



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Nominated Safeguarding Person: Susan Murray

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Foreword

Refugees Welcome in Richmond (RWinR) is a group of local people who volunteer to support refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (LBRUT).

We are currently an unconstituted group, led by a committee, and we are all volunteers. However, we are in the process of becoming a registered charity, and we plan for this legal status to change in the next six months.

We recognise our responsibility and duty of care, and seek to work to the highest standards to support our beneficiaries. We are committed to providing safe and effective community-based activity that harnesses the power and compassion of community, whilst protecting both our beneficiaries and our volunteers from harm, when involved in our services.

We work closely with LBRUT to identify housing and support for refugees settling into the borough focusing on those supported by national government schemes such as the Syrian Persons Relocation Scheme, Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, Homes for Ukraine and Ukraine Family Scheme. We also work with other statutory partners and charities to provide language support, befriending, advocacy and donations.

RWinR acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We are committed to the support, protection and safeguarding of all, ensuring our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance, and national frameworks and is compliant with legislation.

We recognise that we have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children by protecting them from abuse. This policy aims to provide all RWinR volunteers, including committee members, with knowledge of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and safeguarding, and the practical steps they need to take should a disclosure be made or a concern observed.

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as being up to the age of 18. This policy relates to all children and young people up to this age. Vulnerable adults aged 18-25 are protected by the RWinR Adults at Risk Policy.

Abuse is defined as a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

This policy has been written using the legal and social care framework detailed in the following:

- London Child Protection Procedures (revised guidance 2018);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children. A guide to interagency working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018;
- Children's Act 1989;
- Children's Act 2004;
- Children and Families Act 2014.

This policy should be read alongside the following documents:

- RWinR Lone Working Policy;
- Relevant risk assessments;
- RWinR Code of Conduct;
- RWinR Information for Families;
- Safeguarding Disclosure Flowchart;

- RWinR Privacy Policy;
- Abuse and Neglect: Definitions and Indicators;
- RWinR Befriender Role Description;
- Safeguarding Disclosure Form.

The [Kingston and Richmond Children's Safeguarding Partnership \(KRSCP\)](#) has oversight of all child protection and safeguarding activity in the borough and we subscribe to its training and information updates for multi agency providers.

RWinR Responsibilities

We understand that if there is a concern about the risk of significant harm to the child then everyone's overriding duty is to protect the child.

RWinR undertakes to ensure:

- Children feel listened to, valued and respected.
- All volunteers are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures.
- Volunteers are aware of indicators of abuse.
- Volunteers understand the need to share safeguarding concerns with the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) within RWinR
- All volunteers are given appropriate support and training.
- All volunteers will respond without delay to any concern raised that a child has been harmed or is at risk from harm.
- Any conduct or behaviour by a volunteer, which causes harm, or provokes concern in reaction to their interaction with children, will be referred to the Richmond SPA. This is known as the duty to refer, and is a legal duty.

All RWinR volunteers play a crucial role in helping to identify welfare concerns and indicators of possible abuse or neglect at an early stage.

RWinR is committed to referring these concerns via the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) to the Richmond Single Point of Access (SPA).

RWinR's Nominated Safeguarding Person is Susan Murray and can be contacted

via email on scmurray2021@gmail.com.

The Richmond Single Point of Access (SPA) team can be contacted by phone:

0208 547 5008 8am-5.15pm Monday to Thursday.

0208 547 5008 8am-5.00pm Friday.

0208 770 5000 Out of hours.

If for whatever reason, a RWinR volunteer or person receiving RWinR services feels unable or uncomfortable in reporting a safeguarding concern to the RWinR NSP, then phone the Richmond SPA direct or the NSPCC helpline:

0808 800 500 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

****ALWAYS PHONE 999 IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER****

To ensure children are adequately protected RWinR will ensure:

- We have a Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) and a Nominated Safeguarding Deputy Officer who attend multi-agency training (provided by the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children's Partnership) at least once a year.
- All volunteers involved in delivering activities to children receive training in basic child protection awareness every three years.
- We take all reasonable steps to recruit volunteers safely, taking up references requesting DBS checks where required, and once in post managing and supervising volunteers regularly.
- All volunteers have read and understood the RWinR Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and are aware of the indicators of child abuse and how to respond to concerns or disclosures of abuse by children. (See Abuse and Neglect, Definitions and Indicators and the Safeguarding Disclosure Flowchart).
- All volunteers comply with the RWinR Code of Conduct.
- Our policies and procedures are publicised to children, young people and families. This information, including contact details for RWinR and how to raise concerns about volunteers, is available via the RWinR Information for

Families document, which is given to families at the beginning of an engagement.

