

RG spaces

Safeguarding and adult protection policy, code of practice and procedures

Reviewed February 2017 with minor amendments March 2017 next review due June 2018

Background

RG spaces is a small charity, currently with no premises or staff of its own. Normally our work is done in partnership with other organisations. Our contacts with the public occur in public spaces or on others' premises and possibly under the supervision of another organisation.

We are highly unlikely to know whether an adult attending one of our events or taking part in an activity is classified (or classifiable) as vulnerable. We therefore have to adopt a policy based on assessment of risk – bearing in mind both the rights of the individual to have their personal information maintained confidentially if they wish and the rights of others not to be harmed or threatened.

Policy statement

The people covered by the policy include those contracted to do work for the Charity and those standing in a voluntary capacity, including trustees. This policy is included in the induction pack for trustees.

It is RG spaces' policy that

1. It does not engage in regulated activity with service users.
2. In the case of an emergency where physical harm seems likely
 - the police will be contacted

In a non-emergency, concerns about the welfare of an adult will only be passed to a relevant authority if that adult gives permission and there is no indication of a criminal offence.

- where the concern is raised by the person's attendance at an activity where the lead is another organisation (e.g. an activity in a museum) the concern will be passed on using that organisation's procedures if possible
- where the concern is raised by the adult's attendance at an activity for which RG Spaces is the lead organiser, or it is not possible to use the lead organisation's procedures, the relevant authority will be the person's local authority, or if this is not known or is in doubt, Reading Borough Council Adult Services.
- as a small voluntary organisation, RG spaces cannot pretend to have the expertise required to know whether a concern merits consideration by the authorities or not. In the case where it is unsure which is the relevant authority, but the person is exhibiting significant worrying behaviour, the police will be contacted.

3. This policy will be openly published.
4. Anybody who encounters protection concerns in the context of their work on behalf of RG spaces will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.

How concerns may be raised

People could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, for example:

1. the conduct of a member of RG spaces or someone volunteering or contracting for RG spaces
2. someone “disclosing” abuse
3. bruising or evidence of physical hurt
4. unusual behaviour.

Procedure for reporting concerns

In an emergency (physical harm or you feel there is a risk of physical harm), dial 999 and ask for the Police.

Otherwise:

- If you are in a situation where another organisation has the lead responsibility for the activity you are engaged in, contact them and use their procedures.
- If this is not possible in practice, or if the activity is one where RG Spaces is the lead, inform the RG Spaces Designated Safety Protection officer (DSP) or their Deputy as soon as possible. Phone 0118 9268994 or if these do not respond, use the contact form on <http://rgspaces.org.uk>

RG spaces tends not to have long-term persistent contact with the same individuals. It is possible therefore that you will not know that someone you are with is potentially classifiable as a vulnerable adult. If you have any concerns about the safety of the individual or others you should report them, leaving it to professionals in this specialist field to decide on further action.

Definitions of abuse

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm. It may be the result of a deliberate act, but could also be caused through the omission or failure to act to protect.

2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill-treatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on emotional development.

3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of, or consent to, what is happening.

4. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet someone's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health. It may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or failing to ensure that the person gets appropriate medical care or treatment.

Responding appropriately to someone making an allegation of abuse

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said.
3. Allow the person to continue at her/his own pace.
4. Ask questions for clarification only, and avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
5. Ask the person whether they want the information to be disclosed to people who may be able to help.
6. If the answer is 'yes', as soon as possible record in writing what was communicated, using the person's own words. Note the date, time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
7. Forward the information through the relevant channel (see above).
8. Maintain the confidentiality of the information as far as practical - do not tell anyone who does not need to know but do not promise confidentiality as you may need to disclose the details if there is a risk of a criminal offence being committed.
9. It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the relevant specialist agencies.