



Phone Credit for Refugees Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Phone Credit for Refugees (PC4R) makes a positive contribution to the safety of refugees living in difficult circumstances throughout the world, and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

PC4R has access to children and vulnerable adults through the following activities:

- Processing requests for phone credit from refugees who post on the PC4R Facebook page
- Entering refugee information on a secure database managed by PC4R
- Occasional visits by volunteers to sites where refugees live

However most volunteers will never have direct face-to-face with vulnerable people. Contact with children and vulnerable adults will normally be online via the Facebook group page and by access to sensitive data on PC4R's secure database.

This policy seeks to ensure that PC4R undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of children and vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Working together to safeguard Children 2010
- The Children Act 1989
- The Adoption and Children Act 2000:
- The Children act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

- The Police Act – CRB 1997
- Mental Health Act 1983
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 1998

Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.

It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Neglect
- Financial (or material) abuse
- Human trafficking of individuals

Definition of a child

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

Definition of Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.

This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail

- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless
- Is a victim of human trafficking

Responsibilities

All staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures. We expect all staff (paid or unpaid) to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional key/specific responsibilities

Key responsibilities are:

- The policy is in place and appropriate - trustees/management committee
- The policy is accessible – trustees/management committee
- The policy is implemented – designated Safeguarding Lead Officers
- The policy is monitored and reviewed - designated safeguarding lead officers
- Liaison with and monitoring the designated lead officers - trustees/management committee
- Sufficient resources (time and money) are allocated to ensure that the policy can be effectively implemented - trustees/management committee
- Promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults – designated safeguarding lead officers
- Ensure staff (paid and unpaid) have access to appropriate training/information – designated safeguarding lead officers
- Receive staff concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately - designated Safeguarding Lead Officers
- Keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS or equivalent - designated Safeguarding Lead Officers

- Develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies - designated Safeguarding Lead Officers
- Take forward concerns about responses – Trustees/management committee

Implementation Stages

The scope of this Safeguarding Policy is broad ranging and in practice, it will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include:

- Whistleblowing –ability to inform on other staff/ practices within the organisation
- Complaints and Grievance policy – to address breaches of procedures/ policies
- Health and Safety policy, including lone working procedures, mitigating risk to staff and refugees.
- Equal Opportunities policy– ensuring safeguarding procedures are in line with this policy, in particular around discriminatory abuse and ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are not discriminatory
- Data protection (how records are stored and access to those records)
- Confidentiality (or limited confidentiality policy) ensuring that service users are aware of your duty to disclose
- Staff induction
- Staff training

There are various aspects which should be more explicitly detailed within the Safeguarding Policy. These relate to:

Recruitment

- Providing the following safeguarding statement in recruitment adverts or application details –‘recruitment is done in line with safe recruitment practices.’
- Job or role descriptions for all roles involving contact with children and / or vulnerable adults will contain reference to safeguarding responsibilities.
- Interviews are conducted according to equal opportunity principles and interview questions are based on the relevant job description and person specification
- DBS or equivalent checks will be conducted for specific roles for all staff (paid or unpaid) working with children and vulnerable adults. Portable/ carry over DBS checks from another employer will not be deemed to be sufficient. It is a criminal

offence for individuals barred by the ISA to work or apply to work with children or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts.

- No formal volunteer opportunities are made until after checks for suitability are completed (including DBS and 2 references). Where this is not possible the designated officer will conduct a safeguarding risk assessment on the volunteer and put in place alternative arrangements to cover the pending DBS period.

Vetting and Barring (DBS or equivalent) checks

Organisations will ensure that their established staff and roles are regularly reviewed through a:

- A 3 year rolling programme of re-checking DBS or equivalent is in place for holders of all identified posts.
- Existing staff (paid or unpaid) who transfer from a role which does not require a DBS check to one which involves contact with children / vulnerable adults will be subject to a DBS check.

Communications and training and support for staff

PC4R commits resources for induction, training of staff (paid and unpaid), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding.

Induction

- Discussion or access to the Safeguarding Policy (and confirmation of understanding)
- Ensure familiarity with reporting processes, the roles of line manager and Designated Senior Manager (and who acts in their absence)
- Initial training on safeguarding including: safe working practices, safe recruitment, understanding child protection and the alerter guide for adult safeguarding
- A one month trial period under the supervision of the lead volunteer
- Training on how to input on the PC4R data sheets
- Access to all the relevant PC4R policies and appropriate legislation via the volunteer handbook
- Access to any good practice guide

Training

All staff who, through their role, are in contact with children and /or vulnerable adults will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level.

