

Triratna Glasgow Buddhist Centre Adults Protection Policy 2018

Triratna Glasgow Buddhist Centre

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Registered charity number: SC006883

INTRODUCTION

Triratna is a worldwide network of friends in the Buddhist life. This is for many of us a source of great richness, support and strength. However, we must be careful of a risk that we may fail to notice, question or act on behaviours of concern, out of naivety, loyalty to friends or lack of awareness; or an assumption that “it couldn’t happen here” or “they would never do a thing like that.”

This policy is an expression of the first ethical precept taught by the Buddha: to avoid harming living beings. It refers to law and good practice mainly as defined in Scotland.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This document is for Friends, Mitras and Order members involved in the Glasgow Buddhist Centre activities (and those of any outreach groups run by this centre) as employees, volunteers, leaders, teachers or parents.

It aims to provide

- Protection for adults attending Glasgow Buddhist Centre (GBC) activities who may be “at risk” or vulnerable, and
- Protection for Friends, Mitras and Order members working with them

It sets out

- information and practices contributing to the prevention of harm of ‘adults at risk’
- a course of action to be followed if harm is suspected

OUR VALUES

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Although we do not run activities specifically for those with mental illness or addiction, we recognise that people who may be vulnerable in these ways do attend our events and take part in the life of our sangha.

The trustees of Triratna Glasgow recognise their responsibility to safeguard adults who may be deemed to be “at risk” when visiting or involved in Buddhist Centre activities.

This policy is an expression of our commitment to the Five Precepts taught by the Buddha:

Behaviour to avoid	Behaviour to develop
harming living beings	loving-kindness
taking the not-given	generosity
sexual misconduct	stillness, simplicity and contentment
false speech	truthful speech
taking intoxicants	awareness

WHO IS AN ADULT AT RISK OF HARM?

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act, 2007 defines adults at risk of harm as aged 16 years or over who:

- (a) Are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests and
- (b) Are at risk of harm; and
- (c) Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected

This is called the three-point test: all three parts of the above definition need to be met. In practice this means that the following groups of people may sometimes be at risk of harm:

- people with learning disabilities
- physical disabilities or
- mental health difficulties
- older people
- people with addictions
- homeless people
- using counselling services.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 says that an adult is at risk of harm when:

- a) Another person’s conduct is causing (or is likely to cause) the adult to be harmed; or

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- b) The adult is engaging (or is likely to engage) in conduct which causes (or is likely to cause) self-harm.

WHAT TO DO IMMEDIATELY WHEN HARM IS SUSPECTED, WITNESSED OR REPORTED

What to do immediately if you suspect or witness harm or abuse, or it is reported to you. For all Glasgow Buddhist Centre staff and volunteers in contact with 'adults at risk'.

RECOGNISING HARM

All volunteers or staff are encouraged to share concerns with the GBC Protection Officer. If the situation is clearly an urgent case, the adult is too frightened to go home, or we have very serious doubts about the adult's safety, we will contact Social Work Services or Police immediately

Not sure if it is harm?

Sometimes there is no substitute for initially trusting your gut feeling or intuition. Going with your gut feeling is not about prejudging the outcome – it is only a starting point for further information gathering and assessment. Listen to that inner voice when harm is suspected:

'Does this look right?'

'Does this sound right?'

'Does it feel right?'

Is the person's dignity being eroded in any way? If so it is harm.

'Harm' is the harming of an individual usually by someone who is in a position of power, trust or authority over that individual; for example, by a Friend, Mitra or Order member who is helping to run Glasgow Buddhist Centre activities. However, it can include self-harm and neglect.

'Harm' includes violence, harassment, threatening conduct, and any other conduct giving rise, or likely to give rise, to physical or mental injury, fear, alarm, or distress. (Protection from Harm (Scotland) Act 2001).

Harm can denote actions of violence, physical restraint or misappropriation of state benefits and other property, and omissions such as neglect, and denial of rights.

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 defines 'harm' as all harm, including conduct which causes physical harm, psychological harm, self-harm, and unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights, or interests.

Harm is also caused by strangers or those befriending someone in order to harm them.

