

V1.1	Nov 19	Updated DSO	Heather Roche
V1.2	July 22		A Hubbard/ J Woodhouse
V1.3	April 2024	C-SPA replaces MASH Steve Pownall removed Safeguarding email added Helplines added Policy restructured	Geoff Andrews

Safeguarding Policy

North Guildford Foodbank

Approved in Trustees Meeting 12 April 2024

Geoff Andrews
chairoftrustees@ngfoodbank.co.uk

Next Review date: March 2025

North Guildford Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy statement

As a Food bank, we want to contribute to restoring dignity and reviving hope to all our clients. We are concerned with individuals and their circumstances and actively encourage an inclusive and supportive environment.

We seek to ensure that all our volunteers are aware of what is required from them under the safeguarding policy and make sure that it is practised at all times.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to play our part in preventing the physical, sexual, spiritual, financial or emotional abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children.

We commit ourselves to cooperate fully with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting an official investigation into the abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults, children or young people (by an adult or young person).

This statement is to be brought to the attention of all volunteers when they join, as part of their induction programme. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all team members.

The Policy Statement will be prominently displayed during all client sessions. All team members will be issued with a copy of the Volunteer Handbook which includes the Policy Statement and asked to sign to say they have read it and will abide by it. The Food Bank aims to provide refresher training on safeguarding to all volunteers at least once every 3 years or following an update, whichever is earlier.

2. Lead Trustee

A lead trustee will be appointed to provide oversight of safeguarding and to lead on any incident investigation and reporting.

The Lead Trustee and Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is Geoff Andrews safeguarding@ngfoodbank.co.uk
074949 21 696

3. Definitions (for this document)

Safeguarding relevant to the Food Bank is defined as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development

Vulnerable adult: A person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Vulnerable adults are entitled to: privacy; be treated with dignity; lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so; be able to choose how they lead their lives; the protection of the law; have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.

Child: Describes a child aged 0-17 years old.

The Foodbank is committed to safeguarding the rights, well-being and safety of children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the Foodbank. This policy outlines the steps the Food Bank will take to ensure that vulnerable adults and children are protected. It will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Safeguarding Officer.

4. Types and signs of abuse

Abuse can take many forms, such as physical, psychological or emotional, financial, sexual or institutional abuse, including neglect and exploitation. Types and signs that may indicate the different types of abuse are at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.

North Guildford Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

5. Applicability

This policy applies to anyone working for Foodbank including our trustees, our staff and all our volunteers. We will ensure that it is:

- Implemented
- Reviewed when circumstances change.
- Reviewed following a serious incident and/or at least once a year
- Made available to trustees, staff, volunteers, referrers and the public.
- Compliant with all relevant legislation.

We will make all trustees, staff, volunteers, partners and clients aware of our policies and that they know how to apply them.

6. Reporting concerns

If you think that a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger you must call 999.

Incidents can be reported to the Police online <https://www.surrey.police.uk/contact-us/report-online/>

In situations where immediate danger is not anticipated, concerns should be reported by:

- Informing a Team Leader or staff member who will inform the manager or the lead trustee or Safeguarding Officer
- Emailing Safeguarding@ngfoodbank.co.uk
- Calling Foodbank 07807 068264 and asking for the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) to contact them.
- If for whatever reason you do not want to report an incident to the Food Bank safeguarding lead, then you should contact the diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at safeguarding@cofeguildford.org.uk.
- If the DSO is not available or you do not want to report an incident to the Food Bank DSO, then you should contact the diocesan Safeguarding Officer (DSO) at safeguarding@cofeguildford.org.uk.
- The Safeguarding Officers will never be related to each other.

The DSO will then report the incident to the Children's Services Single Point of Access (C-SPA) for children, Surrey County Council for an adult or the police for advice.

Children's Services 'Single Point of Access' C-SPA is available from 9am to 5pm on Monday to Friday.

