



Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy and procedure

Statement of policy

The Sutton Community Transport group is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults and good working practice. The overwhelming majority of our customers are vulnerable. Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of all trustees, staff and volunteers of SCT. The policy takes account of The Children's Acts 1989 and 2004 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012. The policy links with the London Borough of Sutton Safeguarding policy which in turn follows the London Child Protection Procedures. This policy affirms our commitment and details the working practices for dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We will ensure that:

Staff and volunteers

- Will be recruited using robust safe recruitment procedures
- Will undergo a 'Disclosure and Barring' check at enhanced level
- Will have two references taken up
- In circumstances where a DBS check outcome is pending, staff, drivers and volunteers will only work with Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults in the presence of another staff member, driver or volunteer who has a satisfactory enhanced CRB check in place.

We will ensure that our staff

- Are adequately trained and managed.
- Understand and follow the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- Will have regular refresher briefings about Safeguarding procedures

Our organisation:

SCT recognises that safeguarding children young people and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of all our employees and volunteers and is an integral part of our mission.

We exercise care in the appointment of all those working with children young people and vulnerable adults.

We are committed to following statutory and specialist guidelines when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

As part of SCT's commitment to the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy the Trustees have the overall responsibility to ensuring the policy is in place and is being acted upon. A named Trustee will have oversight of Safeguarding policy and procedures. The

responsibility for the daily managing and monitoring of the policy is the responsibility of the Chief Executive who may delegate this responsibility to the Administration or Operations Manager the application of the policy to the day to day working of the organisation. The policy will be reviewed annually and updated where necessary.

Should SCT have any concerns regarding the policy or any reported incidents it will seek advice, and if appropriate, will contact the appropriate Statutory Authorities.

This policy compliments our Equality and Diversity Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Employee Policies contained in the staff handbook.

The policy may be viewed or a copy obtained from SCT on application to Sutton Community Transport Group, Unit 3, Jessops Way, CROYDON CR0 4TS. The policy is also available on our website.

A: For the purpose of this policy document

- ❖ A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

- ❖ A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because they have a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, are old and frail, or have some form of illness.

- ❖ Categories of abuse are Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Social and Emotional Abuse and Neglect

B: This policy breaks down into three parts:

1. Guidance for paid staff and volunteers in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults while they are participating in SCT activities/services.
2. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse is taking place outside of our service
3. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse by another member of staff or volunteer.

Procedure

1. Guidance for paid staff and volunteers in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults while they are participating in SCT activities/services

In addition to the duties reflected in all job descriptions, where necessary, a risk assessment must be carried out and recorded (by the Operations Manager) and all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure a safe working environment for staff and all service users.

Staff, drivers and volunteers must never:

- Undertake tasks and extra duties for individuals over and above what is required without prior consent of management.
- Smack, hit or physically discipline a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Restraint should never be used except by “holding” which may be used if there is an immediate danger of personal injury to the child or other person. If it is necessary to restrain someone a written record of this should be made detailing the events and the reason for the restraint being necessary, records should be obtained from witnesses if any. This should be given to the designated officer: Operations Manager.
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Be alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult without someone else being nearby (e.g. next door with door open)
- Converse/sit with in the rear of a vehicle without another responsible adult in attendance.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching
- Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments even in fun.
- Allow allegations regarding a child, young person or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or vulnerable adult that they can do for themselves.

If you should accidentally hurt a participant, passenger or they misunderstand or misinterpret something you have done or said or seem unduly distressed or an incident occurs make a written record using the Protection disclosure form, and report the incident to the designated officer as soon as possible. The record should include exactly what happened, or what you saw, what was said and who was there.

All accidents must be recorded in the accident book (see Health and Safety policy)

2. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse is taking place outside of our service

It is not the responsibility of anyone working under the auspices of Sutton Community Transport in a paid or voluntary capacity to take responsibility for or decide whether or not abuse is taking place.

However there is a responsibility to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults in order that appropriate agencies can then make enquiries and take any necessary action to protect the individual.

SCT staff and drivers are in a unique position with children, young people and vulnerable adults; it is therefore possible that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may approach you to talk about abuse.

