

Sheba Arts Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

Last updated: September 2024

1. Introduction

This policy is intended to support staff and volunteers working within Sheba Arts to understand their role and responsibilities in safeguarding adults. All staff, freelance workers and volunteers are expected to follow this policy.

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees and volunteers of Sheba Arts to:

- have an overview of adult safeguarding
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard adults
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where an adult with care and support needs is deemed to be at risk

This policy is based on:

- The Care Act 2014 and the Care and Support statutory guidance
- London Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures

Under the Human Rights Act 1998, everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/human-rights/human-rights-act>

2. What is safeguarding adults?

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, 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 - *information from the Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health, updated February 2017*

All adults should be able to live free from fear and harm. But some may find it hard to get the help and support they need to stop abuse.

An adult may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation due to many reasons, including their mental or physical incapacity, sensory loss or physical or learning disabilities. This could be an adult who is usually able to protect themselves from harm but maybe unable to do so because of an accident, disability, frailty, addiction or illness.

Sheba Arts adheres the following six key principles that underpin safeguarding work:

- Empowerment
- Prevention
- Proportionality
- Protection
- Partnership
- Accountability

Sheba Arts will not tolerate the abuse of adults. We should ensure that our work reflects the principles above and ensure the adult with care and support needs is involved in their decisions and informed consent is obtained. Sheba Arts should ensure that the safeguarding action agreed is the least intrusive response to the risk. Partners from the community should be involved in any safeguarding work in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. We are transparent and accountable in delivering safeguarding actions.

3. What is Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)?

MSP means a case should be person-led and outcome-focused. The individual should be involved in identifying how best to respond to their safeguarding situation by giving them more choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety.

4. Who do adult safeguarding duties apply to?

The Care Act 2014 sets out that adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect
- is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect, because of those needs.

5. Good practice guidelines

All staff members, freelance workers and volunteers doing work in the name of Sheba Arts should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour and adhere to the guidelines in this document. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

Good practice means:

- Always meeting and working in the office or public places, avoid private or

unobserved situations and encourage open communication

- Treating all adults equally with respect and dignity
- Always putting the welfare of our adult audiences first
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering adults to share in decision making.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- All staff, managers, Board of Directors and volunteers at Sheba Arts are expected to report any concerns to Fereshteh Mozaffari, the safeguarding lead. If the allegation is against one of Sheba Arts members, volunteers, Board of Directors, seek advice from Sheba Arts safeguarding lead. If the allegation is against the safeguarding lead, seek advice from Sheba Arts Chair.
- Fereshteh Mozaffari is responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and brief feedback to the person raising the original concern. Feedback should be given in a way that will not make the situation worse or breach the Data Protection Act. If the police are involved, they should be consulted prior to giving feedback to the referrer to ensure any criminal investigation is not affected.
- The local authority will decide on who will lead on a safeguarding enquiry should it progress to that stage. Sheba Arts should not conduct its own safeguarding enquiry unless instructed to do so by the local authority.
- Staff and volunteers should ensure that the adult with care and support needs is involved at all stages of their safeguarding enquiry ensuring a person-centred approach is adopted.

7. Use of photographic/filming equipment at events

There is evidence that some people use events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of vulnerable adults in vulnerable positions. All members should be vigilant and any concern should be brought to the attention of Fereshteh Mozaffari.

We take Videos/ photographs as a community development aid at our events. However, the people and their carers should be made aware that this is part of the development process and such films should be stored safely and not shared without consent.

8. Pre-selection checks of members who will work with vulnerable adults

Sheba Arts is committed to safe employment. Safe recruitment practices, such as Disclosure and Barring checks reduce the risk of exposing adults with care and support needs to people unsuitable to work with them.

All volunteers and members of staff should complete an application form. The application form will elicit information about an applicant's past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record.

Every new member of staff or volunteer should provide evidence of identity (e.g. passport or driving licence with photo).

9. Training and induction

Sheba Arts ensures that all staff and volunteers receive basic awareness training on safeguarding for adults as they may come across adults with care and support needs who may be at risk of abuse. Those adults may report things of concern to staff or volunteers who should be equipped with the basic knowledge around safeguarding adults and be confident to identify that abuse is taking place and action is required. All staff and volunteers should be clear about the core values of Sheba Arts and commitment to safeguarding adults.

