

ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Sabre Trust (TST) wants to make sure that everyone who becomes involved in its activities can do so in a safe and protected way. We need to take all reasonable efforts to ensure that everyone follows best practice and complies with the law. This policy identifies the steps that everyone in the Trust should follow to protect adults, particularly those at risk and how to deal with concerns that may arise.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 ADULTS AT RISK

The adults referred to in this document are adults at risk using the definition from the Care Act 2014. This is defined as:

A person over 18, and

Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs) and
Is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and

As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk
of or the experience of, the abuse or neglect.

IS AN ADULT AT RISK

Naturally, a person's disability or frailty does not mean that they will inevitably experience harm or abuse.

In the context of safeguarding adults, the likelihood of an adult in need of care and support experiencing harm or abuse should be determined by considering a range of social, environmental and clinical factors, not merely because they may be defined by one or more of the above descriptors.

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In recent years there has been a marked shift away from using the term 'vulnerable' to describe adults potentially at risk from harm or abuse.

Just to reiterate, an adult at risk is not exclusively someone with a disability, whether that be physical, learning or sensory. Any one at some point given a particular circumstance can be vulnerable.

Some examples in Fencing, include:

- an elite 18 year old fencer being groomed for sexual abuse by their coach
- a member of a fencing club with a learning disability being financially exploited by another club member
- a young woman confiding in her coach about a forthcoming holiday where she believes she will be married against her will
- a club which insists on receiving a parental consent form before taking a 20 year old participant with a mild learning disability on an away day trip
- a coach who regularly neglects the individual needs of disabled participants when training.

Adults at Risk is the preferred terminology and supersedes the previous phrasing of Vulnerable Adults

2.2 ABUSE

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. The definitions of abuse for Adults at Risk include:

Physical abuse

Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Domestic violence

Including honour-based violence and includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse

Sexual abuse

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting

Psychological abuse

This includes threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks

Financial/material abuse

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, 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.

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Discrimination

Is abuse which centres on a difference or perceived difference particularly with respect to race, gender or disability or any of the Protected Characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Research tells us that bullying of vulnerable groups can be an issue in sport

Organisational abuse

This is abuse which centres around routines and schedules which have been designed for the benefit of the organisation and not the individual. Including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and hearing.

Neglect and acts of omission

This covers a wide range of behaviour: neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Self-neglect

2.3 ADULT SAFEGUARDING

Adult safeguarding is protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

2.4 CAPACITY

Capacity refers to the ability to make a decision at a particular time, for example when under considerable stress. The starting assumption must always be that a person has the capacity to make a decision unless it can be established that they lack capacity (Mental Capacity Act 2005).

Everyone should always be mindful of the need for adults at risk to consent to, and to be comfortable with, any proposed activity/service. Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service. The adult at risk may signal consent verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing. Decisions with more serious consequences will require more formal consideration of consent and appropriate steps should always be taken to ensure that consent is valid.

People should remember that no one can give, or withhold, consent on behalf of another adult unless special provision for particular purposes has been made for this, usually in law. In certain situations, the need for consent may be overridden. This is generally when it is in the public interest to do so, for example, the disclosure of information to prevent a crime or risk to health or life.

3. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

There are many pieces of legislation and Guidance that relate to Adults at Risk. These vary across the UK. These include:

3.1 ENGLAND AND WALES

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Care Standards Act 2000

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- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 including the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- The Care Act 2014 (England only)
- Social Services and Wellbeing Act 2014 (Wales only)
- Making Safeguarding Personal Guide 2014

4. PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding is everybody's business. It is important for everyone to be alert to possible signs of abuse or neglect and acting on their concerns. This is regardless of whether a person is a carer, banker, healthcare professional or coach. Enshrined within the Care Act 2014 is the requirement for Local Authorities within England and Wales to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board to ensure that all agencies are co-operating and working together.

A second catchphrase, 'safeguarding is personal', is intended to emphasise the importance of adults at risk being as involved as possible in any safeguarding process. With some exceptions, see later, safeguarding enquiries should only take place with the consent of the adult. The extent of any enquiry where there are suspicions of abuse or neglect should depend on the circumstances of the individual case and the views of the individual at the heart of it. As with other aspects of the social care legal framework the wellbeing of the individual through the safeguarding process is of central importance. This includes control by individuals over their day to day lives.