If you are approached try to do the following:

- Accept what the child, young person or vulnerable adult says.

- Keep calm and do not appear shocked
- Look at the child, young person or vulnerable adult directly
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else- **DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY.** Reassure them that they were right to tell you.
- Never push for information or question the child, young person or vulnerable adult
- Make a written note straight away of exactly what they said and record the circumstances or activity that preceded the disclosure
- Report the disclosure to the designated officer as soon as possible and fill out a protection disclosure form. A copy of the disclosure will be sent to the Chief Executive. If appropriate the matter will be reported to the relevant protection agencies and Chair of Sutton Community Transport group

You can always discuss your concerns in confidence with the designated officer. Do not be afraid to be wrong, it is better to be wrong than do nothing. The responsibility is to ensure concerns are reported appropriately, it is not the responsibility of SCT staff to investigate concerns.

If any member of staff or volunteer notices something which concerns them about a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or the child, young person or vulnerable adult has said something to a member of staff this is the agreed procedure that SCT will follow:

- Everything that has been said by the child, young person or vulnerable adult, or been observed by the member of staff/volunteer will be recorded on a Protection Disclosure Form. The completed records will be kept confidential within a secure location at the SCT offices.
- The information recorded must be factual and not contain assumptions or personal comments by the staff member completing the form.
- We will record the dates/times when these events/situations have happened taking care not to interpret what has been said recording only factually what has been said.
- If there has been an explanation given, the staff member will ensure this is included.
- Members of staff/volunteers will immediately raise the contents of the Protection Disclosure Form with the designated officer. The designated officer will then consult with Sutton Council's Adult Safeguarding Referral Point or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for children. The designated officer and the relevant agencies will then agree on the next course of action.
- All staff and volunteers will receive appropriate training and support to raise awareness of this policy.

It is important to note that this is only a process of observation and at no point will staff be actively looking for evidence of abuse, but they will act if they notice or are told anything which gives them cause for concern. **The responsibility is to ensure concerns are reported appropriately, it is not the responsibility of SCT to investigate the concerns.**

3. What to do if you suspect any form of abuse by another member of staff or volunteer.

The following circumstances may lead to a member of staff or volunteer to suspect that a fellow member of staff or volunteer is abusing a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

- An allegation is made by a child or adult
- A member of staff notices inappropriate behaviour by another member of staff.

In each case a Protection Disclosure Form should be completed and the designated officers immediately informed in strict confidence (if the allegations concern either the Chief Executive or Operations Manager then the Chair of Trustees will be informed.)

The designated officers may be informed of situations where they are unsure if the allegation constitutes abuse or not and they are unclear of what action to take.

There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice.

The relevant agencies will be consulted if there is any doubt and all incidents including poor practice will be recorded and kept on file in a secure location. This is because of the nature of the material and it may be one of a series of instances that cause concern.

If the designated officers conclude that the allegation constitutes poor practice, they will work with the member of staff to ensure adequate training and supervision is given to prevent further incidents. If they conclude that it constitutes abuse they will take advice from the Director and formal disciplinary and criminal procedures will be instituted.

Relevant Agencies

Children: Local Safeguarding Children Board, Multi-Agency Safeguarding hub (MASH)

Tel: 020 8649 0418/0419/0420

Adults: Sutton Council Adult Safeguarding Referral Point

Tel: 020 8770 4565

Sutton Community Transport Management Team assures all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his/her concerns about the possibility that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be being abused.

Signed

Chief Executive:

Safeguarding Trustee:

Appendix 1

Protection Disclosure Form

Name of Child/Vulnerable Adult:	
Names of other individuals involved:	
Date:	Time:
Location:	
Circumstances:	
Name of witnesses:	
Description of incident, details of report given or observation: The information given below must be factual and not contain assumptions or personal comments. Please use continuation sheet if necessary.	
Signed:	Position:
Name:	
Date:	

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Protection Disclosure Form - continuation sheet

Description of incident, details of report given or observation:

The information given below must be factual and not contain assumptions or personal comments. Please use continuation sheet if necessary.

When completed please give a copy of this form to the SCT designated Safeguarding Officer or the Chief Executive.