Harm includes all harmful conduct and may include:

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- Physical
- Psychological (Mental/Emotional)
- Financial
- Sexual
- Discriminatory (Including withholding information and denial of rights)
- Neglect (including self-neglect)
- Self-harm

In practice the starting point is that an adult at risk is a person working, volunteering or attending the GBC that you suspect or know is being harmed or exploited by another person or is harming themselves

See Appendix I for a fuller description of harm and its symptoms.

WHAT TO DO IF AN ADULT REPORTS HARM TO YOU

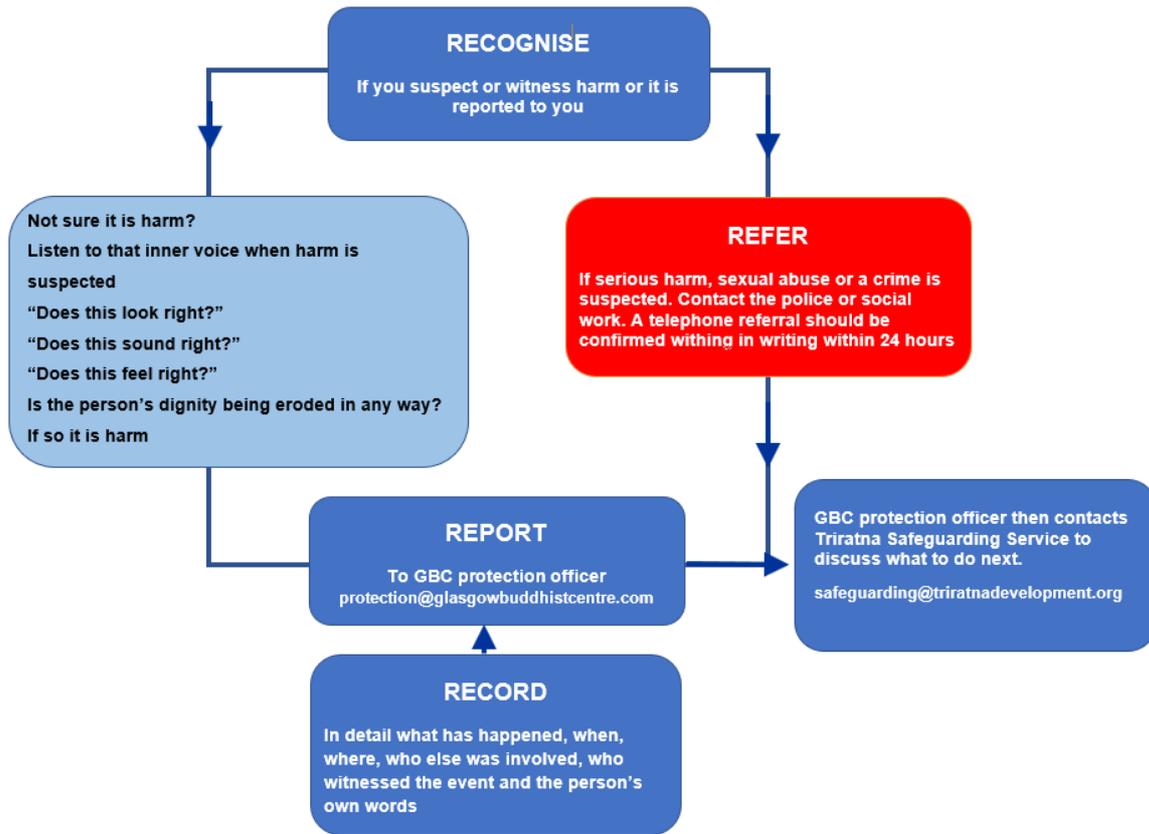
DO

- Stay calm
- Listen patiently
- Reassure the person they are doing the right thing by telling you
- Clarify issues of confidentiality early on. Make it clear that you will have to discuss their concerns with others
- Explain what you are going to do
 - **REPORT:** If you suspect or witness abuse or it is reported to you and you are not sure if it is harm or abuse? If it does not look or sound right, or your gut feeling is that it is harmful, the starting point is to report it
 - **REFER:** If serious harm, sexual abuse or a crime is suspected, immediately contact the police or social work. Do not investigate
 - Hand write a factual **RECORD** of what you have seen and heard, immediately

DO NOT

- Appear shocked, horrified, disgusted or angry
- Press the individual for details
- Do not investigate
- Make comments or judgments other than to show concern
- Promise to keep secrets or offer confidentiality
- Confront the harmer
- Risk contaminating the evidence

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REPORT

The time to report to the GBC protection officer is not when you are certain that harm is happening – that's often too late. If we have concerns we must act- it may be the final piece of the jigsaw that is needed to protect that adult - or we may prevent, further adults at risk of harm from being hurt.

