

Safeguarding

“Protecting people’s health, wellbeing and human rights, enabling them to live free from harm abuse and neglect.”

Key Principles

- ▶ Those working with or supporting children and vulnerable adults are in position of trust and the guidance on safeguarding applies
- ▶ All children and vulnerable adults whatever their gender, racial origin, culture, religious belief and / or sexual identity have the right to be treated with respect, have their dignity maintained and an entitlement to protection from mistreatment and abuse
- ▶ All children and vulnerable adults have the right to access support with as much independence as is appropriate and within their capabilities
- ▶ All incidents and allegations or suspicions of abuse should be taken seriously, responded swiftly and in line with procedures described in the safeguarding policy

Recognising Different Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or other ways causing physical harm. It may also be caused by parent / carer fabricating or inducing illness in child or vulnerable adult

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional ill-treatment causing severe and adverse effects on emotional welfare and development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or valued only when they meet the needs of another person

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse can include exposure of a child or vulnerable adult to sexual stimulation inappropriate to their age and development. Anyone regardless of age, gender and race can be a victim or perpetrator of sexual abuse.

Financial Abuse

The misuse of a person’s funds or assets; obtaining funds without their knowledge and consent, or in the case of an elderly person who is not competent, not in his/her best interests. This can include misuse of power of attorney, tricking someone out of money, cashing pension/cheques without authorisation, using someone’s money for purposes other those intended.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adults’ basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the person’s health or development. It may involve a parent/carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, access to medical care and protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical harm.

Discriminatory Abuse

Treating someone unfairly because something is different about them. This can include unfair or less favourable treatment due to a person’s race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality, appearance or cultural background.

Grooming

Perpetrators of abuse often use the internet as a means of targeting victims for sexual abuse. Grooming is not limited to online activity and the same warning signs are relevant for all forms of grooming.

Trafficking & Modern Slavery

Modern slavery includes human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced and compulsory labour. Exploitation takes a number of forms, including sexual exploitation, forced manual labour and domestic servitude, and victims come from all walks of life

Good Practice

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves:

- ▶ Encouraging an open environment – no secrets
- ▶ Be mindful of where you are when you are supporting a child or vulnerable adult and the potential risks which may arise from being with them in private
- ▶ Treat all children and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- ▶ Maintain a safe and appropriate distance
- ▶ Staff and volunteers should not have unnecessary physical contact with children and vulnerable adults. There may be some limited occasions when someone needs comfort or reassurance, which may include physical comforting. Any such comforting gestures must always be acceptable to the person concerned. A member of staff should be aware, however, that any physical contact may be misconstrued by a child, vulnerable adult, parent/carer or observer
- ▶ Assisting with personal care, wherever possible a member of staff or volunteer of the appropriate gender and be careful to protect the dignity of the child or vulnerable adult. Whenever possible 2 people of staff or volunteers should be present when carrying out personal care
- ▶ Ensure any form of movement and handling, physical support or personal care is provided appropriately and in line with policies or protocols
- ▶ Social media sites should not be used by staff or volunteers to engage with the children or vulnerable adults that Volunteering Matters supports, unless this is a specific requirement of their role and has been approved by their line manager in advance
- ▶ Staff and volunteers must not give their personal contact details, including personal email address or phone numbers to children or vulnerable adults

Practices NEVER to be sanctioned

- ❖ Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching
- ❖ Using sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- ❖ Sharing material of a sexually suggestive, offensive or pornographic nature with staff, volunteers, learners or beneficiaries
- ❖ Allowing allegations made by a child or vulnerable person to be unrecorded and not acted upon
- ❖ Doing things of a personal nature when the child or vulnerable adult can do it for themselves
- ❖ Administering medication unless trained and approved to do so

Reporting

- ▶ Do not promise confidentiality, be honest that information has to be passed on and stress their not in trouble or done anything wrong
- ▶ Speak to your line manager and / or designated safeguarding champion
- ▶ Submit a safeguarding form
- ▶ Line manager / safeguarding champion log concern onto Volunteering Matters safeguarding database and forward to relevant parties
- ▶ Line manager / safeguarding champion will record and follow up if further action required

It is not individual staff or volunteers' responsibility to proceed beyond submitting the safeguarding form.

Social Media

There are **1000+** social media platforms currently available.

- ▶ Staff and volunteers should not invite a child or vulnerable adult supported by Volunteering Matters to become 'friends' with them on a social network site
- ▶ Staff and volunteers should never accept friend requests from the children or vulnerable adults
- ▶ Staff and volunteers should take care to protect their personal privacy online by sense checking their privacy settings in order to maintain a safe and appropriate distance
- ▶ Social media sites should not be used by staff or volunteers to engage the children or vulnerable adults

Preventing & Intervention

- ▶ Staff and volunteers follow the code of conduct key principles
- ▶ Guidance provided is designed to protect staff and volunteers whilst supporting children and vulnerable adults from situations that may lead to allegations against them
- ▶ Expectation that all staff and volunteers will be committed to actively protecting children and vulnerable adults from discrimination and avoidable harm
- ▶ Staff and volunteers have awareness about their own conduct and vigilant about the conduct of others
- ▶ Guidelines provided are not intended to make staff or volunteers feel unduly anxious about working for these groups, they are in fact intended to give confidence in offering guidance on appropriate behaviour and approach