

Flying Scholarships for Disabled People (FSDP) – Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Introduction

The aim of FSDP is to 'change lives through the medium of flight'. Accordingly, the Charity annually awards a number of flying scholarships to disabled individuals whom the trustees consider will rise to, and benefit from, the challenge of learning to fly. Although the FSDP selects scholars on the basis that the individuals concerned have the capacity to protect themselves and are not classified as 'vulnerable adults', the Charity's recognises that nature of disability is such that the condition may impact upon an individual's ability to defend his or her self from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect. Moreover, in dealings with others the disabled condition may be seen first and the person second. This can result in a disabled person being on the receiving end of negative behaviour. An adult at risk may:

- have an illness affecting their mental or physical health
- have a learning disability
- suffer from drug or alcohol problems
- be frail.

All persons engaged with FSDP for whatever purpose are entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and to be safe from harm and abuse. Therefore, the aim of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any person participating in, and with, the activity of FSDP are transparent and both safeguard and promote the welfare of others.

The Legal Framework

The key legislation for safeguarding adults is the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. The Care Act 2014 has moved away from labelling people as 'vulnerable adults'. Rather the Act talks about the need to safeguard adults with care and support needs who are unable to protect themselves from either the risk, or experience, of abuse or neglect. The Act identifies 6 key principles of adult safeguarding:

- Empowerment of those being supported.
- Prevention, so action takes place before harm occurs.
- Proportionality so that the action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk.
- Protection of those in need.
- Partnership with others.
- Accountability for action.

It is not necessary to understand the detailed legislation, related policies, or detailed guidance before passing on urgent concerns about abuse, or failure to safeguard.

Approach

FSDP aims to ensure that we provide a safe and secure environment for trustees, staff, scholars, volunteers and other third parties engaged with the Charity. We believe that abuse is unacceptable and we are committed to preventing it in any form, including bullying, harassment, coercion, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. Consequently, we will:

- ensure that we respect the individual and their individuality;
- take seriously complaints of any nature of abuse;
- ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with in a timely manner and the person experiencing abuse is supported;
- intervene where possible to stop the abuse occurring;
- ensure that staff, volunteers, scholars and trustees plus third parties who undertake work on behalf of FSDP are aware of their responsibility to be proactive in situations where they suspect abuse is occurring;
- create an environment where those who suspect abuse are not afraid of reporting it;
- listen and respond to people who are alerting us to abuse, whoever they are;
- ensure the appropriate implementation of the procedures detailed in this policy;
- ensure that all staff, volunteers, trustees and associated third parties are familiar with these procedures and are trained, as appropriate, in their use including dealing with abuse allegations;
- recognise the importance of confidentiality but not at the expense of leaving anybody at risk; and
- recognise that the term 'abuse' can include criminal activity. When it is suspected a criminal offence is being committed then consultation with the relevant authorities will take place.
- identify risks and explain how these will be managed in a risk register – which will be reviewed annually.

Scope

This policy applies to all those involved with FSDP. This includes those providing services to FSDP who must, as a condition of engagement, agree to be bound by the provisions of this policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out:

- The definition of abuse in its many forms.
- The responsibilities and liabilities of all engaged in FSDP activities in relation to safeguarding.
- Basic procedures on dealing with complaints.

Safeguarding Officer

Every two years, the Board of Trustees will appoint one of its number as Safeguarding Officer. The name and contact details of the Safeguarding Officer will be placed on the FSDP website www.fsdp.co.uk. The latter is responsible for investigating any allegations of abuse and ensuring the charity's safeguarding policy and procedures are put into practice and made available to the public. If the appointed Safeguarding Officer is the subject of allegations, is unavailable or there are other conflicts of interest, another trustee will be appointed by the Board of Trustees.

The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Supporting, in so far as practical, those involved.
- Undertaking an investigation of the abuse.
- Producing a report, with a recommendations for the Board of Trustees
- Taking follow up action as directed by the Board.

In the event that the circumstances clearly warrant immediate action and/or the intervention of support services, the Safeguarding Officer will act on his/her own initiative and only subsequently report to the Board.

