

Policy | Safeguarding

Youth Resource Services (referred to as The Rendezvous) works to:

- Safeguard the welfare of the children and children and young people we work with by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm and radicalisation.
- Support the creation of an environment where young people are listened to and are encouraged to talk about themselves, their lives, and any concerns they may have.

The Rendezvous will seek to safeguard young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made including social media involvement and any changes in circumstances, such as resignations, to be followed up.
- Providing appropriate safeguarding induction and training for staff, volunteers and trustees with annual refresher courses including social media awareness and safe use of online communication when working with young people. Prevent and Channel training as appropriate to ensure awareness of the risks of radicalisation.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with young people, parents, staff and volunteers including awareness of safe use of on line apps and social media at home.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents and young people appropriately.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and open communication.

The Rendezvous recognises that young people may suffer abuse in different ways including when using on line services. Staff and volunteers will be on guard to spot the signs and symptoms of abuse:

Definitions and symptoms of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse**

Deliberate use of force causing injury or bodily harm.

Includes hitting, slapping, pushing, or any form of physical harm.

Symptoms: Unexplained injuries or bruising. Frequent injuries or injuries inconsistent with the explanation. Fearful behaviour, particularly around specific individuals.

- **Emotional/Psychological Abuse**

Persistent emotional ill-treatment causing severe effects on mental health.

Includes humiliation, intimidation, isolation, and threats.

Symptoms: Changes in behaviour, such as withdrawal or aggression, low self-esteem and self-worth, signs of anxiety or depression.

- **Sexual Abuse**

Non-consensual sexual activity or exploitation.

Involves any form of unwanted sexual contact or activity.

Symptoms: difficulty walking or sitting, inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour, sudden reluctance to be alone with a specific person.

- **Neglect**

Failure to provide necessary care, leading to physical or emotional harm.

May include neglect of basic needs, medical care, or supervision.

Symptoms: poor personal hygiene, malnutrition or dehydration, inadequate clothing or living conditions,

- **Financial Abuse**

Unauthorized use of someone's finances or property.

Examples include theft, fraud, or coercing someone to give away money.

Symptoms: sudden, unexplained changes in financial situation.

- **Discriminatory Abuse**

Treating someone unfairly based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or disability.

Can manifest through derogatory language, exclusion, or unequal treatment.

Symptoms: changes in behaviour, especially around specific individuals or groups, verbal abuse or derogatory language related to personal characteristics, Signs of exclusion or isolation.

- **Domestic Violence**

Any pattern of controlling or coercive behaviour within a domestic relationship.

Encompasses physical, emotional, sexual, financial, or psychological abuse.

Symptoms: frequent injuries or unexplained absences, anxiety or fear around a particular person, attempts to hide or downplay injuries.

Responding to suspicions or allegations of abuse

Staff, trustees and volunteers will be on guard to spot the signs and symptoms of abuse and to respond to allegations made whether in the centre or whilst working offsite.

Following any low-risk disclosure or initial concern

- Staff/volunteers will offer support and guidance to the young person and ensure their current safety.
- Staff/volunteers will record incidents and make the Designated Safeguarding Leads aware of any potential for concern.

Following any disclosure or concern for a young person or vulnerable adult in immediate danger staff or volunteers will immediately contact:

- The designated safeguarding lead at the Rendezvous (Jemma Turner) or Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Grace Barnett) with safeguarding concerns. In the event of the designated safeguarding officers being unavailable staff or volunteers should contact the most senior member of staff on the premises or the trustee with Safeguarding responsibility, Chris Cooper (tel 07796334840 or email chris.cooper@therendezvous.org.uk)
- Or contact the police

The designated safeguarding leads will take responsibility for managing the disclosure process and will either contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CHADS) for advice if required

CHADS – 01305 228558 – an out of hours services is available

or contact The Local Authority Channel Referral and follow the Intervention Process

Dorset - 01305 228558 / <https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/>

Somerset – 0300 1232224 / <http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/somerset/index.html>

999 - emergency services for an immediate response if appropriate.

Response to allegations made during work or in another formal setting (eg school, club):

- The staff member, volunteer or other Rendezvous representative will follow the standard safeguarding protocols but will refer to the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead – eg secondary school DSL who will then manage the process for disclosure. The staff member or volunteer should notify the Rendezvous DSL that a referral has been made although details should not be disclosed.

The appropriate County's external authority has a responsibility to:

- Ensure a qualified social worker assesses the referral and a decision should be made about action to be taken (or not) by the relevant line manager within the time scale of one working day

Outcomes:

Whatever the outcome of a referral, if the referrer (ie The Rendezvous designated safeguarding lead) disagrees with the decisions and the difference of opinion with another agency cannot be resolved, the Designated Safeguarding Lead may raise the matter, following the guidance laid out in the appropriate escalation policy:

- Dorset - Escalation process - <https://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com> – search Escalation
- Somerset – Resolving professional differences <https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/working-with-children/local-protocols-guidance/>

Radicalisation & Extremism:

With regards to any young person at risk of being radicalised or extremism the designated safeguarding leads should contact:

For advice: the DSL should contact the national police; Prevent advice line **0800 011 3764** (9:00am – 5:00pm). Call 999 for emergency services for an immediate response if appropriate

Allegations made against staff, volunteers or other charity representatives:

With regards to allegations made against a member of staff, volunteer or other representative of the charity the designated safeguarding leads will:

- Contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) within one working day of an allegation being made and prior to any further investigation taking place (Dorset – 01305 221122 / Somerset - 0300 123 2224); Note: The LADO's role is to provide advice and guidance to organisations dealing with allegations, to liaise with the police and other agencies, and to monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.
- Follow the procedural guidelines according to:
Dorset - <http://pandorsetscb.proceduresonline.com/> - search **Allegations against staff**
Somerset - <https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/working-with-children/allegations-management/>
- Be in contact with other relevant professional body as and when appropriate – eg British Association for Counsellors and Psychotherapists (Note: the BACP do not have any jurisdiction to consider criminal or civil law matters, or any matters which are not related to a therapeutically based service provided by a BACP member and do not accept any complaints for which legal action is in process or proposed. <https://www.bacp.co.uk/about-us/protecting-the-public/professional-conduct/article-126/> BACP Article 12.6 is reserved for issues such as criminal convictions or where disciplinary action has been taken by a member's employer.)

The Rendezvous will

- maintain records and respect confidentiality. The DSLs or centre manager will inform the Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding of any serious issues or concerns who in turn will inform the Board.
- Undertake an annual safeguarding audit
- Leadership and governance to address safeguarding updates at Trustee meetings with a regular slot provided.

The Rendezvous acknowledges that the welfare of the individual is paramount:

Privacy and confidentiality will be respected where possible but if doing this leaves a young person at risk of harm, then the young person's safety will always come first.

Other related policies include:

Safeguarding – online
Safer recruitment
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
Lone working
Volunteering
Whistleblowing
Code of conduct

* Our definition of radical or extreme ideology is 'a set of ideas which could justify vilification or violence against individuals, groups or self.'

Signed: *Stephen Uden*
Date: 3 February 2025

Name and position: Stephen Uden, Chair of Trustees
Date for Review: 3 February 2026