

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1 Policy aims and objectives

- 1.1 The aim of the charity is to prevent sight loss and blindness by raising money to invest in world-class research into the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of any eye condition affecting children or adults.
- 1.2 While Sight Research UK's staff and trustees do not work routinely with children or vulnerable adults, this policy and associated guidelines aim to help us to protect such individuals in the course of our fundraising, supporter engagement activities, and grant making.
- 1.3 While Sight Research UK is itself a grant maker, the recipients of its grants are researchers working within universities or hospitals, which are required to have their own safeguarding and health and safety policies in place. Furthermore, Sight Research UK awards its grants subject to its own terms and conditions, which require the grant holder's host institutions to comply with *all applicable laws, regulations, government guidance, and policies*, including but not limited to research activities.

2 What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of people (especially children and vulnerable adults) and protect them from harm.

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to anyone working for us in any capacity, i.e. employed, charity trustees or other volunteers, or sessional.
- 3.2 Trustees, employees, volunteers and relevant sub-contractors are given a copy of this policy and must deal with any concerns reported to them by contacting the charity's Chief Executive.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 In this document, a child is any person aged under 18; an adult is someone aged 18 or over.
- 4.2 A vulnerable adult may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because they:
 - have a mental health problem
 - have a disability
 - are old or frail
 - have learning difficulties
 - have a sensory impairment

- have an illness

It should be noted that many of SRUK's supporters are visually impaired and/or elderly and as such, may be deemed as vulnerable in certain aspects of this policy (6. Safety) but not in others (7. Safeguarding and fundraising), which relates to adults who lack the capacity to make a decision.

5 Criminal Record Checks

- 5.1 As the charity's staff and volunteers do not work with, or come into regular contact with children or vulnerable adults, Disclosure and Barring Service checks (DBS checks) are not required.

6 Safety

- 6.1 The safety of our supporters, volunteers and staff is paramount and we are committed to providing a safe environment within which to work. Our health and safety policy is reviewed annually by the Trustees and made available to all staff and volunteers.
- 6.2 When planning in-person events at which vulnerable adults (those with a visual impairment, who are elderly or frail, or who have another disability) are likely to be present, due consideration is given to the age and ability of participants. Risk assessments are carried out and documented as part of the planning process for in-person events.
- 6.3 Staff and volunteers should not offer to transport a child or vulnerable adult anywhere (e.g. to and from an event) unless accompanied by a further person or as part of a formal, authorised arrangement.
- 6.4 On no account should any employee, worker or volunteer have any physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult unless this is to prevent accident or injury to themselves or anyone else (e.g. to prevent a fall), or in the case of medical assistance being needed (e.g. to administer first aid).
- 6.5 To protect both themselves and our business, trustees, staff and volunteers should avoid the following:
- being alone with children or vulnerable adults out of public view
 - any unnecessary physical contact
 - taking a child or vulnerable adult alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, taking a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet unless either (a) another adult is present or (b) another adult is aware (this may include a parent).
 - letting allegations made by anyone go unacknowledged, unresolved or not acted upon.

7 Safeguarding and Fundraising

- 7.1 Sight Research UK neither solicits nor accepts donations from anyone who we know or think may not be competent to make their own decisions. If a donation has already been made, and at the time of donating, the individual lacked capacity (and SRUK receives evidence of this), the donation will be returned.
- 7.2 We comply with the Fundraising Regulator's [Code of Fundraising Practice](#), including [fundraising that involves children](#).
- 7.3 Our fundraising material is accessible, clear and ethical, including not placing any undue pressure on individuals to donate.
- 7.4 We protect people's personal data in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as it applies in the UK, tailored by the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and our Board of Trustees reviews our [Data Protection and Privacy Notice](#) annually.
- 7.5 We obtain permission to display all personal stories and images on our website and social media accounts, including from parents when applicable.

8 Assessing and Managing Risk

- 8.1 The Trustees complete an annual assessment of major risks to the charity which includes the identification of risk and steps taken to mitigate them.
- 8.2 The Board of Trustees' People and Governance sub-committee has been established to ensure the charity's compliance with charity and HR legislation, to review all policies regularly to ensure that they are current and fit for purpose, and help to ensure familiarity and compliance with policies amongst SRUK staff and volunteers.

9 Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- 9.1 It is not an individual's responsibility to investigate abuse. However, everyone has a duty to act if there is a cause for concern and to report safeguarding concerns in accordance with the procedure set out in this policy.
- 9.2 If a crime is in progress, or an individual is in immediate danger, the person witnessing the crime or danger should call the police, as they would do in any other circumstances.
- 9.3 Members of the public who have concerns about safeguarding issues relating to SRUK's activities, or who suspect abuse, should contact a member of our team on 0117 325 775 , who will inform the Chief

Executive.

- 9.4 Staff or volunteers who witness or suspect abusive behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult, or who have any concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, or any other safeguarding concerns relating to the charity, should record the details and report this immediately to the Chief Executive, clarifying the grounds for suspicion. In the Chief Executive's absence, the Chair of Trustees must be informed.
- 9.5 The Chief Executive will make a record of all allegations or reported incidents and assess whether any allegation or concern warrants any further action. They will:
- record fully (within 24 hours) all relevant information about the incident or concern, including details of any comments or explanations given by the person who reported the concerns.
 - notify the Chairman of Trustees (within 24 hours) of any [reportable incidents](#) that must be reported to the Charity Commission and or the police. A list of reportable incidents is provided in Appendix A.
- 9.6 Any allegations of abuse made against anyone working for Sight Research UK will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with through our disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal.

10 Communicating this Policy

- 10.1 All employees, trustees and other volunteers will be made aware of this policy to ensure they understand their responsibilities and reporting procedures.
- 10.2 New staff, trustees, and volunteers will be made familiar with this policy during their induction.
- 10.3 A copy of this policy will be made available on the website.

11 Monitoring and Review

- 11.1 The Trustees will monitor and review this policy and related procedures on an annual basis, or at an earlier opportunity should the need arise.
- 11.2 The information gained via allegations or incidents reported to the Chief Executive, as well as feedback from relevant external bodies, will be reviewed by the Trustee Board's People and Governance Sub-Committee, which reports to the Board of Trustees. This information will form the basis for any necessary changes in policy or procedure.
- 11.3 Trustees are aware of and will comply the Charity Commission guidance on [safeguarding and protection people](#) and also the [10 actions trustee boards need to take](#) to ensure good safeguarding governance.
- 11.4 Employees' awareness of this policy will be monitored via the annual appraisal system.

12 Breach of this Policy

12.1 Failure to follow the guidelines in this policy is considered a serious offence and will be investigated thoroughly and dealt with through our disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal (for employees) and termination of any agreement (for volunteers).

13 Related Policies and Documents

- Equal opportunity and diversity policy
- Health and safety policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Notice

The above list is not exhaustive.

14 Policy Owner

This policy is owned and maintained by the Chief Executive, to whom any queries or comments about this policy should be addressed.

15 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Policy	Safeguarding Policy
Last updated	January 2023
Last reviewed	January 2023
Date for next review	January 2024