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Safeguarding Policy

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Owner: Joe Read

Trustee owner: Gary Christian

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Our Lead Safeguarding Officer is	Joe Read
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Our Lead Safeguarding Trustee is:	Gary Christian
Contact number:	garychristianswfa@gmail.com

1. Introduction

This safeguarding policy for Solihull Wheels for All is based on the information provided from Wheels for All. It is designed to protect both children and vulnerable adults involved in Solihull Wheels for All activities.

The Charity works directly with Vulnerable and Young People to deliver cycling activities, normally in partnership with their families or carers present. Many of the people the Charity works with are vulnerable and may be experiencing complex and significant challenges in their lives including disabilities, poor mental health, recovery from injury or loss of confidence in cycling. At all times the Charity will endeavour to support a Vulnerable or Young Person to participate in an activity, however the Charity recognises that there are occasions where it does not have the resource, capability or necessary competency to safely support a Vulnerable or Young Person. Where this is the case, this will be appropriately communicated to the Vulnerable, Young Person and those involved in or responsible for their care.

2. Policy Statement

Solihull Wheels for All is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants, both children and adults, involved in our cycling activities.

We aim to create an environment free from abuse and neglect, where everyone can participate and enjoy cycling, regardless of their age, disability, gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation.

We recognise that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to live free from abuse and neglect

3. Duty of Care

All staff, volunteers, and trustees of Solihull Wheels for All have a duty of care to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. This duty of care requires taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of participants in our activities.

This includes being aware of and adhering to our Code of Conduct.

4. Definitions

- **Adult at Risk:** An adult over 18 who has care and support needs, is at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect, and is unable to protect themselves.
- **Child:** Anyone under the age of 18.
- **Abuse:** A violation of an individual's human and civil rights, including acts of commission or omission, that can cause significant harm. This can include

physical, sexual, emotional, financial, discriminatory, and organisational abuse, neglect, domestic violence, modern slavery and self-neglect.

- **Neglect:** Failure to meet basic needs, including medical, emotional, and physical care, as well as withholding necessities.
- **Poor Practice:** Behaviour that ignores codes of conduct, infringes on individual rights, or fails to meet expected standards of care
- **Best Practice:** Behaviours and actions that create a safe, enjoyable, and inclusive environment.

5. Principles of Safeguarding

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and everyone has a role in ensuring that the Charity provides a safe environment for Vulnerable and Young People. We recognise our duty to promote and protect the safety and welfare of Vulnerable and Young People and we recognise that working in partnership with other organisations, Vulnerable and Young People and their parents and carers is essential to this.
- The welfare of children is paramount.
- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from abuse.
- We will promote the rights, wishes, and feelings of young people
- We will provide staff and volunteers with advice, guidance, and support regarding safeguarding.

6. Recognising Abuse

- Be aware of the indicators of abuse, including physical injuries, changes in behaviour, and neglect.
- Understand that abuse is not always easy to identify and can be a combination of signs over time.
- It is not your responsibility to decide whether someone is being abused, but it is your responsibility to report concerns.

7. Responding to Concerns

If a child or adult discloses abuse:

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing by speaking out
- Do not promise to keep secrets
- Keep questions to a minimum and do not probe for more information

If you suspect abuse or poor practice:

- Record your concerns using the Solihull Wheels for All Safeguarding Incident Report Form as soon as possible (see Appendix C)

- Separate factual information from opinions in your report
- Pass the report to the Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Officer within 24 hours, unless they are implicated, in which case pass to the Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Trustee
- If the adult does not consent to sharing information, contact the Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Officer for advice.

When reporting a concern about an adult:

- Obtain consent from the adult before reporting concerns, unless they lack capacity, there is a public duty to intervene, or not acting would put them at further risk
- Assume an adult has capacity unless proven otherwise
- Respect the decision of the adult

When reporting a concern about a child, you must do so even if the information relates to a setting other than Solihull Wheels for All activities. You do not need to seek consent from the child

If you believe a serious crime has been committed, or if someone is at immediate risk of significant harm, contact the police immediately. Also, if the adult or child requires immediate medical attention, call an ambulance

Contact your Local Authority Safeguarding Adults or Children's Team if needed

www.safeguardingsolihull.org.uk:

Adults 0121 704 8007 or email ccadults@solihull.gov.uk;

Children call the MASH Team to speak to the Duty Social Worker: 0121 788 4300 option 2 (Monday to Thursday 8:45am - 5:20pm, Friday 8:45am - 4.30pm), or 0121 605 6060 (Evenings, weekends or bank holidays)

In all cases, contact the Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Officer (or if this individual is implicated, then the Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Trustee), to advise them of your concern and to whom you have reported it.

An example flowchart is in Appendix D for further guidance.

8. The Mental Capacity Act 2005

Understand the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005

- A person must be assumed to have capacity unless it is established that they lack capacity
- All practical steps to help a person make their own decision should be taken
- A person should not be treated as unable to make a decision merely because it is unwise

- Any action taken on behalf of someone who lacks capacity must be in their best interests

9. Prevention

Safe Recruitment: All staff and volunteers will be subject to appropriate checks, including application forms, reference checks, and DBS checks where eligible

Training: All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training appropriate to their role

Code of Conduct: All staff, volunteers, and participants should operate within an appropriate volunteer code of conduct. This is available on the shared drive as a separate document.

10. Lead Safeguarding Officer (LSO)

The LSO has a critical role in ensuring the welfare of both children and vulnerable adults at Solihull Wheels for All. The LSO is the primary contact for any safeguarding concerns.

Key responsibilities of the Lead Safeguarding Officer include:

- Being the lead for receiving and acting upon safeguarding concerns. This includes concerns about the unacceptable behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer towards a child or vulnerable adult at a Solihull Wheels for All event
- Liaising with the DBS recruitment process
- Co-ordinating the dissemination of relevant safeguarding policies, procedures, and resources
- Supporting development of volunteers and/or staff in their roles.
- Being the focal point and key contact for enquiries from complainants, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), and/or the Police
- The LSO is also responsible for assessing whether an immediate statutory services referral is required
- The LSO is the person to whom concerns should be reported. They will complete the incident referral form.

11. Useful Contacts

- **Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Officer:** Joe Read
- **Solihull Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Trustee:** Gary Christian
- **Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Officer:** Chris Watts 07971 476520
chris.watts@wheelsforall.org.uk
- **Wheels for All Lead Safeguarding Trustee:** Alison Moorhouse 07748 763167
alison.moorhouse@wheelsforall.org.uk
- **Police:** 999

- **NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000
- **Local Adults Safeguarding Team:** www.safeguardingsolihull.org.uk:
 - **Adults** 0121 704 8007 or email ccadults@solihull.gov.uk;
 - **Children** call the MASH Team to speak to the Duty Social Worker:0121 788 4300 option 2 (Monday to Thursday 8:45am - 5:20pm, Friday 8:45am - 4.30pm), or 0121 605 6060 (Evenings, weekends or bank holidays)

12. Document Control

This policy will be reviewed annually, or when there are changes to regulation or best practices

13. Appendices

- Appendix A: Definition of abuse or neglect
- Appendix B: Indicators of abuse
- Appendix C: Safeguarding incident reporting form
- Appendix D: Safeguarding incident (Adult) ‘what to do’ flowchart

14. Revision History

Version	Date	Changed by	Comments
0.1	11/02/2025	D Fountain	Initial draft
1.0	12/02/2025	G Christian	Circulated and agreed
2.0	13/03/2025	J Read	Appendix D added, role holders clarified
3.0	03/01/2026	G Christian	Document reformatted, section numbers updated S1: Introduction modified S5: Principles of safeguarding modified S9: ‘volunteer’ added before ‘code of conduct’. Clarification that it is a separate document.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

It's generally acknowledged that there are six main types of abuse in relation to children - Physical, Sexual, Emotional, Neglect, Bullying and Child Sexual Exploitation.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is just what the term implies - hurting or injuring a child e.g. by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting them. In cycling this might result if the nature or intensity of activity is inappropriate for the capacity of the child. Bullying is likely to come into this category - see below.

