

West London Welcome Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy statement

West London Welcome (WLW) is committed to prioritising the well-being of all children and adults at risk, promoting safeguarding at all times, including at all programmes and events we run. This Policy strives to minimise risk, deliver a positive experience for everyone involved in WLW and respond appropriately to all safeguarding concerns/disclosures.

2. Use of terminology

Adult at risk: a person aged eighteen years or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and is, or may be, unable to take care of, or unable to protect him or herself against abuse or neglect.

Safeguarding adults at risk: protecting adults from abuse and/or neglect. Enabling adults to maintain control over their lives and make informed choices without coercion. Empowering adults at risk, consulting them before taking action, unless someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, or their mental health poses a risk to their own or someone else's safety, in which case, always acting in his or her best interests.

Child: a person under the age of eighteen years.

Safeguarding children: protecting children from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

(See appendix A for full glossary of terms).

3. Scope

This policy applies to all personnel of WLW drop-in centre for refugees, asylum seekers and migrants and anyone working for or on behalf of WLW. It is in line with national legislation.

4. Responsibility for the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and associated policies including the Reporting Procedure

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY: NOT RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN IS NOT AN OPTION.

- Our Board of Trustees has overall accountability for this Policy and its implementation.
- Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for updating this Policy in line with legislation and any specific guidance issued by Asylum Support & Integration Directorate.
- All individuals involved in/present at WLW activities are required to adhere to the Policy and any associated procedures.

Our responsibilities for safeguarding

We will ensure that:

- The appropriate checks are carried out on all staff and volunteers, by verifying their identity and qualifications, checking employment and volunteering history and obtaining references.
- Where appropriate, individuals will be required to undertake appropriate checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- All staff and volunteers are made aware of WLW policy and procedures for safeguarding of children and adults at risk.
- At least one senior staff at WLW acts as the DSL and another member of staff is the deputy DSL
- Arrangements are in place the event of a complaint against the DSL by a child or adult at risk.
- The Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures are reviewed and updated regularly.

Where there is a safeguarding concern or disclosure:

The individual who is told about, hears, or is made aware of the concern/disclosure is responsible for reporting the safeguarding concern in accordance with the guidance at Appendix B. Unless someone is in immediate danger, they should inform the DSL who is responsible for assessing all safeguarding concerns/disclosures that are reported. The DSL will follow up as appropriate on a case-by-case basis, prioritising the well-being of the child/ adult at risk at all times. Dependent on the concern/disclosure, a referral may be made to:

- The police in an emergency (999)
- Family Services at Hammersmith and Fulham Council, to report concerns about children: 0208 7536600 (daytime); emergency duty team (out of hours) 020 8748 8588
- Customer Support Centre at Hammersmith and Fulham Council, to report safeguarding concerns about adults: 0800 145 6095 (daytime); emergency duty team (out of hours) 020 8748 8588

5. Breaches of the Safeguarding Policy and Reporting Procedure

Breaches of this Policy and/or failure to comply with the outlined responsibilities may result in the following:

- Disciplinary action leading to possible exclusion from WLW, dismissal and legal action.
- Termination of current and future roles within WLW.
- Referral of the matter to the relevant authorities.

6. Whistleblowing

Safeguarding children and adults at risk requires everyone to be committed to the highest possible standards of openness, integrity and accountability. At WLW, we are committed to encouraging and maintaining a culture where people feel able to raise a genuine safeguarding concern and are confident that it will be taken seriously.

What is whistle blowing?

In the context of safeguarding, “whistleblowing” is when someone raises a concern about the well-being of a child or an adult at risk.

A whistleblower may be:

- A member of the centre

- A volunteer
- Staff
- Trustees
- A member of the public

How to raise a concern about a child or an adult at risk

If a child or an adult at risk is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, the police should be contacted by calling 999.

Where a child or an adult at risk is not in immediate danger, any concerns about their well-being should be made without delay to the DSL. The DSL will pass the details of the concern on to the relevant local authority and the police will be contacted, where appropriate.

If, however, the whistleblower is for any reason unable to contact the DSL or is uncomfortable raising a concern with the DSL, the whistle blower should contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Hammersmith and Fulham Council. Contact details: 0208 7535125 / LADO@lbhf.gov.uk

The DSL, Leyla Williams, can be contacted on: 07311662218

Information to include when raising a concern

The whistle blower should provide as much information as possible regarding the incident or circumstance which has given rise to the concern in accordance with the guidance at Appendix B, including:

- their name and contact details (unless they wish to remain anonymous);
- names of individuals involved;
- date, time and location of incident/circumstance; and
- whether any witnesses were present.