Report when you suspect harm

Share the burden

Do not investigate

Record

Always report any concerns we have to the GBC protection officer.

All allegations or suspicions are to be treated seriously. No harm is acceptable.

Some harm may be a criminal offence and should be referred to the police as soon as possible.

The employee or volunteer's primary responsibility is to protect the vulnerable adult if they are at risk.

Each employee or volunteer has a duty to act.

Each Supported staff member and volunteer involved in activities at GBC has a duty to act ;

RECOGNISE, REPORT, REFER, RECORD

Always report any concerns we have to GBC protection officer who will then contact the Triratna Safeguarding team to discuss what to do next.

REFER

If serious harm, sexual abuse or a crime is suspected, refer immediately to the police or the social work department to undertake in depth investigation of any suspicions or allegations about harm.

Immediately thereafter contact the GBC Protection officer who will then contact the Triratna Safeguarding team to discuss what to do next. It is imperative that you write a report as a matter of urgency.

When deciding whether to refer the matter to social services, consider the following:

- The wishes of the vulnerable adult and their right to self-determination
- The mental capacity of the vulnerable adult
- Known indicators of harm
- Definitions of harm
- Level of risk to the individual
- The seriousness of the harm

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- The effect of the harm on the individual
- Level of risk to others
- The effect of the harm on others
- Whether a criminal offence has been committed
- Whether other statutory obligations have been breached
- The need for others to know
- The ability of others (eg police, social services) to make a positive contribution to the situation

CONSENT

Where a vulnerable adult expresses a wish for concerns not to be pursued, this should be respected wherever possible.

However, decisions about whether to respect their wishes must have regard to the level of risk to the individual and others, and their capacity to understand the decision in question.

If the alleged perpetrator is a member of staff or volunteer or visiting instructor report this immediately to the GBC Protection officer and the Triratna Safeguarding officer

The consent of the vulnerable adult must be obtained except where:

- The vulnerable adult lacks the mental capacity to make a decision, and a risk assessment indicates that referral would be in their best interests
- Others may be at risk
- A crime has been committed

If the alleged perpetrator is a member of staff or volunteer or visiting instructor - report this immediately to the GBC Protection officer.

Where you are concerned that someone is at risk of harm and they do not give their consent for you to refer to the Police and/or social services you must discuss this with the GBC Protection officer.

Both the local Area Social Work Office and Police Office telephone numbers are to be found in the telephone directory and at the back of this document.

If in doubt REFER. Protection law takes precedence over Data Protection and privacy laws.

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RECORD

Upon the receipt of any information concerning harm or suspected harm, it is necessary to make an accurate and detailed written record of what they have seen, heard or know, at the time the event occurs. This is emailed to the GBC Protection officer and no copy is kept;

Checklist for a good record

- ✓ A record of any suspected harm or risk of harm should be completed on the same day or within 24 hours
- ✓ What is the exact nature of the concern and which category of abuse does it suggest
- ✓ Dated and signed
- ✓ No copy or photocopy should be made – the original should be emailed to the Protection officer and then deleted on acknowledgement of being received.
- ✓ Try to record the actual words used by the person who attends our centre to describe what happened
- ✓ Record the rationale for reporting /referring
- ✓ Avoid recording opinions - record only facts supported by evidence
- ✓ Record any decisions and actions taken.
- ✓ **Be precise** with time words – what does always, frequent, never mean
- ✓ The record should be stored by the GBC Protection officer in a locked cabinet to ensure confidentiality

CONFIDENTIALITY

Sharing information only on a need to know basis is very important. Nobody else has a right to know about the matter. This is not a matter of concealment but is intended to protect all concerned.

It will also protect your sangha from fear, rumour and disharmony which will make it much harder to deal with the matter effectively without causing further harm.