It is also useful to discuss training with staff who have attended training sessions to ensure they are embedding this in practice.

Staff members and volunteers should:

- follow the codes of good practice, and ensure their practice is likely to protect them from any false allegations.
- recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse.
- respond to concerns expressed by a vulnerable adult
- work safely and effectively with all adults

10. What should I do if I am concerned?

Staff and volunteers at Sheba Arts who have any adult safeguarding concerns should:

- Respond: Take emergency action if someone is at immediate risk of harm/in need of urgent medical attention. Dial 999 for emergency services.
- Get brief details about what has happened and what the adult would like done about it, but do not probe or conduct a mini-investigation
- Seek consent from the adult to take action and to report the concern. Consider

whether the adult may lack capacity to make decisions about their own and other people's safety and wellbeing. If you decide to act against their wishes or without their consent, you must record your decision and the reasons for this.

- Report any potential safeguarding concerns to Fereshteh Mozaffari.
- Record: write a brief about the incident, or record it, and send it to the safeguarding lead. All the information must be kept confidential. As far as possible, records should be written contemporaneously, dated and signed. The records about safeguarding concerns must be kept confidential and in a location where the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access should not be given to any unauthorised personnel for accessing confidential information including the sharing of passwords.
- Refer: In making a decision as to whether to refer or not, the designated safeguarding lead should take into account:
 - the adult's wishes and preferred outcome
 - whether the adult has mental capacity to make an informed decision about their own and others' safety
 - the safety or well being of adult with care and support needs
 - whether there is a person in a position of trust involved
 - whether a crime has been committed

This should inform the decision whether to notify the concern to the following people:

- the police if a crime has been committed and/or
- Sheba Arts' safeguarding lead, or the Board of Directors for possible safeguarding enquiry
- relevant regulatory bodies such as Care Quality Commission, service commissioning teams
- family/relatives as appropriate (seek advice from adult social services)

The designated safeguarding lead should keep a record of the reasons for referring the concern or reasons for not referring.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple and may affect one person or more. Staff and volunteers should look beyond single incidents to identify patterns of harm. Accurate recording of information will also assist in recognising any patterns.

As soon as Adult Social Services becomes involved, a 4-stage safeguarding adults process is followed. For more information about this 4-stage safeguarding adults process, refer to the London Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

11. Why is it important to take action?

It may be difficult for adults with care and support needs to protect themselves and to report abuse. They rely on you to help them.

12. Confidentiality and information sharing

Sheba Arts expects all staff, volunteers, and Board of Directors to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law, Sheba Arts does not share information if not required.

It should however be noted that information should be shared with authorities if an adult is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm. Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference to preventing harm.

13. Prevent

Radicalisation and extremism of adults with care and support needs is a form of emotional/psychological exploitation. Radicalisation can take place through direct personal contact, or indirectly through social media.

If staff are concerned that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of being radicalised, they should treat it in the same way as any other safeguarding concern.

Annex 1

What are the types of safeguarding adult abuse?

The Care and Support statutory guidance sets out the 10 main types of abuse:

- Physical abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Domestic violence
- Modern Slavery
- Self-neglect

However, you should keep an open mind about what constitutes abuse or neglect as it can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered.

What are the possible signs of abuse?

Abuse and neglect can be difficult to spot. You should be alert to the following possible signs of abuse and neglect:

- Depression, self-harm or suicide attempts
- Difficulty making friends
- Fear or anxiety
- The person looks dirty or is not dressed properly
- The person never seems to have money
- The person has an injury that is difficult to explain (such as bruises, finger marks, 'non-accidental' injury, neck, shoulders, chest and arms)
- The person has signs of a pressure ulcer
- The person is experiencing insomnia
- The person seems frightened, or frightened of physical contact.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- The person is withdrawn, changes in behaviour

You should ask the person if you are unsure about their well-being as there may be other explanations to the above presentation.

Who abuses and neglects adults?

Abuse can happen anywhere, even in somebody's own home. Most often abuse takes place by others who are in a position of trust and power. It can take place whether an adult lives alone or with others. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- partners
- other family members
- neighbours
- friends
- acquaintances
- local residents
- people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse
- paid staff or professionals
- volunteers and strangers