- We will respond without delay to every concern raised that a child may have been harmed or be at risk from harm.
- We will fully cooperate with the appropriate statutory agencies during any investigations into abuse.

The role of the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP)

The NSP takes the lead responsibility for child protection. The duties include to:

- Refer suspected abuse/neglect of children and young people to Richmond SPA.

Urgent concerns must be reported immediately even if the NSP is not available.

- Report allegations made against members of staff to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) via the SPA.
- Develop and update child protection and other safeguarding policies ensuring volunteers are made aware of their responsibilities, and families are familiar with how to raise a concern.
- Ensure that confidential records are kept of any concerns about a child or young person and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies.
- Provide support and advice to all volunteers regarding safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure all volunteers have appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, and maintain training records.

The role of all RWinR volunteers

Volunteers will deliver the support outlined in the Befriender Role Description. At all times they will work in accordance with the RWinR Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Adults at Risk Safeguarding Policy, Lone Working Policy, Code of Conduct and relevant risk assessments.

All RWinR volunteers are responsible for:

- Making sure they understand the part they play in safeguarding children and young people.
- Cooperating with each other to follow the safeguarding procedures in the policy.
- Reporting any suspicions of abuse or neglect to the NSP or Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
- Reporting any concerns about the behaviour of other RWinR volunteers towards children or young people at risk.

The duty to refer and the role of the local area designated officer (LADO)

The LADO is employed by the local authority and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

The LADO helps coordinate information sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible. The LADO will attend local strategy meetings and chair managing allegation strategy meetings. If you have concerns about a volunteer relating to child protection you are legally obliged to refer the case to the LADO, This is known as "the duty to refer". Referrals are made through the Richmond SPA.

Recruitment, induction and supervision of staff and volunteers

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with RWinR. The following steps will be taken:

- The RWinR commitment to safeguarding and child protection will be stated in all volunteer recruitment.
- A written application form is to be completed by all volunteers. The application form will include a question on any past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases. Applying to be a volunteer does not assume the candidate will become a volunteer.
- We will meet face to face with potential volunteers and assess their suitability for roles.
- An awareness of safeguarding and child protection will be part of all volunteer role descriptions and the interview.
- A willingness to undertake basic safeguarding training is required.
- Prior to appointment two references will be taken and proof of ID required.
- For all roles involving direct work with families enhanced DBS checks are required, renewable after every three years. These need to be in place prior to a volunteer delivering any activity relating to children on behalf of RWinR.
- All new volunteers will read and understand this policy as part of their induction process.
- We will ensure volunteers have a clear understanding of their role and responsibility with regard to confidentiality and safeguarding issues.
- Staff and volunteers will follow the Level 1 Safeguarding course provided by the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Partnership, and be able to identify the signs of abuse. (See Abuse and Neglect: Definitions and Indicators (Children)).
- Staff will be confident about the steps to take to report any concerns. (See Safeguarding Reporting Flowchart).

Creating a safe environment

- A risk assessment will be completed, with mitigating actions, for all home and private settings in which RWinR delivers services.
- Initial visits to families by new volunteers will be accompanied by a more experienced volunteer.
- Volunteers working with children will be appropriately trained and qualified to deliver the activities and support we are asking of them.
- We will maintain an accident book for recording incidents or accidents that happen whilst we are delivering RWinR work.
- Wherever possible we encourage an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations. Ideally volunteers should not be alone with a child at any time. The delivery of personal care does not form part of any volunteer activity. When being alone with a child is unavoidable it should be done with the full knowledge and consent of the child's parent/carer and in an open environment e.g. in a room with the door open where the activity is clearly visible.
- Client confidentiality is essential to ensuring our families are not exposed to censure or attack from the wider community. We will keep data safe and work within our Privacy Policy.
- Volunteers will be assigned in groups of two or more for each family. When visiting a family, volunteers will make the arrangement ahead of time, in agreement with the family. Volunteers will inform coworkers of when they plan to begin a visit and alert them when it has ended.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The RWinR NSP and Deputy Safeguarding Officer;
- The relevant SPA;
- NSPCC;

- The person making the allegation;
- Police;
- The RWinR Chair;
- The child's parent or legal guardian (if appropriate and safe to do so).

Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure). Hard copies will be in a locked cabinet and online information on a Google Doc only shared by the safeguarding staff. Consent must be obtained to share information with third parties, for example police statements or child protection investigations being passed on for the purpose of disciplinary proceedings.

These detailed records should be kept until RWinR is confident that the information is held accurately with the agency responsible for taking further action to safeguard the child, young person or adults at risk, i.e. partner agencies, social services or the police. A chronology of decisions made and actions taken can then be kept on file, once the detailed records are deleted or destroyed.

Volunteers must agree to hold personal information relating to their work at RWinR confidentially, in line with the RWinR Privacy Policy.

Confidentiality should not be promised to children in relation to safeguarding disclosures. When a disclosure is made there is a duty to report it, as this is in the best interest of the child. Children must know that any information they share will be taken seriously and will be held and dealt with safely by adults working for their well-being.

Responding to safeguarding concerns

It is not the responsibility of anyone volunteering for RWinR to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, we recognize it is our responsibility to act on any concerns and refer them to the Richmond SPA.

Any concerns will be clearly recorded. It is not the NSP's job to investigate any concern or issue raised with them. It is their role to record the information as they have been told and to refer this to the Richmond SPA.

The NSP's decision and the process to reach the decision will be recorded and kept in a securely locked filing cabinet or an encrypted electronic file. Records will be retained securely for a minimum of 5 years and then destroyed.

RWinR assures all volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Any allegation against an RWinR volunteer will be referred to the LADO via the Richmond SPA. We will fully cooperate with any investigation into abuse.

What to do if there are concerns

Volunteers may become concerned about a person in a number of ways:

- A child may tell (disclose) that s/he or someone else has been or is being abused.
- There may be concerns due to the person's behaviour or presentation.
- Concerns may be raised about the behaviour of an adult, who may be a volunteer, another professional, or a member of the public.
- A parent, carer, relative or member of the public might share their concerns about a child, young person or adults at risk.

In all cases the following procedures must be followed.

When a child, young person or young person at risk wants to confide in you:

- Stay calm and listen carefully to them.
- Show them that you take what they are saying seriously.
- Encourage them and do not interrupt whilst they are recalling events.
- Ask questions only to clarify your understanding of what you are being told. Do not investigate. Do not ask them to repeat their account.
- Do not promise to keep the information secret. Explain that you have to pass the information on to those who can help. Tell them what you are going to do next.
- Do not confront any alleged abuser. As soon as you can, write down what the young person has said, using the child's own words.

- Report to the NSP or to the Deputy as soon as you can. Prioritise reporting to them verbally immediately, and follow up as soon as possible by completing the RWinR Disclosure Form.
- Submit a RWinR Safeguarding Disclosure Form.

Reporting a young person's disclosure of abuse is not a betrayal of the young person's confidence. It is your duty and is also necessary to allow protective action to be taken in relation to the participant.

If you feel a young person may be going to tell you about abuse, but then stops or tells you something else, let them know that you are always ready to listen to them and/or remind them of the **Childline number 0800 1111**.

If the child, young person or adult at risk has communication difficulties or English is not their first language, pass this information on so that an appropriate interpreter can be identified.

Completing a RWinR Safeguarding Disclosure Form

To ensure your information is as helpful as possible a detailed record should be made, ideally at the time of the concern or observation. Depending on the circumstances, it might be preferable to make a verbal report to the NSP, which is followed-up by a written report.

Reports should be submitted by completing a RWinR Safeguarding Disclosure Form, which should be forwarded to the RWinR NSP as soon as possible. This form should not be shared with anyone other than the NSP or local LADO. RWinR will keep Safeguarding Disclosure Forms securely and the information will be confidential.

Date of authorisation of policy: 4 July 2022

Name

Position

Signed

Date

Date for review: 4 October 2023