Sexual Abuse

Where young people are used by adults to meet their own sexual needs. It could range from sexually suggestive comments to full intercourse and includes the use of pornographic material.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse occurs when a child is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided or ridiculed e.g. racial or sexual remarks. It can also occur if a child is over protected. Abuse can occur where a parent, carer or leader has unrealistic expectations over what a child can achieve.

Neglect

Failing to meet children's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing, and medical attention or constantly leaving them alone. It could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm or injury.

Bullying

The bully in cycling can be an adult - the parent/carer who pushes too hard, the forceful leader who encourages inappropriate risk taking or older cyclists who attempt to assert unacceptable behaviour on younger cyclists to make them unwelcome or prevent them using equipment. Bullying can also occur between young people.

Child Sexual Exploitation

This is a subset of sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity

(a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or

(b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Psychological abuse

Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse,

cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse

Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking; forced labour and domestic servitude.

Discriminatory abuse

Including harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse (previously known as institutional abuse)

Neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment.

Neglect and acts of omission

Including, ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self - neglect

This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Appendix B - Indicators of Abuse

These are **not confirmation of abuse** but rather signs that should raise concern. It is stressed that it is not your responsibility to decide whether someone is being abused, but it is your responsibility to **pass information on to the appropriate person**.

Indicators of abuse can include changes in behaviour, physical signs and changes in living conditions. It is also noted that some people with disabilities may use alternative forms of communication, which should be considered to understand what is happening to them.

Here are some specific indicators:

Changes in Behaviour

- Low self-esteem, passivity, becoming withdrawn or quiet.
- Isolating themselves from a group and seeming unable to make friends.
- Fearfulness or defensiveness
- Becoming aggressive or verbally violent
- Significant changes in sexual behaviour or attitude

- Changes in appetite, such as excessive weight loss or gain for no obvious reason
- Appearing not to trust adults.

Physical injuries

- Consistent untreated injuries or health issues
- Marks on the body, including slap marks, finger marks, and bruising
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Multiple fractures
- Injuries for which the explanation does not fit
- Becoming increasingly neglected in appearance
- Weight loss or gain for no apparent reason.

Changes in living conditions

- Sudden inability to pay bills or maintain lifestyle, including lack of heating, clothing, or food
- Physical appearance becoming unkempt
- Unusual interest shown by family members or others in the person's assets
- Lack of identification documents.
- Having little or no personal finances.

Other indicators for children

- A child says they are being abused, or someone else says they believe abuse is occurring.
- A child shows inappropriate sexual awareness for their age or behaves in a sexually explicit way
- A child may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening to them.

It's important to remember that these are **only indicators and not confirmation** of abuse, and abuse is not always easy to identify, often presenting as a combination of signs or symptoms forming a pattern over time.

Appendix C –Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

Your name:
Name of organisation:
Your Role:
Contact information (you): Address: Postcode: Email Address: Telephone Number:
Adult/Child's name:
Adult/Child's D.O.B:
Adult/Child's ethnic origin:
Does the Adult/child have a disability:
Adult/Child's Gender: Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Parent's / Carer's name:
Contact information (parent/carer): Address: Postcode: Email Address: Telephone Number:
Have parent's / carer's been notified of the incident? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If YES please provide details of what was said/ actions agreed:
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else: <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else
If responding to concerns raised by someone else: Please provide further information below
Date and times of incident:
Details of the incident or concerns: Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay.

Adult/Child's account of the incident:
Details of any witnesses to the incident Name of Witness: Address: Postcode: Telephone Number: Email address:
Details of person(s) involved in the incident/alleged incident: Name: Address: Postcode: Telephone Number: Email Address:
Your Name: Signature: Date:

Appendix D –Safeguarding Incident (Adult) ‘what to do flowchart’

