

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY OF THE RUTH STRAUSS FOUNDATION**

**This policy was adopted by the Trustees by resolution dated 1 March 2021.**

**This policy should be reviewed at least every two years.**

**Next review date: February 2023.**

### **1. Statement of policy**

Safeguarding children and adults at risk is a priority for The Ruth Strauss Foundation (“RSF”). The activities carried out by RSF mean that there are a range of staff and volunteers who may come into contact with people who are at risk of harm. All staff and volunteers are requested to help promote the welfare of children and adults at risk, and report any safeguarding concerns to the relevant person.

This policy, and associated procedures, upholds RSF’s duties and reinforces our values and responsibilities in ensuring we provide a safe and responsive environment which safeguards children and adults at risk. It demonstrates compliance with UK legislation and other four nation’s government legislation, policy guidance, research and good practice. This policy applies to all staff and volunteers, including the board of trustees, agency staff, students, or anyone working on behalf of RSF.

### **2. Purpose**

RSF has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and adults at risk who are involved in, or affected by, our work. This policy sets out our approach to reducing and managing risks, and the action staff and volunteers are asked to take when dealing with safeguarding concerns.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- (a) The safety, needs and interests of children and adults at risk who receive services from RSF are upheld.
- (b) Appropriate response is made to protect all children and adults at risk who may be experiencing abuse.
- (c) Staff and volunteers are provided with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

This policy provides clear procedures on what to do if you have a safeguarding concern, how to manage, respond and refer those concerns, and where to go for help and support. This applies to all staff and volunteers across all divisions.

### **3. Our approach to safeguarding**

#### **3.1 Safeguarding Group, Roles & Responsibilities**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will provide advice and support to staff and volunteers, provide advice to the organisation about all elements of safeguarding, oversee investigations into allegations and concerns of abuse, and ensure compliance with policies and procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will liaise with and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Director and external agencies, as required.

The Designated Safeguarding Director will support RSF's safeguarding responsibilities, provide support and guidance to Designated Safeguarding Lead in dealing with any difficult or urgent concerns, and ensure policies and procedures are complied with, reviewed, and updated.

### 3.2 Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

RSF will ensure that rigorous and robust recruitment procedures will be in place to ensure that we appoint staff and volunteers that are appropriately qualified, and have the skills and knowledge to deliver a quality service. The law in the UK makes it clear that, under certain circumstances, criminal background checks can be used as part of recruiting paid staff and volunteers:

- There is a legal duty to carry out full criminal background checks for roles that involve very specific tasks that are considered regulated activity or regulated work.
- There is an obligation to carry out full criminal background checks for roles that involve substantial, unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk, but do not involve carrying out tasks that constitute regulated activity or regulated work.

We would not be eligible to ask for full criminal background checks for any other roles.

In England and Wales, criminal background checks are carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), in Northern Ireland by Access NI, and in Scotland by Disclosure Scotland.

Requesting a full criminal background check for a role that is not eligible is unlawful. The Ruth Strauss Foundation will only carry out the appropriate level of criminal background checks on successful applicants, for employee and volunteer roles, where it can be clearly demonstrated that such a check is justified under the relevant national law.

### 3.3 Learning & Development

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of their role in supporting RSF's safeguarding responsibilities. Different levels of training may be provided for the different roles and responsibilities within RSF.

## 4. Definitions

*Types of Abuse:* the Care Act, 2014 and Working Together, 2018 outline categories of abuse, which include:

- Discriminatory
- Domestic violence
- Financial and material

- Institutional
- Modern slavery
- Neglect/acts of omission
- Online abuse
- Physical
- Psychological/emotional
- Sexual

Abuse can be carried out by other children or adults at risk.

*Child:* Any person under the age of 18 years (Children Act, 1989).

*Adult at risk:* An adult at risk is someone over the age of 18 who is, or may be for any reason, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

*Safeguarding:* In its simplest terms safeguarding can be defined as ‘keeping children and adults at risk safe from harm’. It is a broad term that can refer to things such as road safety and playground safety, as well as specific abuse.

*Child protection:* Is part of safeguarding and refers to the activity undertaken to protect young people. It focuses on specific types of abuse and our response to its occurrence.

