



THH03

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

AND PROCEDURES

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A list of the holders of the posts mentioned in this document and their contact numbers is provided in THH08 TORCH Volunteer Handbook.

1.0 Introduction

TORCH believes that the welfare of vulnerable individuals is of paramount importance, taking all concerns about risk seriously and acting without judgement. We believe that prevention and protection of the most vulnerable is important and that ignoring or tolerating abuse is not an option. TORCH makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

TORCH comes into contact with vulnerable individuals through a variety of its activities, including providing help with shopping, a prescription pickup service, as well as a telephone chat support service.

The type of contact with a vulnerable individual will primarily be a one-to-one contact with an individual and their families.

This policy seeks to ensure that TORCH undertakes its responsibilities with regard to the protection of those who are vulnerable and will respond to concerns appropriately. This policy establishes a framework to volunteers in their practice and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

2.0 Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Data Protection Act 1998.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Care Standards Act 2000.
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- The Police Act 1997.
- Mental Health Act 1983.
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010.
- The Children Act 1989.
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002.
- The Children Act 2004.
- The Care Act 2014.
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017.

3.0 Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of vulnerable individuals wherever possible.

Designated Safeguarding Officer is the person responsible for disclosing any safeguarding concerns to other relevant agencies, at the appropriate point.

Protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation, and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm.

Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender, or culture.

It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Sexual abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Bullying.
- Neglect.
- Financial (or material) abuse.

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who:

- Is a substance misuser.
- Is homeless.
- Has a learning disability.
- Has a mental illness including dementia.
- Is elderly and frail.
- Has a physical or sensory disability.
- Has a severe physical illness.

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

Child Protection is part of safeguarding and is defined as the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.

4.0 Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to be familiar with and to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all staff and volunteers to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

However, these people have key areas of responsibility:

The Senior Management Team (SMT) is ultimately responsible for safeguarding governance and practice throughout the organisation. There is one member of the SMT appointed to have a lead role in relation to Safeguarding, the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will: -

- carry out monitoring, review and audits of safeguarding practice.
- Ensure that the safeguarding guidelines are discussed with and clearly understood by Lead Coordinator/Coordinators to ensure that the policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed.
- Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to ensure the policy can be effectively implemented and that any concerns are taken forward in an appropriate manner.

The Lead Coordinator/Coordinators responsibilities are to ensure that TORCH's safeguarding guidelines

are implemented effectively and that any concerns or issues are responded to and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer in an appropriate manner.

5.0 Implementation Stages

The scope of this policy is broad ranging and in practice it will be supplemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include:

- THH02 General Data Protection Policy.
- THH04 Health and Safety Policy
- THH05 Lone working Policy
- THH11 Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
- THH12 Complaints Policy and Procedures
- THH14 Transportation Policy and Procedures
- Staff & volunteer induction.
- Staff & volunteer training.

6.0 Safe Recruitment

TORCH ensures safe recruitment through the completion of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) process and ensuring adequate and relevant references are taken up. The split of responsibilities between TORCH and the Churches from whom the volunteers may come from is summarised in Table 1 below.

Step	Action	Applicant/ Volunteer	Church Pastor	Church Designated Safeguarding Officer	TORCH Designated Safeguarding Officer	TORCH Lead Coordinator
1	Define Role Description				√	√
2	Apply for Role via Google Forms Application form	√				
3	Confirm applicant is a church "member" and suitable for the role		√			
4	Apply for new full DBS via Church (assisted by Church Safeguarding Recruiter)	√				
5	Undertake ID Check			√		
6	Verify Application			√		
7	Send copy of Certificate to TORCH DSO and register for DBS Update Service	√				
8	Log Certificate			√	√	
9	Examine Certificate				√	
10	Resolve issues arising from Certificate				√	
11	Issue THH03 Safeguarding Policy and Procedures plus THH08 Volunteer Handbook to Volunteer to read				√	
12	Sign acknowledgement to confirm having read THH03 and THH08	√				
13	Ensure all Volunteers have access to suitable training				√	
14	Attend Safeguarding Training when required to do so from time to time	√				
15	Send "Welcome to Torch" email confirming approval to Volunteer					√
16	Issue TORCH Identification Pass and Lanyard			√		
17	Undertake DBS update checks every 3 years				√	
18	Maintain TORCH records				√	

Table 1: Safeguarding Recruitment and Responsibility Matrix

The level of DBS required is Enhanced Adults and Children, both with barring check. This is because the role may involve regulated activities with unsupervised one-to-one contact for both adults and children.

Subscription to the update service for all staff and volunteers is encouraged. Update Service checks are done on a rolling annual basis. If not subscribed further DBS will be checked every three years.

7.0 Communications, Training and Support for Staff

TORCH commits resources for induction, training of staff and volunteers, effective communications, and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding.

Induction will include:

- Discussion of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures (and confirmation of understanding).
- Discussion of other relevant policies.
- Ensuring familiarity with reporting processes and key roles (and who acts in their absence).

All staff and volunteers who, through their role may come into contact with vulnerable people, will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level through an external provider. Additionally, we recognise that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be stressful for staff concerned, and will offer appropriate internal support, and where necessary, seek external advice and support. Staff should familiarise themselves with the NSPCC documentation *Signs, Symptoms and Effects of Abuse*.

8.0 Professional Boundaries

Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a volunteer and a service user. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.

TORCH expects staff to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the organisation. More guidance on this matter are provided in the THH08 Volunteer Handbook.

If the professional boundaries and/or policies are breached this could result in disciplinary procedures or enactment of the allegation management procedures.

9.0 Reporting

For guidance on what constitutes 'abuse' in terms of safeguarding concerns please refer to the NSPCC documentation *Signs, Symptoms and Effects of Abuse*, (<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse>)

The process outlined below details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at TORCH:

Stage 1: Staff and volunteers communicate concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer

Stage 2: If required, external advice will be sought beyond this point. It is the sole responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to disclose any safeguarding concerns to other relevant agencies, at the appropriate point.

10.0 Allegations Management

TORCH recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff and volunteers within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation. The step process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

Stage 1: Any member of staff or volunteer working on behalf of TORCH is required to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Stage 2: If required, external advice will be sought beyond this point. It is the sole responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to disclose any safeguarding concerns to other relevant agencies, at the appropriate point.

11.0 Monitoring

TORCH will monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:

- Safe recruitment practices.
- DBS checks undertaken.
- References applied for new staff or volunteers.
- Records made and kept of supervision sessions.
- Training.
- Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned.
- Checking that policies are up-to-date and relevant.
- Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place.
- Ensuring the presence of designated Coordinators and a member of the SMT responsible for Safeguarding is in post.

12.0 Managing Information

Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with THH02 TORCH General Data Protection Policy.

All staff and volunteers must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard vulnerable individuals. The public interest in safeguarding this group may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a 'need to know basis only', as judged by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise clients, their families or carers that they will keep secrets.

13.0 Communicating the Policy and Procedures

TORCH will make staff and volunteers aware of this policy during their initial induction. This is a mandatory document which must be adhered to.

Non-compliance with this policy is a disciplinary matter and will be dealt with via the line management of the organisation.



Please confirm you have received and read THH03 TORCH Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document by signing and completing the details below and send a scan or photograph of this completed page to the Lead Coordinator at TORCH.

I understand that if I have any concerns with regards to Safeguarding, I am to contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is John Davies, who can be contacted on 07780 990588.

I confirm that I have been made fully aware of and understand the contents of THH03 TORCH Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Signature:

Name:

Date: