

Adur Ukraine Support Association Safeguarding Policy

1 Introduction

Everybody has a responsibility for the safety of children, young people and adults at risk in accordance with relevant legislation.

Adur Ukraine Support Association (AUSA) is supporting Ukrainian people (predominantly women and their children, but also including older people and men exempt from military service) who have come to the UK as a result of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. We have both a moral and legal obligation to ensure proper procedures are in place for their safeguarding. They may be particularly vulnerable in a number of areas, over and above general vulnerabilities:

- Emotional trauma and vulnerability because of their direct and indirect war experiences
- Increased risk of abuse because of:
 - their refugee status
 - their fragile emotional state
 - their lack of / limited understanding of English language
 - living with people (host/sponsor families) that are not well known to them
 - being lone females
- Women and children may be subject to environmental factors they cannot control and or exit from (e.g. host family members aggressive with them or each other, inappropriate behaviour around women and children and nowhere else to go)

Whilst membership of the group is adults only, children may be present at events and activities so recognising signs of risk in children and taking appropriate action are included in our policy. Children may also have experienced or be experiencing traumas related to the Russian aggression in Ukraine and to being in a foreign country.

In addition, we will have members of the group and guests at events and activities from the local community. These may also include vulnerable adults and children and our safeguarding obligation includes those people too.

2 At risk definitions

- A child/young person is defined as anyone under 18
- A vulnerable adult is any person aged 18 or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

3 Types of abuse and harm

There are many types of abuse and harm we need to be mindful of, including:

- Physical
- Sexual

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- Financial
- Neglect
- Self-neglect
- Psychological
- Emotional
- Discriminatory
- Modern Slavery
- Domestic Violence
- Organisational
- The impairment of physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

4 Purpose of the policy

Adur Ukraine Support Association (AUSA) is committed to safeguarding practices that help ensure the safety of its members and any guests whilst taking part in our group activities and in the wider community. This policy helps everyone involved in our group:

- be aware of our legal responsibilities
- understand safeguarding risks
- know what to do if they have a concern about the wellbeing or welfare of any adult or child that comes into contact with our group
- ensure that concerns and actions are recorded so that this policy can be refined and training tailored over time

The policy will be available in both English and Ukrainian.

5 Legal duty

AUSA recognises that the local authority has the main legal duty to safeguard adults and children at risk, and we are committed to working with them.

6 Recognising safeguarding concerns

There are many signs and indicators that may suggest someone is experiencing abuse or neglect. AUSA will not ignore any of these signs if they are apparent.

An adult or child may confide (disclose) to any member of AUSA that they are experiencing abuse or harm or self-neglect, inside or outside the activities of the group. Or someone else may notice signs in a particular individual. The signs we will look out for include:

- Unexplained bruises or injuries
- The person no longer attending or enjoying AUSA's activities, or responding to contact from other members of the group

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- A change in confidence or behaviour of a person e.g. if they are withdrawn and quiet around a particular person or people, when usually they are outgoing and confident.
- A change in appearance of the person e.g. losing or gaining weight, deterioration or change in personal hygiene, dirty hair or nails.
- Someone else (e.g. a host or sponsor) always speaking for the person and not allowing them to make their own choices
- The person showing fear of, or not wanting to be around, a particular individual or group of people

7 Responding to concerns

If anyone in the group notices any signs of abuse or neglect in another person, they should bring these concerns to the designated Safeguarding Lead who will then take appropriate action.

All concerns raised will be documented in a risk register that will include details of actions taken.

If a child discloses to any adult in the group that they are being abused, the response should be as follows:

- Always make sure the child speaking up feels they are being listened to and supported
- Reassure the child they have done the right thing by telling you
- Emphasise that abuse is never their fault
- Take time, be patient, and let the child go at their own pace
- Don't promise to keep information confidential between you and them. Explain that you need to share the information with someone who will be able to help.
- Tell the designated Safeguarding Lead about the concerns (unless the Safeguarding Lead is implicated in causing the harm or perpetrating the abuse. In this situation, information should be shared with a trusted committee member and they will be responsible for taking further action instead of the Safeguarding Point of Contact)
- Write a clear statement of what you have been told, seen, or heard
- Do not talk to the alleged perpetrator about the child's disclosure, this could make it a lot worse for the child

7.1 Initial assessment

As soon as a concern is identified, the designated Safeguarding Point of Contact will make an initial assessment and, if possible speak to the person reporting the concern and gather as much information as possible.

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If the concern is being raised based on a direct disclosure from a child, the Safeguarding Point of Contact will not question the child or ask them to repeat any details. They may, however, tell the child that they have heard the concerns, reassure the child again that they have done the right thing in disclosing, and tell them what the next steps will be.

Key questions for the Safeguarding Point of Contact to consider:

- What type of concern has been reported? Different actions are required depending on what type of concern it is (see below)
- What action has already been taken?
- Is anyone else in the organisation affected by this situation (e.g. other volunteers or those you work with)? Are there any attitudes or emotions that you may have to be aware of?
- How might this concern affect what the organisation delivers in the short term?
- Who else might need to be informed?
- What other actions now need to be taken?

7.2 Immediate actions depending on what type of concern has been raised

(a) Emergency incidents: these are when there's a life-threatening situation where there's imminent danger and harm to a child.

- Immediately contact the emergency services if they haven't been called already.
- Make sure the current situation is safe.
- Establish how others are coping – do they need any immediate support?
- Inform the senior people in the group

(b) Protection and welfare concerns: these are when there are suspicions or disclosures that a child, or adults who you believe is unable to protect themselves, is at current risk of, or is experiencing, abuse or harm

- If the person is at immediate risk, call the police.

Children:

- If they are not in immediate danger, but there has been a disclosure from the child, you should make a referral to the local authority safeguarding team (West Sussex Children's Access Point, contact details in section 10) within 24 hours
- If the child is showing signs but there has not been a direct disclosure, you can consult with the NSPCC Helpline (contact details in section 10) and be guided by them on any further actions

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Adults:

- If they're not in immediate danger, you must contact the local authority safeguarding team (West Sussex Adult CarePoint Team, contact details in section 10) within 24 hours and make a referral.
- Be guided by the safeguarding team or police on any further actions required of you.

(c) Allegations concerning staff or volunteers: this is when someone has alleged that staff or volunteers from your organisation have harmed or abused a person.

- Contact the local authority safeguarding team as soon as possible within 24 hours.
- Be guided by them on any further actions required of you.

(d) Concerns about other organisations: This is a situation where the safeguarding concern is about another organisation, their staff, volunteers or the people they work with.

- As soon as possible within 24 hours contact the designated safeguarding lead of the organisation in question and pass on your concerns, if this has not already happened.
- In some circumstances you may decide to follow up with the organisation to confirm they have acted on the issue.
- If at any point you think the organisation has not acted and someone is at risk, you should contact the local authority safeguarding team yourself.

(e) Supporting those who share a concern with you: Your primary concern should be the best interests of the person who is at risk of harm. However, the person sharing this concern with you may also be distressed by the situation, even if they are reporting on behalf of someone else. Everyone can respond to worries about another differently. If someone has previously experienced trauma they can find it especially upsetting.

- Thank them for bringing this concern to your attention and that they have fulfilled their key responsibility
- Explain that you will now take responsibility in leading management of this concern and any contact with statutory agencies
- Highlight that there may be limited updates that you have or can give them on the situation; that does not mean that it was not important for them to share their concern
- Remind them of the importance of confidentiality and not sharing this information further
- Ensure they have your contact details in case they think of anything else they have not yet shared that they think may be relevant
- Discuss with them what additional support they may require. This may include supporting them to access additional support

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- Consider contacting them later to check in on how they are doing

8 Confidentiality, consent and information sharing

Timely information sharing is key to keeping people safe and responding appropriately to concerns about their welfare. In general, AUSA expects all members to maintain confidentiality and act in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

We will share information within the group (e.g. with other officers) in situations where this is necessary in order to deal effectively with safeguarding concerns or to provide continuity of support. We will share information with other organisations in order to keep a person safe.

