

Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse - Safeguarding People Policy

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Section 1: Details of the organisation

Name of Organisation: Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse (formerly Replenished Life CIO)

Address: 24 Nun Street, St David's Haverfordwest. Pembrokeshire. SA62 6NT Tel No:

07709655836

General Email address: inbox@replenished.life

Designated Safeguarding Officer Name: Simon Plant

Designated Safeguarding Officer Contact Telephone / Email: 07709 655 836

inbox@replenished.life Charity Number: 1195846

Regulators: Charity Commission for England and Wales

Insurance Company: Ansvar

What The Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse Does

The charitable objectives of the Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse are:

- 1. To protect and preserve the physical and mental health and relieve the needs of people who have suffered abuse and trauma, including spiritual abuse, within a religious context, through the provision of support and practical advice.*

- 2. To advance the education of the public on the subject of abuse, trauma and spiritual abuse within religious contexts, and to promote research for the public benefit in all aspects of that subject and to disseminate the useful results.*

For the purpose of these objects 'spiritual abuse' is a form of emotional and psychological abuse characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious context

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to all trustees, staff and volunteers.

All beneficiaries and where applicable parents or carers will be informed of the policy and procedures for Safeguarding and Complaints upon their first contact with the Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse and will then subsequently be reminded at regular intervals.

Where safeguarding issues arise or cause for complaint arise the beneficiary or their parent/carer as appropriate will be given a copy of the relevant policy or procedure.

All staff, volunteers and trustees will also be given a copy of the whistleblowing policy upon induction and will be reminded annually of the whistleblowing policy.

Where staff raise issues that fall under the whistleblowing policy they will be given a copy of the policy at this time.

Our commitment

As the Board of Trustees we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status".

We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child."

As a Board of Trustees we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by thirtyone:eight.

The Board of Trustees undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.

The Board of Trustees agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

Section 2: Prevention

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard our trustees, staff, volunteers and beneficiaries of our services, we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or

punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

Safer recruitment

The Board of Trustees will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post (or role profile for volunteers)
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Safeguarding training

The Board of Trustees is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all trustees, staff and volunteers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The Board of Trustees will also ensure that adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Management of Workers and Volunteers – Codes of Conduct

As a Board of Trustees we are committed to supporting all workers and volunteers, and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children adults with care and support needs.

Management of Online Forums

As a Board of Trustees we are committed to ensuring that the online forums, whatever their focus, are safe spaces for all. There are clear arrangements for moderation, review and action. All members of the forum are provided with a copy of the code of conduct which outlines the expected behaviour and conduct within the online forums. This document also outlines the arrangements for reporting, moderation and review along with the options for action to be taken. Where there are safeguarding concerns reported or identified this policy will be followed.

Section 3: Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable staff and volunteers to run services safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for staff and volunteers we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation using our premises, as part of the letting agreement will have their own policy that meets thirtyone:eight's safeguarding standards.

We believe good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Section 4: Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or staff member carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

Documenting a concern

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Simon Plant (hereafter the Designated Safeguarding Officer)

Tel: 07709655836

Email: simon.plant@actiononspiritualabuse.org.uk

The above is nominated by the Board of Trustees to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer, then the report should be made to:

Name: Ruth Appleton (hereafter the Deputy)

Tel: 07833747682

Email: ruth.appleton@actiononspiritualabuse.org.uk

If the suspicions implicate the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

Chair of Trustees: Lisa Oakley (lisa.oakley@actiononspiritualabuse.org.uk)

Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern:

- Chair or trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18. The charity does not work with persons under 18 years of age.

Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A copy of the Safeguard Reporting Form should be filled out and kept in a secure place.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.

The Board of Trustees will support the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Board of Trustees hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Designated Safeguarding Officer(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Board of Trustees demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer/deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If the charity hears of a child who has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Officer/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team directly. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014/ Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

If there is a concern regarding spiritual abuse, Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

- Identify support services for the victim i.e. counselling or other pastoral support
- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

The Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse does not provide any services to children or young people under the age of 18. It is therefore highly unlikely that the Charity would need to handle allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people. If this ever is the case the following guidance will be followed.

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff)

whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act/Social Services and Wellbeing Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide, not the organisation.

Section 5: Supporting others

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Board of Trustees is committed to offering support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the organisation. This includes working with statutory agencies as appropriate,.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

The Charity for Action on Spiritual Abuse does not provide any services where public gather and is not directly responsible for anyone attending any service. It is therefore highly unlikely that the Charity would need to manage offenders or those that may pose a risk. If this ever is the case the following guidance will be followed.

When someone in contact with the organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; the individual concerned will still be welcome to access our services. In its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, the Board of Trustees may set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.

Adoption of the policy

This policy was agreed by the Board of Trustees and will be reviewed annually.

Signed by: *Simon Plant*
Simon Plant (Dec 9, 2024 11:43 GMT)

Name: Simon Plant
Position: Designated Safeguarding Officer
Date: Dec 9, 2024

Signed by: *L R Oakley*
L R Oakley (Dec 11, 2024 08:53 GMT)

Position: Lisa Oakley
Position: Chair of Trustees
Date: Dec 11, 2024

A copy of this policy is also lodged with: the Charity Commission