The concept of wellbeing is threaded throughout the Care Act and it is one that is relevant to adult safeguarding in sport and activity. Wellbeing is different for each of us however the Act sets out broad categories that contribute to our sense of wellbeing. By keeping these themes in mind, we can all ensure that adult participants can take part in our sport fully.

- Adult Safeguarding: Prevention and Protection in Partnership
- Personal dignity (including treatment of the individual with respect)
- Physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Protection from abuse and neglect
- Control by the individual over their day-to-day life (including over care and support provided and the way they are provided)
- Participation in work, education, training or recreation
- Social and economic wellbeing
- Domestic, family and personal domains
- Suitability of the individual's living accommodation
- The individual's contribution to society.

There are six further principles of Adult Safeguarding as laid out in The Care Act 2014
Principle Definition

What does this look like in practice?

Empowerment

People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

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"I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens."

Prevention

It is better to take action before harm occurs.

"I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help."

Proportionality

The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

"I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest as I see them, and they will only get involved as much as needed."

Protection

Support and representation for those in greatest need.

"I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want."

Partnership

Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse

"I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me."

Accountability Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

To add to this, we believe that the following should apply:

"I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they."

- All adults, regardless of age, ability or disability, gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status have the right to be protected from abuse and poor practice and to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment.
- We will seek to ensure that our sport is inclusive and make reasonable adjustments for any ability, disability or impairment, we will also commit to continuous development, monitoring and review.
- The rights, dignity and worth of all adults will always be respected.
- We recognise that ability and disability can change over time, such that some adults may be additionally vulnerable to abuse, in particular those adults with care and support needs
- We all have a shared responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of all adults and will act appropriately and report concerns whether these concerns arise within our sport for example inappropriate behaviour of a coach, or in the wider community or outside of it, perhaps through the action of a carer which is reported or observed by us
- All allegations will be taken seriously and responded to quickly in line with our Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.
- We recognise the role and responsibilities of the statutory agencies in safeguarding adults and are committed to working with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Adults Boards.

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5. WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS

The Sabre Trust takes all allegations and concerns raised seriously. The information provided will be referred to the relevant authorities as necessary.

If you become aware or suspect that abuse or poor practice is taking place you must report it. Remember - It is not your responsibility to decide whether or not an adult has been abused. It is however everyone's responsibility to respond to and report concerns.

If the person is at immediate risk then please call the police on 999, otherwise your normal first point of contact will be the Chair or delegated Trustee. When raising your concerns thus, remember Making Safeguarding Personal. It is good practice to seek the adult's views on what they would like to happen next and to inform the adult you will be passing on your concern. It is important when considering your concern that you also ensure that keep the person informed about any decisions and action taken about them and always consider their needs and wishes.

You should also record your concerns using the Sabre Trust Incident Report Form.

6. SAFER RECRUITMENT OF PEOPLE WORKING WITH ADULTS AND ADULTS AT RISK

It is important that appropriate recruitment procedures are put in place when recruiting new volunteers and staff to work with adults at risk.

7. WHISTLEBLOWING

The Sabre Trust is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, all members are encouraged to come forward and voice any concerns. It is recognised that certain cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

All suspicions and allegations of abuse or poor practice should be taken seriously and reported. It is acknowledged that this can be difficult to do, particularly in cases where any form of abuse or poor practice is suspected particularly where there is loyalty to a colleague or friend. If there are concerns about making a report within the sport the police or adult social care should be contacted.

No one should be worried about reporting a concern because they fear harassment or victimisation. Individuals reporting concerns will be supported by The Sabre Trust.

All information received will be treated in confidence and only shared on a need to know basis with those individuals who will be able to manage the situation. On occasions it may be necessary to seek advice or inform the statutory agencies e.g. the Police or Local Authority Adult Services.

8. OTHER INFORMATION

This policy should be read in conjunction with TST other Welfare Policies which can be found at www.thesabretrust.co.uk

9 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next review is March 2021