*Local Authority Designated Officer:* Working Together, 2018 says that local authorities should have designated a particular officer (a qualified social worker), or team of officers (either as part of multi-agency arrangements or otherwise), to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children. Local authorities in England should identify designated officers (referred to as the LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases of allegations of abuse made against those who work with children as set out in the Allegations Against People who Work with Children Procedure (published by the Department of Children, Schools and Families). Local authorities will also have procedures for dealing with allegations against people who work with adults at risk.

The role of the LADO is to give advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaise with the police and other agencies, and monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, and are consistent with a thorough and fair process.

## 5. Recording and reporting concerns

### 5.1 Reporting concerns

Staff and volunteers are asked to report concerns about the welfare of people they come into contact with. These may be about people affected by lung cancer or bereavement or may relate to the behaviour of other staff or volunteers, or working practices in place.

Individual staff and volunteers must never investigate an allegation of abuse unless appointed to do so by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

In all circumstances, staff and volunteers should take the following action:

- (a) Ensure their own safety – leave the situation if they are at risk of harm;
- (b) Where there is clear evidence of harm or an imminent danger call the emergency services immediately;
- (c) Treat all allegations of abuse seriously;
- (d) Report concerns to a line manager/Volunteer Lead/the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

## 5.2 Responding to a Child/Adult at Risk Concern

If a safeguarding concern comes to your attention, the following actions must be taken by the person receiving the information:

1. If in person, always offer reassurance, listen to and take seriously what is being said. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the individual or the family not to take action if you are worried that the individual is being harmed, or is at risk of harm.
2. Complete the safeguarding record form (see Appendix A) as soon as possible after receiving information, including date, time, words spoken, injuries noticed/disclosed, and a brief outline of the concern or incident. It may be necessary to undertake some enquiries, including; full name, age, mobile number, email address, and any involvement with RSF's work.

It is not your job to investigate or verify what is being said, or to examine the child/adult; this is the statutory responsibility of the local authority/child protection services and/or the police.

3. If the child/adult is at immediate risk of harm (unless doing so would put you or others at risk):
  - 1) Refer immediately to the police by calling 999, or NSPCC on 0800 800 5000.
  - 2) Contact your Line Manager/Volunteer Lead/Designated Safeguarding Lead, to inform them that you are making a safeguarding report.
4. Explain the process (where possible) to the child/adult; that you will need to pass this information on, to whom you'll pass it on to, the reasons why, and any possible actions.
5. Report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, forwarding to them the completed Safeguarding Record Form. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will review all details of the case and make a clear assessment of whether the information received is deemed to be a child/adult protection referral, and/or a situation in which further action must be taken. They may also contact the Designated Safeguarding

Director and external agencies for further information and advice.

6. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for agreeing any necessary further action with the Safeguarding Director. If a referral is needed to a child/adult protection agency, this will be completed by a member of the Safeguarding Group within 24 hours.
7. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will also complete necessary sections on the respective Safeguarding Record Form to provide details of further people contacted, together with any outcome known at that stage. Reports should be copied to the Designated Safeguarding Director.
8. If, at any point, the situation escalates and it seems that the person is at increased risk, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must immediately contact the police.
9. The Designated Safeguarding Lead must establish the outcome of the referral. The Local Authority Social Work Manager will decide if child/adult protection procedures are appropriate. If adult/child protection services do not make further contact with RSF within three days, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will contact them for an update.
10. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the individual who raised the concern of the outcome in as much detail as possible, respecting confidentiality. In many cases this is likely to be an acknowledgement of receipt of the concern, and confirmation that action has been taken.
11. The person reporting the concern can request an update on the outcome from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If they are not satisfied by the actions taken, they can raise this with the Designated Safeguarding Director, who will look into the matter further.

### 5.3 Out of Hours Services

If the child/adult is at immediate risk of harm, or if you need advice outside of office hours:

- Refer immediately to the police by calling 999, or call the NSPCC on 0800 800 5000.
- Contact your line manager/Volunteer Lead/Designated Safeguarding Lead, as soon as possible, to inform them that you are making a safeguarding report.

## 6. Investigating allegations of abuse

Where a Designated Safeguarding Lead decides that the allegations need to be investigated, the issue will be notified to the appropriate local authority, health and social care trust and/or the police. All enquiries will be managed within the local authority, trust or police procedures, in line with legal and statutory guidance. The main aim of any enquiries is to prevent or stop harm to children or adults at risk.