- **Phone:** 0300 470 9100
- **Email:** cspa@surreycc.gov.uk <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/contact-childrens-services>

During evenings, weekends and bank holidays, the **Emergency Duty Team** is available:

- **Phone:** 01483 517898
- **Email:** edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk

Further information can be found at <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/children/contact-childrens-services>

If anyone is concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a vulnerable adults, they should call **0300 200 1005** or complete a report at <https://customer.surreycc.gov.uk/adult-safeguarding-referral>

North Guildford Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

The DSO will inform trustees when a safeguarding incident has been reported but shall maintain confidentiality. The trustees will report serious incidents to the Charity Commission and the responsible agencies in Guildford Borough Council.

Relevant helplines can be found in Appendix 3

7. Responsibilities

The Food Bank commits to plan its work so as to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults and children might occur:

Although the number of people who actively seek to abuse vulnerable adults and children is very small, the food bank can reduce opportunities for abuse in various ways. We commit to:

- Creating a culture of respect, in which everyone feels safe and able to speak up.
- An annual review of safety, with recommendations to the Board.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented
- Ensure that any vulnerable adult or child working with the food bank is aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns.
- Ensure that an adult is not left alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the child.
- Ensuring that all reports of safeguarding issues are properly investigated and dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively, and are reported to the Police and statutory authorities as required.
- Ensuring that the Charity Commission is informed of any suspicions, allegations and incidents of abuse or mistreatment of vulnerable adults or children. The Charity Commission's Serious Incident guidance will be followed <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>
- Ensuring the Disclosure and Barring Service is informed if the trustees have dismissed or ceased using an employee or volunteer because they think they have harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.
- Ensuring safeguarding risk assessments are carried out and appropriate action taken to remove or minimise them
- Ensuring that personal data is stored and managed in a safe way that is compliant with data protection regulations, including valid consent to use any imagery or video in which a child or vulnerable adult can be identified.
- Making staff, volunteers and others aware of:
 - Our safeguarding procedures and their specific safeguarding responsibilities on induction, with regular updates/reminders, as necessary.
 - The signs of potential abuse and how to report these.

8. Recording concerns

All reports concerning the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults will be treated seriously.

The Safeguarding Officer will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they or another team member has and seek advice from the C-SPA or the Police if appropriate. The Safeguarding Officer must ensure that their recording of disclosures, incidents, assessments, referrals and case discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up to date, legible, dated, and factual.

North Guildford Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

When recording details it is important not to jump to conclusions or judge the situation and to remember that the role of the Safeguarding Officer is to refer to appropriate agencies, not to undertake an investigation. Suspicions should be noted carefully and backed up with factual evidence. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence.

Written records should be scanned and then destroyed. Scanned documents will be held in the google drive associated with safeguarding@ngfoodbank.co.uk which is accessible only to authorised trustees. These records will be available to authorised individuals on request (not third party information) and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.

Note: once someone reports a safeguarding concern and has passed on their records, they have no right to know what happens next. They will only receive more information about the case if they are required to be part of civil or criminal proceedings e.g. as a witness. To respect confidentiality, volunteers must refrain from talking to anyone else about the safeguarding concern except the Safeguarding Officer, the Police or Social Services).

9. Disclosure of Abuse

Where a member of a foodbank team receives a disclosure of abuse from a child or vulnerable adult they must:

1. **Ensure they do not promise confidentiality** to anyone wishing to share a secret. This is important in case information needs to be shared with the Safeguarding Officer or the Police/Social Services.
2. **Listen** - If the disclosure is particularly complicated and the person is not very young, this may mean asking permission to make notes as the disclosure is made to ensure nothing is missed. The team member hearing the disclosure can ask the child or vulnerable adult to repeat something if it has not been said clearly but must not ask leading questions.
3. **Reassure** - Making a disclosure of abuse can be a frightening process and often the child or vulnerable adult is afraid that they won't be believed. Reassuring them that they have been brave and that the information will be passed on is vitally important.
4. **Record** - Notes should be made as soon after the disclosure as possible. The notes should reflect what the child or vulnerable adult has said in their own words. The record should be signed and dated by the note taker.
5. **Report** - The record must be passed on to a Safeguarding Officer at the earliest possible opportunity and the child or vulnerable adult told what will happen next.