What happens next?

All concerns raised by a whistle blower about the well-being of a child or an adult at risk will be taken seriously and every effort will be made to deal with each concern fairly, quickly and proportionately.

Support

WLW will not tolerate any harassment, victimisation or unfair treatment of, and will take appropriate action to protect, whistle-blowers when they raise a concern in good faith.

7. Serious Incident

WLW has a duty to report promptly serious incidents to the Charity Commission and the Trustees shall consider, on a case by case basis, in accordance with the Charity Commission's guidance, whether a serious incident has occurred and should be reported.

This Policy is reviewed every year (or earlier if there is a change in national legislation).

This Policy is recommended for approval by:

Board of Trustees' Chair, Joanna Farquharson
Designated Safeguarding Lead, Leyla Williams

The following are the contact details if you have any concerns regarding safeguarding at WLW:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Leyla Williams – 07311662218 / leyla@westlondonwelcome.com

Deputy DSL, Joanne MacInnes – 07867553580 / joanne@westlondonwelcome.com

Lead Trustee for Safeguarding, Antonia Benfield - a.benfield@doughtystreet.co.uk

Chair of Trustees, Joanna Farquharson - chair@westlondonwelcome.com

Hammersmith and Fulham Council - 0208 748 3020

Emergency Services - 999

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Safeguarding:

Protecting **children** from abuse and neglect, preventing the impairment of children's health or development, ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

Enabling **adults at risk** to achieve the outcomes that matter to them in their life; protecting their right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Empowering and supporting them to make choices, stay safe and raise any concerns. Beginning with the assumption that an individual is best-placed to make decisions about their own wellbeing, taking proportional action on their behalf only if someone lacks the capacity to make a decision, they are exposed to a life-threatening risk, someone else may be at risk of harm, or a criminal offence has been committed or is likely to be committed.

Abuse and neglect

Physical abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult at risk. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness

Sexual abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child/adult at risk to take part in abuse sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child [/adult at risk] is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children/adults at risk in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children/adults at risk to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child [/adult at risk] in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Emotional abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child/ adult at risk that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person; not giving them opportunities to express their views; deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed, including interactions that are beyond a child or adult at risk's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing them participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing a child or adult at risk to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child/ adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to: o provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); o protect a child/ adult at risk from physical and emotional harm or danger; o ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or o ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or adult at risk's basic emotional needs. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Additional examples of abuse and neglect of adults at risk

Financial abuse: having money or property stolen; being defrauded; being put under pressure in relation to money or other property; and having money or other property misused.

Discriminatory abuse: treating someone in a less favourable way and causing them harm, because of their age, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, socio-economic status, ethnic origin, religion and any other visible or non-visible difference.

Domestic abuse: includes physical, sexual, psychological or financial abuse by someone who is, or has been a partner or family member. Includes forced marriage, female genital mutilation and honour-based violence (an act of violence based on the belief that the person has brought shame on their family or culture). Domestic abuse does not necessarily involve physical contact or violence.

Psychological abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Organisational abuse: where the needs of an individual are not met by an organisation due to a culture of poor practice or abusive behaviour within the organisation.

Self-neglect: behaviour which threatens an adult's personal health or safety (but not that of others). Includes an adult's decision to not provide themselves with adequate food, clothing, shelter, personal hygiene, or

medication (when indicated), or take appropriate safety precautions

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, criminal and sexual exploitation, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Appendix B: What to do if a disclosure from a child or adult at risk is made to you:

1. **Listen** carefully and calmly to the individual.
2. **Reassure** the individual that they have done the right thing and what they have told you is very important.
3. **Avoid questioning** where possible, and never ask leading questions.
4. **Do not promise secrecy or confidentiality.** Let the individual know that you will need to speak to the DSL because it is in their best interest. If you intend to speak to the police or social care, you should let them know this too.
5. **Report the concern.** In an emergency, call the police (999), otherwise talk to the DSL as soon as possible. Do not let doubt/personal bias prevent you from reporting the allegation.
6. **Record** details of the disclosure and allegation within 24 hours. Write down the details using what you have available then sign and date it.