

Grief to Grace: Safeguarding Policy and Procedures	
Section Heading	Explanatory Notes
Introduction	<p>Grief to Grace is committed to providing a safe environment for those who use our services and also for staff and volunteers. Though few of our service users fall within the letter of of the category of vulnerable adults, and we do not work with minors, our residential retreats are an environment which needs to be safeguarded to the highest standard and fall within the parameters of regulated activities for safeguarding by virtue of the intensive contact involved over six days. Likewise, the consultations with individuals before and after the retreats if these occur once a month or more are categorised as frequent contact for safeguarding purposes. All the team who work on the retreats are to be made aware of this and trained accordingly.</p> <p>Trustees and volunteers and those in ancillary or administrative roles may have infrequent direct contact with service users but they may also have access to sensitive data on vulnerable people and therefore they too are to be trained and fully compliant with safety procedures</p>
Legislation/Compliance	<p>The principle pieces of legislation governing this policy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Care Act 2016 The Protection of Freedom Act 2012 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 Care Standards Act 2000 Human Rights Act 1998 Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 The Police Act 1997 Mental Health Act <p>See also our own Living Scripture 'Ethics of Care' document policy for a positively expressed statement of how we ensure people's safety and thriving in our work.</p>
What is Safeguarding?	<p>Safeguarding ensures that best practice to protect vulnerable adults at all stages of contact with us is always followed by all our staff and volunteers. By contrast, vulnerable adult protection is about responding to any circumstances which may arise.</p> <p>These circumstances include any selfish act of oppression or injustice, exploitation or manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This applies equally to those who cause harm or those who fail to intervene to prevent it occurring. Abuse takes many forms: Physical, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, financial or material abuse, discrimination or harassment.</p>
Definition of a vulnerable adult	<p>A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or more who may be be unable to take care of themselves, to protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who is elderly and frail, has a mental illness, physical or sensory disability, a learning disability, a severe physical illness or an addiction problem.</p>

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Responsibilities within the Organisation	<p>All trustees and team members and volunteers have a responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and ensure a safe environment for all our users. They are required to pass on any safeguarding concerns using the procedures outlined in this document. We also expect them to promote good practice by being positive role models and by contributing to discussions about safeguarding policy and any ways they feel it can be improved. This is not just about a narrow compliance with minimum standards but a more positive commitment to the well-being of all involved with the organisation (as outlined in our document 'The Ethics of Care.')</p> <p>The Trustees are Responsible for ensuring that the safeguarding policy is in place and up-to-date. Safeguarding will be a fixed time on the agenda of every trustees meeting and the policy will be monitored and reviewed not less than yearly or sooner in the light of any significant issues arising. The trustees, in the person of the Director (Fr Dominic Allain) are responsible for the task of seeing that this policy is accessible to all staff and volunteers. The trustees are also responsible for ensuring that budget resources are appropriately allocated for staff training so that the policy can be implemented, and that all staff and volunteers have access to appropriate training and information.</p> <p>All trustees are to receive any concerns about safeguarding and respond to all swiftly and appropriately. The designated lead trustee for safeguarding is Peter Sebastian.</p> <p>Trustees will see that other policies help to embed safeguarding within the organisation and are linked to and complement this policy: Whistleblowing policy; volunteer policy (including training and induction, grievance procedures, health and safety, data protection, confidentiality. As the Director, Fr Dominic Allain is the lead trustee for these areas. Fr Daniel Weatherley will be the lead trustee to receive the concerns of would-be whistleblowers.</p>
Safe Recruitment	<p>Grief to Grace ensures safe recruitment through the following processes: DBS checks to the highest level. All team members are first received as service users and therefore complete a detailed application form which includes disclosure of any criminal convictions. They are thoroughly monitored and assessed as to the quality of their interactions with others during the programme itself. They must be approved by the existing team following completion of a period of reflection and discernment as to their motivations and the completion of another detailed application form. They are required to provide two referees and to be DBS checked. All staff are made aware that their involvement with the organisation is subject to probation and peer-reviewed after every programme.</p> <p>A 3-year rolling programme of re-checking DBS is in place to avoid any gaps in disclosure</p>
Training	<p>This policy is distributed to all new staff as part of their induction. They are made aware of reporting processes and the designated safeguarding lead (and that they can contact other trustees in his absence) Safeguarding is a fixed item on the agenda of team meetings and the team are familiarised with the requirements to report and keep notes of any issues relating to safeguarding. They are also made aware of statutory responsibilities to report any behaviour which they believe to be criminal in regard to safeguarding to the police or social services whether or not they have previously informed the trustees and especially if it concerned one of the trustees.</p>

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Boundaries	<p>Our programme is successful because we care about the people who come seeking healing from abuse. Such people respond very positively to the level of care shown and because of previous boundary violations from apparently caring people in their lives they may feel and express strong feelings for the person who appears to understand and compassionate them in a way they have often found lacking. For this reason, it is essential that all staff realise that they are responsible for maintaining healthy boundaries at all times.</p> <p>Grief to Grace does not permit the giving or receiving of gifts from clients. However, gifts may be given as part of a planned activity. If a team member feels that to refuse a gift might be harmful to a client, he/she may simply refer them to this policy protocol by way of explanation. Likewise, no commercial transaction should be entered into or monetary gifts given or accepted, nor any reward or inducement e.g. corporate hospitality.</p> <p>It is not permitted to have personal relationships with anyone who has been a user of our programme within the past 24 months, to offer or receive hospitality in a private home or to engage in an exclusive relationship on social media e.g. Facebook.</p> <p>Though retreatants often experience psychological transference and can express very powerful or inappropriate emotions towards team members, the team member must always respond appropriately and professionally not become caught in a counter-transference by reacting in the same emotional manner in response.</p> <p>Team members should avoid personal contacts with clients, though in the course of seeing them for some kind of follow-up or at the support group meetings they should, of course, remain friendly and boundaried.</p>
Allegations	<p>All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report concerns or allegations against any members of its staff made by those who use our services or any professional from another organisation in contact with our users immediately to the team if these occur during a retreat, or to one of the trustees at other times. A verbal report is acceptable, but should eventually be accompanied by a written account, or such an account may be compiled by the Director or the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding in consultation with the reporter. All such allegations are to be thoroughly investigated and the appropriate action taken. This does not prejudice recourse to police or social services if there is a clear and present danger to a vulnerable person.</p>
Record Keeping	<p>Any concern over safeguarding must be recorded in the safeguarding register which will be held at the Grief to Grace office. This will also contain records of the action taken. This information will be stored in accordance with the data protection policy and our commitment to the confidentiality of our users.</p>