

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern Procedure

Applicable to:	✓	The OR Society
	✓	The OR Society EPAO Only
Accountable Owner	Head of Qualifications & Accreditation (Designated Safeguarding Lead)	
Frequency of review	Annual <i>or earlier if required for regulatory, legislative or business need.</i>	
Date of next review	July 2026 (full review)	
Relevant Regulator & Regulatory conditions associated with the policy	OFQUAL GCOR (A8)	
Associated policies and processes	Health & Safety Policy Governance, bullying, harassment, whistleblowing policies	
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Summary of Amendments since previous version	Version 1.2: Re-branded, title changed and contact details updated.	
OR Society Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Completed	06 September 2024 , no outstanding actions	
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Approver	Executive Director (CF)	

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Purpose

This document is designed to explain what to do if you have a safeguarding concern. For more information about safeguarding at The OR Society, and how we fulfil our safeguarding duty, please see our safeguarding policy.

Scope

This procedure and related policies apply to all employees and volunteers including in the provision of End Point Assessment (EPA). Activities and workstreams across the organisation fall within the scope of this policy including but not limited to pro bono, education, publications, events and apprenticeships.

Responsibilities

Everyone at The OR Society is responsible for safeguarding. The safeguarding team is responsible for responding to safeguarding disclosures in a timely and robust manner. Other staff and volunteers have a responsibility to share safeguarding concerns with the safeguarding team.

Types of abuse and things to look for

Every individual's situation is different but the most common types of abuse are below. Other types of abuse that can occur include modern slavery, financial abuse and discriminatory abuse.

Physical abuse

This involves the hurting or injuring someone by ways such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning and suffocating.

What to look out for:

- unexplained bruising or injuries
- multiple bruises in clusters or in unusual places
- cigarette burns
- human bite marks
- scalds with upward splash marks

Sexual abuse

This involves forcing or persuading someone to take part in sexual activities. This could be directly – by touching– or indirectly, for example, making someone watch sexual activities or act in a sexualised way online. It includes grooming a child in preparation for abuse, often via the internet. Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse.

What to look out for:

- pain or itching in the genital area
- bruising or bleeding near genital area
- vaginal discharge or infection
- discomfort when walking or sitting down
- pregnancy
- incontinence unrelated to medical diagnoses

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Emotional abuse

This includes someone being repeatedly rejected, isolated, humiliated, bullied, or scared, and “denying” their self-worth.

What to look out for:

While there may be physical signs, such as looking withdrawn or changes in weight, emotional abuse is mainly identified through changes in behaviour.

Neglect

This is the repeated or continued failure to meet someone’s basic needs such as food, warmth, access to medical care, social interaction and meeting their cultural or religious needs. It also includes failing to supervise a child effectively, such as leaving a child at home alone for long periods and failing to provide an education.

What to look out for:

- repeated or constant hunger or stealing food from others
- repeatedly or constantly being dirty or smelly
- loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- wearing unseasonal clothing (e.g. having no coat in winter)

What to do if you have a concern

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns or issues to the safeguarding team as a matter of urgency. We take historic and non-recent concerns as seriously as current or recent concerns.

To formally express your concern, please complete the [ORS Safeguarding Report Form](#) immediately and email the completed form to: safeguarding@theorsociety.com.

All information, including your details will be stored confidentially and will be shared with the safeguarding team. The Safeguarding team will respond as soon as possible to a disclosure/concern, and within one day.

Any member of staff or volunteer who encounters a situation where a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of imminent harm should immediately contact the emergency services as appropriate and then follow our safeguarding process. Internal safeguarding processes should never delay emergency intervention in these situations.

Contacting a Safeguarding Officer

The safeguarding team are available to support staff and volunteers, whether they wish to make a formal report of a safeguarding concern or talk about a worrying situation.

The safeguarding team can be contacted by emailing safeguarding@theorsociety.com or by phoning a member of the Safeguarding team (Sarah Pick 0121 234 7857, Chiara Carparelli 0121 234 7816, Sarah Davies 0121 234 7821).

Commented [SPI]: Link needs updating to reflect website link

If a staff member or volunteer makes a formal report and this needs to be escalated to external safeguarding agencies, the safeguarding team will do this on their behalf. The only exception to this is that in an emergency, the emergency services should be contacted as soon as possible.

We understand that reporting a safeguarding concern can be difficult and will do our best to support anyone sharing concerns with us.

What to include in a safeguarding report

We recognise that sometimes concerns or safeguarding reports will not have all of the below information, and always encourage someone to share as much information as they can. It is better to share a partial report than keep concerns to yourself. When completing a report, if you have any of the below information, please include it in the report:

- When you first recognised or were told about the abuse (including who told you)
- Who the alleged perpetrator(s) are
- Any witnesses that were present when the concern was raised
- What the child or vulnerable adult's behaviour was like at the time, including exactly what they said
- Any physical injuries that have been identified, if any
- What safeguarding actions have been taken by you or others during and after the event
- Any other discussions that were had with the child or vulnerable adult, their family, carers or other staff members or volunteers
- Whether the emergency services/any other agencies have been contacted regarding this concern

Investigating a Safeguarding Concern

After the safeguarding team receive a report we are responsible for investigating it. If a safeguarding concern is shared with the Safeguarding team, an initial assessment will quickly be made of the concern. We will ask questions to establish what action has already been taken and whether anyone else in, or working with, The OR Society has been affected by the situation. We will decide what actions need to be taken and will make a record of the information we are given and the actions we take. Actions we may take depend on the situation:

- If it is an emergency, we will also contact the emergency services.
- If we receive an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer from The OR Society has harmed or abused a child or adult at risk, we will also contact the local authority safeguarding team.
- If we receive an allegation that a member of staff or volunteer from The OR Society has harmed or abused adult who isn't at risk, we will follow our disciplinary procedures.
- If we receive an allegation involving another organisation, we will contact their Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to inform them.

Once we have assessed a concern, we will monitor the situation and record new information and actions as they arise. If possible, we will let the person who reported the concern know that we have taken action.

Closing a Safeguarding concern

When we no longer have a role in the investigation or any actions to complete we will close the concern. Everyone involved in the concern will be told that it is closed, and we will update our records, including filing a final report and making changes to our policies and procedures if needed.

Other regulatory activity

As an Ofqual recognised EPAO, where a safeguarding concern has the potential to cause a potential or actual adverse effect, the Responsible Officer will report accordingly to the regulator.

It is a Charities Commission requirement that the OR Society has an identified DSL (and that it is included in their job description) and that there is an identified senior level board member involved in the governance of safeguarding.

Governance

The DSL oversees the policy, its continuous review and implementation. The Executive Director is accountable for the policy's approval. The DSL works with a link board member to ensure appropriate safeguarding governance, policy and process.

Retention of materials

Safeguarding records are retained in line with the [OR Society's approach to data retention](#).

Contact

Queries in relation to the content of this policy should be raised with the Safeguarding team by email to safeguarding@theorsociety.com

Procedure Review

This procedure is reviewed annually or earlier if legislative or regulatory change requires it to be revised.



Appendix – How to make a disclosure flowchart