Where a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of the foodbank team the team member must never:

- Trivialise, play down or ignore allegations of abuse
- Assume that somebody else will take responsibility for reporting/addressing concerns and making referrals

10. Disclosure of Information

There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All personal and delicate information disclosed by a complainant will be confidential but may not always be secret.

Personal and delicate information about a volunteer named by a complainant:

- Will be confidential to the Foodbank and can be shared with volunteers on a 'need to know basis' and
- Can be shared with another agency when:
 - Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held or
 - There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent or
 - The law requires it.

11. Domestic Violence

North Guildford Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

Where a Food Bank client reports a suspected incident of domestic violence that has taken place whilst a child or vulnerable adult was at the home, this must be treated as a disclosure of abuse and should be passed on to the Safeguarding Officer with immediate effect. Where an incident of domestic violence is reported and there is no child or vulnerable adult present, Foodbank volunteers should signpost the client to an appropriate agency but must not attempt to coerce them to contact the police unless the client feels ready to do so. Where Food Bank volunteers witness an act of violence in the course of their duty they must contact the police immediately.

For advice or information about anything relating to domestic violence the Foodbank team should contact the National Domestic Violence Helpline on: 0808 2000 247

It is important that everyone in the Foodbank is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional vulnerable adult and child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about someone.

If a vulnerable adult or child begins making a disclosure of abuse to a team member who feels unable to cope with what they are hearing, they should gently halt the conversation and contact the Safeguarding Officer immediately. If the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, the team leader should take over the conversation.

The wellbeing of volunteers is of great importance. If a disclosure has been made which has caused upset to the person hearing it, the Foodbank will endeavour to offer or facilitate counselling or support if requested.

12. Clear roles

It is the Food Bank's policy not to engage in close or personal tasks (such as washing, dressing, or accompanying to the lavatory,) with vulnerable adults. Volunteers are therefore ineligible for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. However, anyone who delivers to the home of a client will require a basic DBS check because they may be required to enter the client's home with a delivery. The Foodbank will continue to keep abreast of any further legislative changes from the DBS.

13. Supervision as a means of protection

Regular meetings are held where team leaders meet together to raise issues about their area of work and discuss them. Particular attention will be paid to any situation or suggestion that a vulnerable adult or child is being either highly favoured or harshly treated, as these are signs of abuse.

In all recruitment decisions concerning volunteers:

- a) An application form should be completed.
- b) An informal interview will provide an extended conversation in which the applicant's experience and motivation for volunteering can be explored in more detail.
- c) the Food Bank is under no obligation to accept a volunteer if there are any concerns about their ability to work with other volunteers and /or clients.

The Team Leader will be responsible for the supervision of all volunteers in that session.

14. Criminal convictions

All volunteers must complete an application form before commencing work at the Foodbank. Details of criminal convictions (except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) must be provided so an adequate risk assessment can be undertaken. (The Foodbank reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer and/or ban them from the property should they feel it is necessary.)

15. Training

The Food Bank recognises that it is insufficient to give workers guidelines without equipping them with the skills and knowledge to carry them out. Therefore, regular updates and training will be provided to all staff, trustees, volunteers and the Safeguarding Officer will undergo external training in order to remain up-to-date with legislation and good practice.

16. Supported Volunteers

North Guildford Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

The Foodbank will ensure that all volunteers, including young people or volunteers with additional needs understand the safeguarding policy. If the volunteer is likely to struggle to absorb the information contained within this policy by reading it, the coordinator or a Safeguarding Officer will talk through the policy verbally or will liaise with the professional staff supporting a vulnerable volunteer to ensure that safeguarding is understood.