The Safeguarding Officer is currently David Higham. His contact details are:

Email: info@fsdp.co.uk

Telephone: 01285 713299

Training

The Board of Trustees will ensure, when making the bi-annual appointment of the Safeguarding Officer, that Safeguarding training is undertaken as necessary given the role. An appropriate level of training might be the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (SOVA) Training Course Level 1. The course explains safeguarding responsibilities, how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect, and how to report concerns.

Definitions

Abuse, of whatever nature, is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights. As detailed in **Annex A**, abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts and can take many forms that may or may not involve criminal activity.

Indicators of Abuse

The indicators that someone might be at risk of, or experiencing, harm include:

- Changes to an individual's appearance, behaviour or routines
- Unexplained weight gain or loss
- Appearing withdrawn and isolated
- Unexplained injuries to the body
- Self-harm

Responsibilities

All FSDP trustees, staff, volunteers and related parties are expected to; respect the dignity and rights of others; be alert to the risk of abuse; and report any concern about abuse, or its possibility, or following any allegation to the trustee appointed as Safeguarding Officer (see above).

Investigation and Reporting Process following Reports of Safeguarding Concerns/Allegations

The Safeguarding Officer will follow the FSDP safeguarding policy and procedures and will:

- Review the information on the Safeguarding Concern/Allegation Report.
- Where a third party is making the allegation, interview the individual concerned making a note of all pertinent detail and recording the incident or allegation in a secure and responsible way.
- Speak to the alleged abused person; explain the circumstances, the Safeguarding Officer role and the issues around confidentiality, offer support and advice and the requirement to investigate the matter.
- Make a contemporaneous record of any subsequent meeting, quoting verbatim as appropriate.
- Ascertain the wishes of alleged victim as to next actions.
- Agree the accuracy of the record with the individual concerned.
- Evaluate the evidence and consider the likelihood abuse has occurred.
- Conduct a risk assessment to ensure the protection of the person involved.
- Assess what support or Adult Social Care Services are required and, as appropriate, make contact.
- Evaluate whether the matter is within the remit of FSDP to handle or should be handed over to Social Services for investigation.
- Determine the possibility of a criminal offence having taken place. If the latter appears to be likely, the Safeguarding Officer is to stop the investigation and contact the police accordingly.
- If applicable, preserve and maintain any forensic or other evidence.
- Inform the alleged abused person, and obtain consent as far as possible, regarding next steps.
- If the Safeguarding Officer, having reviewed the information, believes that the matter involves a member of the FSDP organisation, including volunteers, report in writing to the Board of Trustees, within a maximum of 48 hrs, and take such follow up action as agreed.

Depending upon the nature and severity of the complaint, it may be both necessary and appropriate for the Safeguarding Officer, in order to ascertain the veracity of the allegation, to also interview the alleged perpetrator. In which case, the points above concerning the conduct of the interview apply. The record of any such interview will be included in the report to the Board.

Outcomes

If the nature of any abuse requires the involvement of external agencies, FSDP will follow their advice as to further action and the on-going responsibilities of FSDP.

Where the matter is not of a nature that requires intervention by the police and/or Adult Social Care Services the following actions will be taken:

- Where the abuse has been perpetrated by a trustee, volunteer or other party associated with or working on behalf of the FSDP, the Board of Trustees will determine what sanction should apply including whether that individual's relationship with FSDP should be terminated.
- Where a member of staff appropriate has perpetrated the abuse formal disciplinary action will be taken.

If the investigation concludes that abuse has not taken place it must be made clear to the person making the allegation that there is no further course of action available internally. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome it is within his or her discretion to take the matter up with an external agency such as the Adult Social Care Services, the Police or the Local Authority.

Confidentiality

Trustees, the Medical team, flying instructors and volunteers who are involved in the selection, training and support of scholars will be privy to sensitive personal information about both scholar applicants as well as scholars. The latter have the expectation and statutory entitlement that all personal information will be kept confidential. All written records will be secured in accordance with FSDP's GDPR policy.

If a candidate or scholar confides in any person working on behalf of FSDP it is important that the latter informs the complainant that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the FSDP Board and appropriate agencies.