Whenever confidential information is shared, we will follow the principles below. We will:

- Have a clear and legitimate purpose
- Keep clear records of why we chose to share the information
- Ensure we are not putting the person at risk by sharing information
- Be as factual as possible
- Seek consent. If the adult refuses consent, we may share information **only** if:
 - We think they are at serious risk of harm or abuse, including harming themselves;
 - Information indicates that a serious crime has been or is going to be committed;
 - We think the person lacks the mental capacity to decide for themselves and we believe it would be in the individual's best interests;
 - We are required by law

9 Reviewing policy and procedures

This policy and its procedures will be reviewed at least every 2 years or when there are significant changes to the law that impact the policy.

10 Key contacts

10.1 AUSA Designated Safeguarding Point of Contact

Name: Wendy Blann

Email: safeguarding@adurukrainesupport.org.uk

10.2 WSCC Ukraine support community hub

Support with:

- guest/host issues and concerns

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- financial support
- housing support
- school places
- travel information and free bus passes
- English lessons and language skills
- Opening bank accounts
- Work, benefits and getting a National Insurance number
- Healthcare
- Mental health support
- Translation and interpretation support
- General information and support

Phone: 0330 2227980 9am – 5pm every day including weekends and bank holidays

Email: ukrainesupport@westsussex.gov.uk

10.3 West Sussex Adult Care Point team

To report any safeguarding concerns relating to Adults

Phone: 01243 642121

Email: socialcare@wstsussex.gov.uk

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/adults/contact-us-for-adult-social-care-support/>

10.4 West Sussex Childrens Access Point team

To report any safeguarding concerns relating to children

Phone: 01403 229900

Email: wschildrenservices@wstsussex.gov.uk

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/children/contact-us-for-childrens-social-care-support/>

10.5 Sussex Police

Non-emergency, phone: 101

Emergency, phone: 999

10.6 National Domestic Violence Helpline

Freephone, 24 hours a day, for advice: 0808 2000 247

<http://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk>

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10.7 West Sussex Mind

Mental Health support for adults, young people (16-25), carer, older people and families
Monday to Friday, 10am until 4pm on 0300 303 5652
or email helppoint@westsussexmind.org

<http://www.westsussexmind.org>

10.8 Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Information and advice on a range of subjects including financial and housing

<https://www.advicewestsussex.org.uk/>

The Shoreham Centre

Pond Road

Shoreham-by-Sea

BN43 5WU

Tuesday – Thursday 10-4

Phone: 0808 278 7969

10.9 Translation/Interpretation support

These can be requested through the West Sussex Community Hub, but if there is urgent need, members of AUSA will try to assist. Please email info@adurukrainesupport.org.uk

10.10 Bereavement support

Cruse West Sussex – helpline 0808 808 1677
Samaritans – helpline 116 123

10.11 Pastoral support

For any religious or spiritual matters

Father Jonathan can be contacted on 07799 271913

<https://sites.google.com/view/ukraine-ukfaq/religion>

There is an Orthodox church in Lewes that can provide pastoral support:

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St Thomas a Becket's Church

Cliffe High Street, Lewes, BN7 2AW
Services every Sunday at 11.30am

Rector: Father Ian Wallis,

15 Barnett Road BRIGHTON BN1 7GJ, telephone: 01273 55 32 30, email:
ianoutwest@aol.com

Parish Warden: Mr Anthony Stunt,

email: silverinkwell@outlook.com

For Russian/Ukrainian speaking contacts:

Mrs Vitalina Fesyk, email: vitalinafesyk@gmail.com

<https://orthodoxsussex.blogspot.com/>

10.11 NSPCC Helpline

For adults to call for support or advice about child safeguarding concerns

0808 800 5000

help@nspcc.org.uk

10.12 Childline

For children to call for support: 0800 1111 , 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

11 Document Control

Updated: February 2026

Next review date: February 2027

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