RSF staff and volunteers may be asked to cooperate as required with any external protection agencies, enquiries or investigations.

## 6.1 Allegations of Abuse Made Against RSF Staff and Volunteers

RSF must investigate where a staff member or volunteer of RSF is alleged to have abused someone. The respective line manager and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead will discuss the allegation with the Designated Safeguarding Director, and will make a decision about whether the allegation needs to be reported to the police and/or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

A decision must be made as to whether the staff member or volunteer is able to continue in their normal duties, or whether adjustments should be made to their work to protect them and/or others. This is in order to allow an investigation to be carried out as quickly as possible, while minimising risk. The Designated Safeguarding Director will advise on the investigative process and an appropriate person to carry out any investigation. Any adjustment and/or investigation will be carried out under the staff disciplinary policy & procedure or the volunteer management process.

All staff and volunteers who are alleged to have abused someone will be signposted to agencies that can provide support until any investigation is concluded.

## 6.2 E-safety & Social Media

All staff and volunteers are asked to exercise personal responsibility and maximise safety, when accessing RSF IT and Social Media.

1. The use of e-media should always be within the context of a planned and supervised piece of work, consistent with RSF's Safeguarding Code of Conduct (See Appendix B).
2. Staff and volunteers are required to gain permission from their relevant line manager (or the Designated Safeguarding Lead) on taking and storing digital images, and gain appropriate consents for all images of children used. This will include written consent from parents or guardians of children.

All forms of social media and internet postings must be appropriate and in keeping with our code of conduct.

## 7. Support for staff and volunteers

### 7.1 Assessment of roles

Certain roles within RSF may increase the risk of physical, psychological, and emotional harm, such as roles where staff or volunteers deal with sensitive and challenging situations and issues. RSF has a duty to ensure that all staff and volunteers in such roles have access to regular supervision and the opportunity to discuss their own wellbeing. We are working on arrangements to prevent, where possible, violence and aggression occurring whilst working or volunteering, and to take action where necessary to deal with any incidents. In the meantime, all concerns of this nature should be addressed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or to the police where necessary.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess all roles carefully to ensure that signposting for

support and provision of training are put in place, as necessary.

The requirement for the following additional options must be considered, if applicable at any time:

- Personal safety training
- Clinical supervision

## 7.2 Lone Working

RSF does not anticipate any staff or volunteers working alone. Staff or volunteers must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are to work alone.

Employees and volunteers who work alone will receive any necessary training and information about how they can access support whilst working, and respond to safeguarding concerns in line with this procedure.

## 8. Safeguarding code of conduct

All staff and volunteers are asked to follow the guidelines set out within the Safeguarding Code of Conduct, to help protect the integrity of themselves and the organisation.

## 9. Confidentiality

All documentation relating to incidents or allegations of people being harmed, or placed at risk of harm, will be kept and treated confidentially and in accordance with GDPR requirements). This includes information from Safeguarding Report Forms, individual details, and outcomes of all investigations. Only those people who need to know about an incident will be kept informed.

The minimum relevant information will be stored within a restricted access folder on the server, and managed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 10. Complaints about safeguarding actions

If for any reason, a staff member or volunteer feels they cannot raise issues through a member of the Safeguarding Group or line management, other external third parties are available. No individual should feel that they cannot report a concern. All reports will be treated seriously, fairly and impartially. The independent third parties available in such cases are:

Chair of the Board of Trustees:	Terry Grote
Chair of the Finance Advisory Group:	Vince Niblett
External independent auditor:	Nick Sladden (RSM UK Audit LLP)

Any complaint about the way RSF has handled a safeguarding issue will be logged through our internal complaints policy and addressed by the relevant team in accordance with this. If the complaint concerns sensitive or confidential information, or information which is the subject of an ongoing investigation, it may be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Director who will discuss with the relevant people, and respond to the complaint as appropriate having established the facts.