Where possible, consent should be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. However, that confidentiality may be broken if the person:

- Is a danger to themselves or others.
- Is experiencing a crisis and needs support.
- There is a safeguarding concern which has a wider impact e.g. if the person alleges abuse by another person but asks for secrecy.

The intention to breach confidentiality should be discussed with the individual concerned and ideally his or her written permission obtained. Where a disclosure has been made, the complainant should be kept informed of any action to be taken and why.

Boundaries

Particularly where an individual may need physical assistance it is important from the outset to establish the boundaries that define acceptable and unacceptable behaviour as far as that individual is concerned. These boundaries protect all parties concerned,

Risk Assessment

The greatest risk of abuse for an individual engaged with FSDP is mainly in one to one situations and, therefore, while undertaking the flying scholarship. It is important therefore to ensure all related parties are aware of the provisions of this policy – in particular the various forms abuse may take (as listed under 'Definitions' in Annex A) and commit to respecting the dignity and rights of others to live free from harm or abuse.

The FSDP Board of Trustees will ensure that the charity's Risk Register, covering identified risks in connection with its safeguarding policy and procedures, is reviewed annually.

Definitions

Physical. Physical abuse is the infliction of bodily harm and/or mental distress. It includes physical assault, imprisonment, and misuse of drugs. The perpetrator may cause physical or mental pain by doing (e.g. hitting) or not doing (e.g. withholding food). Often the nature of the physical injury is not consistent with the account of how it occurred.

Neglect and Acts of Omission. Neglect can result in bodily harm and/or mental distress. It may involve failure to provide appropriate help and support in daily living tasks. Often there is a failure to meet basic needs (e.g. warmth, nutritional diet). It can also involve failure to intervene in behaviour that is likely to cause harm to a person or to others.

Self-Neglect. Typically self-neglect is manifested in the disregard of personal hygiene, health or surroundings resulting in a risk that impact on the adult's wellbeing.

Psychological Abuse. Psychological abuse is likely to cause mental distress and may also affect a person's physical health. The abuse can involve the denial of choice, dignity and respect. It can include the threat of violence, other threats, harassment, humiliation, loss of liberty, name-calling and/or the use of racist/sexist/ discriminatory language, criticism and undermining. It can involve restricting or failing to present all of the options to the adult with care and support needs, over-riding the individual's wishes and treating adults as children.

Sexual Abuse. Sexual abuse occurs when a person is involved in sexual activities that she/he does not want to be involved in or does not understand, or to which she/he is unable to give informed consent. Sexual activity does not always involve contact. It may take the form of looking at pornographic photographs, videos and magazines, voyeurism, indecent exposure.

Financial or Material Abuse. Financial or material abuse involves the exploitation of an individual's financial and material position, including the theft, misuse or withholding of money or possessions. It can involve the use of verbal, physical and emotional threats.

Organisational Abuse. Organisational abuse can occur in any group living situation (e.g. day centres, supported housing, residential or nursing homes etc.) Any of the abuse listed here could happen in an organisational setting. In addition it could be the institution itself that is the source of the abuse through the imposition of rules by staff without the consent of those living there. It can involve lack of privacy and the lack of individual attention.

Domestic Violence & Abuse. Domestic abuse is the incidence of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour or violence by someone who is or has been an intimate partner or family member regardless of gender or sexuality.

Modern Slavery. Slavery is a criminal offence. Its victims are forcibly exploited through threats, deception, violence and other forms of coercion into various forms of servitude.

Discriminatory Abuse. Abuse can be experienced as harassment, insults or similar actions due to race, religion, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation.

Sexual Exploitation. Sexual exploitation is a subset of sexual abuse. It involves exploitative situations and relationships where people receive 'something' (e.g. accommodation, alcohol, affection, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual activities.

'Mate Crime'. 'Mate Crime' occurs when a person is specifically targeted then befriended and exploited by a perpetrator, usually (but not solely) for the latter's financial gain.

Radicalisation. Radicalisation occurs where a vulnerable person is specifically targeted, groomed or otherwise persuaded to take part in, assist with or promote potential terrorist or other violent extremist activities.

Cyber Bullying. Applies when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging humiliating or isolating another person.