Ongoing Support and communications

We recognise that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be stressful for staff concerned. The mechanisms in place to support staff include:

- Regular access to lead volunteer and Safeguarding Officer
- The 24 hours online chatline on Facebook
- The Admin Facebook group
- Standing item on trustee/management committee meetings
- Provision of a clear and effective reporting procedure which encourages reporting of concerns.
- Encouraging open discussion to identify and barriers to reporting so that they can be addressed.
- Debriefing support for staff so that they can reflect on the issues they have dealt with
- Access to continuous training on safeguarding and data input as required
- Seeking further support as appropriate e.g. access to counselling.

Professional boundaries

Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a support worker and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.

PC4R expects staff to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the organisation.

The following professional boundaries must be adhered to:

- To promote our ethos and values in every aspect of behaviour and activities.
- Be respectful, professional and courteous to everyone – refugees and volunteers.
- Consult the Chief Volunteer on any promotional materials representing the organisation.

- Not acting or speaking in a way that is in opposition to PC4R's brand, values or volunteering policies and could bring PC4R into disrepute.
- Never accepting a gift of money from a refugee for themselves or on behalf of another volunteer.
- Informing PC4R of any gifts offered from people or families.
- Never to buy from, or sell anything to, a refugee. This includes services, work or favours as well as objects.
- Not lend money to refugees from their own pocket or borrow from them or open bank (or other) accounts for them under their own name.
- Treat other volunteers and refugees with respect
- No information being kept on personal mobile phones and devices and conversations deleted.
- All PC4R information to be entered onto the PC4R database and not stored anywhere else on private devices.
- Not take or download photos or videos of refugees unless you have specifically been given written permission to do so by refugees and confirmed by Chief volunteer.
- Under no circumstances should any images be taken using your own personal camera or phone.
- Under no circumstances should digital images be downloaded onto equipment or USB owned by volunteers.

Every volunteer has the responsibility to help create and maintain an environment that is free of bullying, harassment and discrimination. This can be achieved by:

- Being aware of how your behaviour may affect others, and if necessary, changing it.
- Treating others with dignity and respect.
- Appropriately challenging what you think are inappropriate comments, actions or behaviours by making it clear to others that you find their behaviour unacceptable.
- Being aware that, in some cases, people may be unaware that their behaviour is inappropriate or objectionable, and acting accordingly.
- Trying to resolve it informally, where possible, to stop harassment, victimisation, bullying or discrimination.

- Intervening, if possible, to stop harassment or discrimination, or raising it with the Volunteer Supporter
- Understanding the difference between constructive feedback on action and behaviours; and harassment, victimisation or bullying.
- Reporting any concerns to your Volunteer Supporter if you witness, or are made aware of, potential 'dignity at work' concerns.

If the professional boundaries and/or policies are breached this could result in disciplinary procedures or enactment of the allegation management procedures

Reporting

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is: Jennifer Trevisan (known as Wren Trevisan)

The process outlined below details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at PC4R:

1. Communicate your concerns to the lead volunteer and Designated Safeguarding Officer
2. Lead volunteer/Designated Safeguarding Officer to attempt to seek medical attention for the vulnerable person if needed
3. Complete an incident report and submit to the designated safeguarding officer within 24 hours
4. Designated Safeguarding Officer to discuss with vulnerable person to obtain permission to make referral if safe and appropriate/ make an emergency referral to the relevant inter-country agency.
5. Refer the matter to the trustees/management committee if another volunteer is implicated

Allegations Management

PC4R recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff (paid or unpaid) within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

1. PC4R recognises its legal duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of its paid or unpaid staff to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), according to the ISA referral guidance document <http://www.isa.gov.uk/PDF/ISA%20Referral%20Guidance%20%20V2009-02.pdf>

2. Any member of staff (paid or unpaid) from PC4R is required to report any concerns in the first instance to their lead volunteer. A written record of the concern will be completed by a member of the board of trustees/management committee.
3. In the UK, a referral to the appropriate Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Monitoring

A lead person on the Board of Trustees will have responsibility to monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:

- Safe recruitment practices
- DBS or equivalent checks undertaken
- References applied for new staff
- Safeguarding records made and kept
- Training – register/ record of staff training on child/ vulnerable adult protection
- Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned
- Checking that policies are up to date and relevant
- Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place
- Presence and action of Designated Officer responsible for Safeguarding is in post.

Managing information

Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the Data Protection and Confidentiality policies.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Lead Volunteer.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise refugees that they will keep secrets.

Communicating and reviewing the policy

PC4R will make refugees, donors and supporters aware of the Safeguarding Policy through the following means:

- The publication of the Safeguarding Policy on the organisations website www.pc4r.org along with the contact details for the DSO.

- The provision of a simple guide to refugees explaining the safeguarding policy. This should include a simple description of what safeguarding covers.
- a clear guide on how to report a safeguarding concern for themselves or others.
- a clear guide on how to make a complaint to PC4R

This policy will be reviewed by the trustees/management committee every year and/or when there are changes in legislation.