

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

For use in:	South Cheshire Riding Club
Target Audience:	All members
Purpose	To Safeguard Children, young people and Vulnerable Adults
Document Author:	Isabel Burrows
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Statutory and legal requirements	Children's Act 2004
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South Cheshire Riding Club (SCRC) is committed to creating an environment that promotes equality and embraces diversity, both within our workforce and in service delivery. This document should be implemented with due regard to this commitment

This document seeks to uphold the duties and principles contained within the Human Rights Act. All committee members should be aware of its implications

This policy is due for review by 11th March 2018. After this date, this policy and associated process documents may become invalid. All users should ensure that they are consulting the current version of this document.

1. Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's business. This policy sets out SCRC's responsibility under the Children's act 2004 to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe from harm.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved with or in contact with SCRC activities. SCRC committee members have a clear responsibility to take action when they suspect or recognise that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be a victim of significant harm or abuse.

It is necessary that all SCRC committee members having direct contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults have an understanding of the issues involved. A procedure for safeguarding must be in place which is accessible, easily understandable and easy to implement.

3. Legal Duties

The Children Act 1989 states that the child's welfare is paramount and that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Section 10, 11 and 13 of the Children Act 2004 and specifies what is required. This includes:

- Commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- A clear statement of SCRC's responsibilities to children which should be available

4. Principles

SCRC believes Safeguarding is committed to the following principles for children, young people and vulnerable adults:

- Their welfare is paramount.
- Whatever their background and culture, parental or pregnancy status, age, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, they have the right to participate in society in an environment which is safe and free from violence, fear, abuse, bullying and discrimination
- They have the right to be protected from harm, exploitation, abuse, and to be provided with safe environments to live and play.

5. Policy Statement

SCRC is committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse when they are engaged with SCRC activities.

SCRC only has adults as members, however, children may attend horse shows or training events. Therefore, this policy also applies to children despite them not directly being members of SCRC.

6. Procedure

The SCRC Safeguarding Policy must be read in conjunction with any other appropriate policies that SCRC adheres to (e.g. Health and Safety, etc....).

All committee members are expected to make themselves familiar with the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of the club or a member of the public attending a SCRC event or if they have serious concerns about a child.

SCRC endeavour to provide an environment in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe and feel safe, where they are valued, where they are listened to and where they know that their concerns will be taken seriously.

If any matter gives us cause for concern regarding the safety and welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult then SCRC's primary responsibility will be to that child, young person or vulnerable adult. Causes for concern may be direct disclosures of abuse, but may also include changes in behaviour, marks or bruises or hearing children talk about inappropriate subjects. It is not safe to assume that someone else will take action. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action. Recognising and coping with child, young person or vulnerable adult abuse can be very stressful and the person reporting the concern will be fully supported by SCRC.

7. Key Definitions

Abuse: Abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all involved. It is not always easily recognisable and is categorised into four groups;

- Physical: This is when individuals physically hurt or injure children or young people. This can include hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, biting, allowing access to alcohol.
- Emotional: Persistent lack of love and affection can cause emotional damage. Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted.
- Neglect: An adult may fail to meet the basic needs of a child, such as food, warm clothing and environment or medical attention. Children being left alone unsupervised may also constitute neglect.
- Sexual: This is when children/person are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity. This could be unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact, suggestive comments, innuendo or sexual swear words or by exposure to pornographic materials.

Child Protection: This is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

Safeguarding: This is an umbrella term encompassing the safety and well-being of a child. Employees of Acorn recognise the importance of meeting the needs of all children and the necessity to intervene early to provide support.

8. Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements.

SCRC recognises its responsibility to:

- Safeguard children and promote their welfare;
- Promote good health;
- Support children's behaviour;
- Ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children;
- Ensure that facilities are safe and suitable
- Ensure that organisational arrangements enable all children to have a positive learning and development experience;
- Maintain records, policies and procedures relating to safeguarding

SCRC will take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well and must also be alert to any issues for concern in the child's life at home or elsewhere.

This policy is to be reviewed annually or when there are significant changes to legislation and guidance.

9. Procedures for Child Protection

Any committee member **who have, or become aware of, concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or unborn baby should discuss any concerns they have with the committee** to clarify their understanding of the child's circumstances.

Concerns about the immediate safety and welfare of children

If a SCRC committee member have concerns for the immediate safety and welfare of a child, SCRC will act without delay to notify child protection agencies.

Cheshire Emergency Contact Numbers

- Safeguarding Concerns 0300 123 5012
(Mon-Thurs 8.30 a.m. – 5pm or Fri 8.30 a.m. – 4.30 pm)
- Out of Hours Service: 0300 123 5022
- Family Information Service/General Enquiries : 0300 123 5033
- Police: 101

10. What to do on suspicion or disclosure of abuse

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult spontaneously talks of experiences which give a cause for concern you should,

- Explain to the child, young person or vulnerable adult that if he / she discloses information which leads you to believe they are being abused, that you will be unable to keep it confidential.
- Listen to the child/person without questioning him or her. Do not ask leading questions and be aware of your own reactions as showing disapproval may stop the child/person from continuing their disclosure
- Do not try to stop the child/person from recalling events. Make a note of what is said, in what context, the setting, the timing and the people that were present.

11. Dissemination of Policy

This Safeguarding Policy will be shared with SCRC's committee members.

12. References

- 1) HM Government (2004) The Children Act, London: The Stationary Office
- 2) HM Government (2006) Working Together to Safeguard Children, London: The Stationary Office.