Ryedale Special Families (RSF) is a registered charity which supports families of children, young people and young adults with disabilities and additional needs. The RSF base is located at 121 Town Street, Old Malton, Malton, North Yorkshire. The majority of work we do is conducted in the community and family homes.

# Policy Statement on Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

RSF recognises that all adults have a right to protection from abuse and takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of vulnerable adults. RSF will not tolerate the abuse of adults at risk in any form.

RSF is committed to:

* Managing our services is a way which minimises the risk of abuse occurring
* Supporting adults at risk who are at risk, experiencing or have experienced abuse
* Working with adults at risk and other agencies to end any abuse that is taking place

In achieving these aims the organisation will:

* Ensure that all managers, employees and volunteers have access to and are familiar with this safeguarding adult policy and procedure and their responsibilities within it
* Ensure concerns or allegations of abuse are always taken seriously
* Ensure the Mental Capacity Act is used to make decisions on behalf of those adults at risk who are unable to make particular decisions for themselves.
* Ensure all staff receive training in relation safeguarding adults at a level commensurate with their role.
* Ensure that service users, their relatives or informal carers have access to information about how to report concerns or allegations of abuse.
* Ensure there is a named lead person to promote safeguarding awareness and practice within the organisation

This policy and procedure has been developed to be consistent with the Joint Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures (West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and City of York), which can be referred to for additional guidance at [www.nypartnerships.org.uk/sab](http://www.nypartnerships.org.uk/sab)

# Policy Definitions

# Who is a person at risk? An adult who is:

# Aged 18 or over and

# Has needs for care and support (whether or not these are being met)

# Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and

# As a result of these needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect

This definition includes adults with physical, sensory and mental impairments and learning disabilities. Also included are people with a mental illness, dementia or other memory impairments, people who misuse substances or alcohol.

**What is abuse?**

The following are examples of issues that would be considered as a safeguarding concern:

Physical abuse - includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, unlawful or inappropriate restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic abuse – is “an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse… by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality” (Home Office, 2013). Domestic violence and abuse may include psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; as well as so called ‘honour’ based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Sexual abuse - 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 - includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial and material abuse – includes 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 - includes human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use the means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhuman treatment.

Neglect and acts of omission - includes 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 heating.

Discriminatory abuse - includes abuse based on a person’s race, sex, disability, faith, sexual orientation, or age; other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment or hate crime/hate incident.

Organisational abuse – includes neglect and poor practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Self-neglect - covers a wide range of behaviours, such as neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.

A safeguarding response in relation to self-neglect may be appropriate where:

* a person is declining assistance in relation to their care and support needs, and
* the impact of their decision, has or is likely to have a substantial impact on their overall individual wellbeing

Abuse may

* Consist of a single act or repeated acts
* Be carried out deliberately or unknowingly.

People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life.

**Mental Capacity Assessment**

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework to empower and protect people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves; and establishes a framework for making decisions on their behalf. This applies whether the decisions are life-changing events or everyday matters. *All decisions taken in the adult safeguarding process must comply with the Act*.

The Mental Capacity Act outlines five statutory principles that underpin the work with adults who lack mental capacity:

* A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity;
* A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision unless all practicable steps to help them to do so have been taken without success;
* A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because they make an unwise decision;
* An act done or decision made, under this Act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done, or made, in their best interests;
* Before the act is done, or the decision is made, regard must be had to whether the purpose for which it is needed can be as effectively achieved in a way that is less restrictive of the person's rights and freedom of action.

In the application of this policy all trustees/members/management leads/staff/volunteers will consider the mental capacity of service users on a case by case basis.

**Key Roles**

Every member of staff and volunteer has a responsibility to act on concerns of possible abuse and must inform the organisation’s Safeguarding Lead.

The responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead is to decide whether it is appropriate to raise a safeguarding concern with the local authority on behalf of their organisation or to respond to the concerns in an alternative manner.

The role also includes

* ensuring that immediate safety issues are addressed, other parties notified (such as the regulator) and that staff are supported.
* ensuring that they are kept informed when a member of staff (or volunteer) has raised a concern
* establishing the desired outcomes of the adult at risk

RSF’s Safeguarding Lead is Lisa Keenan, Chief Officer

RSF’s Safeguarding Deputies are the Care Managers

**Safe Employment**

RSF

* is committed to achieving best practice in respect to the safe recruitment of employees and volunteers;
* is committed to working within best practice as established by the Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS)
* has procedures in place to deal with allegations of abuse made against members of staff, volunteers or trustees.

RSF will ensure that any allegations made against members of staff, volunteers or trustees will be dealt with swiftly. Where a member of staff/volunteer/trustee is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately. Where the allegation involves alleged abuse of an adult at risk, a concern should be raised following the process outlined in the Joint Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures (West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and City of York), Section 2.1.2. The correct procedure regarding referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be followed.

Training, Induction & Supervision

RSF are committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse and will ensure that trustees/members/staff and volunteers have access to training around Safeguarding Adults

∙ Awareness of this safeguarding policy/procedure is covered within the induction programme of all new employees or volunteers and their understanding checked within supervision meetings.

∙ All staff will receive training on safeguarding adults at a level commensurate with their role.

∙ All staff will receive training on the requirements and provisions of the Mental Capacity Act at a level commensurate with their role

Other relevant policies

This policy aims to minimise the risk of abuse occurring and should be used in conjunction with the following

Safer Working Practice Guidance

Safeguarding Children

Positive Handling Policy

Staff Development Policy

What to do if you have a safeguarding concern

Working with Carers

Whistleblowing Policy

Confidentiality Policy

**Safeguarding Adults Procedures**

Responding to an allegation or concern

RSF recognises that it has a duty to act on reports, or suspicions of abuse or neglect. Anyone who has contact with adults at risk and hears disclosures or allegations or has concerns about potential abuse or neglect has a duty to pass them on appropriately.

If any trustee/member/staff or volunteer has reason to believe that abuse is or may be taking place you have a responsibility to act on this information. It does not matter what your role is, **doing nothing is not an option.**

If a person discloses abuse to you directly, use the following principles to respond to them:

* Assure them that you are taking the concerns seriously
* Do not be judgemental or jump to conclusions
* Listen carefully to what they are telling you, stay calm, get as clear a picture as you can. Use open ended questions
* Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions
* Explain that you have a duty to tell your manager or the safeguarding lead
* Reassure the person that they will be involved in decisions about them

Your responsibilities are:

1. To take action to keep the person safe if possible.

∙ Is an urgent police presence required to keep someone safe – call 999

∙ Does the person need urgent medical assistance; do they need an ambulance – call 999

1. If a crime has occurred, be aware of the need to preserve evidence
2. Always inform a manager or the Chief Officer. You cannot keep this information secret, even if the person asks you to.
3. Clearly record what you have witnessed or been told, record your responses and any actions taken. If consulting with your manager will lead to an undue delay and thereby leave a person in a position of risk, you should ‘Raise a Safeguarding Concern’ yourself by calling NYCC 01609 780780

The North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NYSAB) has further information including [easy read leaflets and leaflets in alternative languages.](http://safeguardingadults.co.uk/resource-library/)

Lisa Keenan

Chief Officer

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