17. Driving

Volunteers must not transport clients in their cars. In exceptional circumstances, a volunteer may transport an adult client only if accompanied by another volunteer or staff member. Volunteers must never transport a child in their car.

Volunteers driving any vehicle which transports food parcels or vulnerable adults must hold a valid driver's licence for the type/class of vehicle they are driving.

All vehicles used in the transportation of food parcels or vulnerable adults must have a valid road fund licence, be appropriately insured, have a valid MOT certificate and comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations.

18. Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually and whenever there are any legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies.

Signatures

..... Geoff Andrews, Chair of Trustees : April
2024.

.....Clare Porter, Trustee
.....

.....Jessica Povey, Food Bank
Manager.....:

19. Appendix 1 - Types of Risks and Harms

Harms and risk to be alert to, whether online or in person, include:

- sexual harassment, abuse and exploitation.
- criminal exploitation.
- a charity's culture, which may allow poor behaviour and poor accountability.
- people abusing a position of trust they hold within a charity.
- bullying or harassment.
- health and safety.
- commercial exploitation.
- cyber abuse.
- discrimination on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010.
- people targeting your charity.
- data breaches, including those under General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- negligent treatment.
- domestic abuse.
- self-neglect.
- physical or emotional abuse.
- spiritual or psychological abuse
- extremism and radicalisation.
- forced marriage.
- modern slavery.
- human trafficking.
- female genital mutilation.

20. Appendix 2 – Signs of Abuse

Physical Abuse.

- bruises, black eyes, welts, lacerations, and rope marks.
- broken bones.
- open wounds, cuts, punctures, untreated injuries in various stages of healing.
- broken eyeglasses/frames, or any physical signs of being punished or restrained.
- individual's report being hit, slapped, kicked, or mistreated.
- vulnerable adult's sudden change in behaviour.
- the caregiver's refusal to allow visitors to see a vulnerable adult alone.

Sexual Abuse.

- an individual's report of being sexually assaulted or raped.

Mental Mistreatment/Emotional Abuse.

- being emotionally upset or agitated.
- being extremely withdrawn and non-communicative or non-responsive.
- nervousness around certain people.
- an individual's report of being verbally or mentally mistreated.

Neglect.

- dehydration, malnutrition, poor personal hygiene.
- unattended or untreated health problems.
- hazardous or unsafe living condition (e.g., improper wiring, no heat or running water).
- unsanitary and unclean living conditions (e.g., dirt, fleas, lice on person, soiled bedding, faecal/urine smell, inadequate clothing).
- an individual's report of being mistreated.

Self-Neglect.

- dehydration, malnutrition, untreated or improperly attended medical conditions, and poor personal hygiene.
- hazardous or unsafe living conditions.
- unsanitary or unclean living quarters (e.g., animal/insect infestation, no functioning toilet, faecal or urine smell).
- inappropriate and/or inadequate clothing, lack of the necessary medical aids.
- grossly inadequate housing or homelessness.
- inadequate medical care, not taking prescribed medications properly.

Exploitation.

- unexplained disappearance of funds or valuable possessions.
- bills unpaid despite the money being available to pay them.
- forging a signature on financial transactions or for the titles of possessions.
- sudden appearance of previously uninvolved relatives claiming rights to a vulnerable adult's possessions.
- unexplained sudden transfer of assets to a family member or someone outside the family.
- providing services that are not necessary.
- individual's report of exploitation.

21. Appendix 3 - Helplines

Further help can be found at:

NSPCC for adults concerned about a child: 0808 800 5000

Childline for children and young people: 0800 1111

Action on Elder Abuse helpline: 0808 808 8141

24 hour National Domestic Violence helpline: 0808 2000 247

Stop It Now helps prevent child sexual abuse: 0808 1000 900

MACSAS for people who have been abused by church officers: 0808 801 0340

Samaritans for people struggling to cope and needing someone to talk to: 116 123