self Harm handbook) as a guide to collate the relevant information needed and copy and paste the information into the client's notes on the database.

Workers will record the conversation in a **factual** way as soon as practically possible, using CLIENT'S own words, and will avoid conjecture, assumptions or personal opinions.

Safeguarding records will be kept for as long as deemed necessary, in line with Data Protection principles. The Accident book can be found with the First Aid Box, which is located:

Harvest Court - Kitchen  
Highfield House - Main office  
Penny Brohn Main - Office

If using a room at another organisation, please ask a member of their team.

## Implementation and monitoring of this policy

SWEDA will ensure that all workers have access to a copy of this policy and the Safeguarding and Self Harm Handbook, together with appropriate training as part of their induction and ongoing responsibilities. All workers, including trustees must record on Breathe to say they have read and understood this policy.

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and will ensure that the arrangements for protecting our clients are effective, robust and reviewed on a regular basis.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee is responsible for overseeing the liaison between the Police and Children's Social Care in connection with allegations against the CEO or any of the Designated Safeguarding Leads. This process will not involve undertaking any form of investigation but will ensure good communication between the parties and provision of recorded information to assist enquiries.

We will ensure all SWEDA trustees are made aware of how safeguarding is being managed in the organisation. An annual safeguarding report will be presented to the board of trustees, which will include:

- Number of concerns raised
- Number of referrals made to statutory services
- Percentage of referrals to statutory services
- Nature of concerns raised (categories of abuse)
- Number of allegations against staff and volunteers
- Number and progress of investigations of staff and volunteers
- Names of designated safeguarding lead and deputies
- Training record of staff and volunteers at all levels
- Safer recruitment updates relating to staff and volunteers
- Identify any emerging trends or patterns

We will ensure our [SWEDA Safeguarding Policy](#) is available to view on our website.

Anyone not adhering to this policy may face disciplinary action.

## Annex A – Current Designated Safeguarding Leads

|               |                              |                                                                        |              |
|---------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Nerissa Shaw  | Clinical Lead                | <a href="mailto:nerissashaw@swedauk.org">nerissashaw@swedauk.org</a>   | 07545 951620 |
| Sam Best      | Chief Operating Officer      | <a href="mailto:sambest@swedauk.org">sambest@swedauk.org</a>           | 07885 540309 |
| Hannah McKie  | CYP Lead                     | <a href="mailto:hannahmckie@swedauk.org">hannahmckie@swedauk.org</a>   | 07775 734547 |
| Claire Rylatt | Therapeutic Services Manager | <a href="mailto:clairerylatt@swedauk.org">clairerylatt@swedauk.org</a> | 07540 374351 |
| Hannah Lewis  | Safeguarding Trustee         | <a href="mailto:h.k.lewis@qmul.ac.uk">h.k.lewis@qmul.ac.uk</a>         | 07516 252799 |