## 11. References and associated guidance

Strictly Confidential: The information contained in this paper is confidential and must not be reproduced or disclosed to others

- Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Volunteers
- The Care Act 2014
- Children's Act 1989
- Corporate Entertainment, Gifts, Hospitality and Promotional Expenditure Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Gambling Act 2005
- Fundraising and Vulnerable People Policy



# Safeguarding Record Form

Please complete all sections of this form with as much information as possible. If you do not have the information, do not let it delay reporting the concern. Once reported, the safeguarding lead will speak with you if there are any questions or clarifications needed. If you need support in completing this form you can contact Phil Glyn-Smith ([phil.glynsmith@ruthstraussfoundation.com](mailto:phil.glynsmith@ruthstraussfoundation.com))

Out of hours: If the child/adult is at immediate risk of harm, or if you need advice outside of office hours: call 999 or contact NSPCC on 0800 800 5000 and then Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Once this form is complete, please scan and send to [phil.glynsmith@ruthstraussfoundation.com](mailto:phil.glynsmith@ruthstraussfoundation.com). Information provided will be managed sensitively and stored in line with our internal safeguarding procedures.

Details of the Child/ Adult at risk and their Parents(s) / Carer (if known)			
Name of Child / Adult at risk			
Gender		Date of Birth	
Parent / Carers Name(s)	*leave blank if your concern is about an adult at risk who does not have a carer		
Home address			
Telephone number			

Your details			
Your name		Your role	
Contact phone number:		Date form completed	

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

<b>Details/physical description of the person alleged to have caused harm to a child/adult at risk, or who there is reason to believe may cause harm (If known)</b>			
Name or description of person alleged to have caused harm to a child / adult at risk			
Gender		Date of Birth	

Agency	
Parent/Carers Name(s)	*leave blank if your concern is about an adult or adult at risk who does not have a carer
Home address	

<b>Report</b>			
These are my own concerns	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	These are concerns raised by someone else	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
		(Please provide details)	
<b>Nature of your concern (Please describe what you have been told and/or observed that has worried you)</b>			
Description:			
Please tick here if you have attached a supporting document (e.g. letter): <input type="checkbox"/>			

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

<b>Further Actions Taken</b>			
Details of any witnesses to the incident(s)			
Police / Other Emergency Services	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Other employee / Volunteer	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

Further details: Including what advice did they give you and what actions did you take			
Print Name		Signature	

<b>To be completed by the Safeguarding Lead</b>		
Assessment and actions:		
Safeguarding Lead name and signature:	Print Name:	Signature:
Date:		

### **Safeguarding Code of Conduct For Staff and Volunteers**

The Ruth Strauss Foundation (“RSF”) believes that all staff and volunteers should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. This code of conduct forms part of the agreement for all paid and unpaid roles.

This code of conduct is designed to:

- safeguard children and adults at risk involved in any activity
- assist staff and volunteers to identify appropriate behaviour as they carry out their role
- enable staff and volunteers to raise concerns without fear of recrimination

RSF promises to:

- support any staff or volunteer who raises a concern
- take all reports seriously and follow up according to internal procedures
- provide appropriate training and guidance to all staff and volunteers
- investigate any breach of this code of conduct and take appropriate action

We ask all staff and volunteers to:

- report any incidents or concerns that cause you to believe that a child or vulnerable adult is, or is likely to be, at risk of harm to the Safeguarding Lead. In the case of emergencies, report directly to the police
- remember not to investigate the matter any further yourself, and don’t promise to keep any disclosure of abuse a secret
- be respectful towards your peers, other volunteers and RSF staff, treating them how you would want to be treated yourself
- be aware of changes in behaviour and inappropriate conduct in other workers and volunteers and report if necessary
- disclose any criminal record, caution, reprimand or warning - whether received prior to, or during the course of your role with RSF

We ask all staff and volunteers not to:

- use your position to intimidate, bully, threaten, discriminate against, coerce or undermine children, adults at risk, volunteers or staff
- behave or communicate with children or adults at risk in ways which seek to build inappropriate relationships which may put them at risk
- use a relationship with a patient, donor, or their family, for personal gain
- give special rewards or privileges in an attempt to build inappropriate relationships with children or adults at risk.
- engage in, or attempt to engage in, abusive or inappropriate relationships with children or adults at risk, including the use of suggestive conversations, comments, texting or emails
- possess indecent images of children
- carry out your role whilst adversely affected by alcohol, solvents or drugs

- encourage or assist others to break the law in any way