No sangha member should attempt to investigate a criminal allegation. This is the job of the police and to attempt this could prejudice a court case and put the person in danger.

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CONTACT DETAILS

Glasgow Buddhist Centre Protection Officer

Named person: Viryadevi

Deputy : Dassini

gbcprotect@gmail.com

Triratna Safeguarding Team

safeguarding@triratnadevelopment.org

SOCIAL SERVICES

Telephone

0141 287 0555

Out of hours telephone

0300 343 1505

Select 3

<http://www.actagainstsharm.org/getting-help/find-your-local-contact>

Address

Adult Protection,
220 High Street,
Glasgow,
G4 0QW

Email: socialcaredirect@glasgow.gov.uk

Police:

101

State that you are calling about “Adult Protection Concerns”

APPENDIX I - HARM AND ITS SIGNS

VARIETIES OF HARM

PHYSICAL

- Bodily assaults resulting in injuries e.g. hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- Bodily impairment e.g. malnutrition, dehydration, failure to thrive
- The deliberate mismanagement of someone's health condition by a carer.

PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL

- Threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal harm, enforced isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- Humiliation
- Bullying, shouting or swearing

FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL

- Theft, fraud
- Exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions; the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits

SEXUAL

- Rape, incest, acts of indecency, sexual assault
- Sexual harassment or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented to or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- Sexual harm might also include exposure to pornographic materials
- Being made to witness sexual acts
- Sexual harassment, with or without physical contact

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DISCRIMINATORY

- Language which is racist, sexist, or based on a person's disability, gender or sexual orientation, etc

HARM THROUGH NEGLECT

- Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services
- the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

SIGNS OF HARM

PHYSICAL

NB Ageing processes can cause changes which are hard to distinguish from some aspects of physical assault e.g. skin bruising can occur due to blood vessels becoming fragile.

- A history of unexplained falls or minor injuries
- Bruising in well-protected areas, or clustered from repeated striking
- Finger marks
- Burns of unusual location or type
- Injuries found at different states of healing
- Injury shape similar to an object
- Injuries to head/face/scalp
- History of moving from doctor to doctor, or between social care agencies; reluctance to seek help
- Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence
- Weight loss due to malnutrition; or rapid weight gain
- Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing
- Drowsiness due to too much medication; or lack of medication causing recurring crises/hospital admissions

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SIGNS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL OR EMOTIONAL HARM

- Isolation
- Unkempt, unwashed appearance; smell
- Over meticulousness
- Inappropriate dress
- Withdrawnness, agitation, anxiety; not wanting to be touched
- Change in appetite
- Insomnia or need for excessive sleep
- Tearfulness
- Unexplained paranoia; excessive fears
- Low self-esteem
- Confusion

SIGNS OF FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL VULNERABILITY

- Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills
- Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts
- Disparity between assets and satisfactory living conditions
- Unusual level of interest by family members and other people in the vulnerable person's financial assets

SEXUAL

- Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as 'It's a secret')
- Medical problems, e.g. genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting
- Disturbed behaviour e.g. depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, loss of previous skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury, showing fear or aggression to one particular person, inappropriately seductive behaviour, loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down.
- Unusual circumstances, such as, for example, two attendees found in a toilet/bathroom area, one of them distressed
- Confusion

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SIGNS OF DISCRIMINATION

- Lack of respect shown to an individual
- Substandard service offered to an individual
- Exclusion from rights afforded to others, such as health, education, criminal justice

SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Poor physical condition
- Clothing in poor condition
- Inadequate diet
- Untreated injuries or medical problems
- Failure to be given prescribed medication
- Poor personal hygiene

OTHER SIGNS OF HARM

- Controlling relationships
- Inappropriate use of restraint
- Sensory deprivation e.g. spectacles or hearing aid
- Denial of visitors or phone calls
- Failure to ensure privacy or personal dignity
- Lack of personal clothing or possessions

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REVIEWING THIS DOCUMENT

This adult support and protection policy is to be reviewed annually.

This policy was last reviewed on 30/10/18

Chair's name: Dharmacarinī Kuladharinī signature

Protection officer's name: Viryadevi (Margaret Graeber) signature

Deputy Protection officer: Dassinī (Madeleine Cadwallender) signature