



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 We are committed to protecting all children and vulnerable adults against all forms of abuse and we expect everyone who works in our organisation to share this commitment.
- 1.2 This policy sets out how the organisation will manage recruitment for job roles that involve working with vulnerable groups and how it will manage matters arising during employment where it is believed that vulnerable groups could be, or have been, placed at risk.
- 1.3 The policy also explains the responsibilities of staff in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable groups and the procedure that should be followed when reporting an allegation of abuse.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. We may also vary elements, such as any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

2. WHO IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

- 2.1 This policy applies to all employees, directors and other officers, workers, agency workers and volunteers.
- 2.2 We also require in any contracts with self-employed consultants or contractors that they comply with this policy. We will ensure they are given access to a copy.
- 2.3 All individuals covered in sections 2.1 and 2.2 are referred to as 'staff' in this policy.
- 2.4 The policy specifically covers all who work in a regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable groups, and this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years.

3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY?

- 3.1 While we ask all managers to take responsibility for making sure this policy is complied with, it is the responsibility of all staff to report any allegations of abuse to your manager or a Director.
- 3.2 Please take the time to read and understand this policy and to go back to your manager with any questions you may have. References to Directors in this policy mean the most senior people within our

organisation.

4. RECRUITMENT

- 4.1 We will make it clear to candidates when advertising a job role if the work involved is regarded as a regulated activity (work that involves unsupervised contact with children or vulnerable adults) and will determine this in accordance with the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- 4.2 Before we can employ a candidate for a role in a regulated activity, we will require receipt of a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure with a relevant barred list check from the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 4.3 The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps us make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups. We will ensure that the correct level of DBS certificate is sought. The purpose of this check is to confirm that the candidate is suitable to perform this work and is not barred from doing so.
- 4.4 All Enhanced Disclosure Certificates will be issued to you directly by the DBS. As a consequence, we require you to provide the original DBS check to your manager or a Company Director upon receipt.
- 4.5 We will make any offer of employment in a regulated activity conditional upon satisfactory background checks, including satisfactory criminal record and barred list checks. We reserve the right not to employ a candidate where these conditions are not satisfied.

5. EXISTING EMPLOYEES

- 5.1 If an existing employee's work either becomes a regulated activity, or if you are asked to perform work that is a regulated activity, we will require you to provide a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure with a relevant barred list check from the Disclosure and Barring Service. The purpose of this check is to confirm that you are suitable to perform this work and are not barred from doing so.
- 5.2 If you refuse to undertake these checks, or if a disclosure confirms that you have a relevant criminal conviction or have been placed on a relevant barred list, we will investigate the circumstances further and will fully consider the effect of this on continued employment.
- 5.3 Where you are not legally permitted to perform a regulated activity, or where we otherwise have reason to believe that this will be inappropriate, we may consider if there are any other non-regulated activities in which you can be employed.
- 5.4 We reserve the right to dismiss you where continued employment cannot be supported.

6. IF YOU ARE ADDED TO A BARRED LIST

- 6.1 If you are added to a barred list during employment, we cannot legally allow you to continue to engage in a regulated activity.
- 6.2 Where you are not permitted to perform a regulated activity, we may investigate if there are any other non-regulated activities in which you can be employed.
- 6.3 We reserve the right to dismiss you where continued employment cannot be supported.

7. WHAT IS ABUSE?

- 7.1 Abuse may be a single incident or something that occurs over a long period of time. It can take many forms including, but not limited to:
 - a) financial or material abuse
 - b) physical abuse
 - c) mental abuse
 - d) neglect and failures to act
 - e) sexual abuse
 - f) threats of abuse or harm
 - g) controlling or intimidating conduct
 - h) self-neglect
 - i) domestic abuse
 - j) poor practices within an organisation providing care
 - k) modern slavery.
- 7.2 The abuse may come from employees, personal assistants, service users, relatives, neighbours, social workers, providers of support services etc.

8. REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

- 8.1 You must always be vigilant to risks of abuse towards children and/or vulnerable adults.
- 8.2 If you believe or suspect that abuse is occurring, you must refer the matter to your manager or a Director immediately. We will treat all complaints, allegations, or suspicions of abuse with the utmost seriousness.
- 8.3 When reporting an allegation of abuse, it is important to provide as much detail as possible, including the names of the people involved, the nature of the abuse, the dates and times of any specific incidents (if known) and details of any evidence or other witnesses that may be available.
- 8.4 We may ask you to refrain from discussing alleged abuse with fellow colleagues, other than those specified by your manager, to avoid the spread of potentially harmful misinformation and to protect the validity of any investigation.

9. INVESTIGATION

- 9.1 We will investigate all complaints of alleged or suspected abuse fully. The investigation will be conducted in a discrete and timely manner, and will involve the collation of evidence typically derived from witness statements and surveillance footage where possible.
- 9.2 We may be required to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service and may also consider it necessary to inform the police of allegations under investigation

10. SUSPENSION

- 10.1 If you are suspected of abuse, you will be suspended on full pay pending a full investigation of the complaints. It should be noted that this suspension is not an indication of your guilt, but rather a necessity given the circumstances. We appreciate the impact prolonged suspension can have on your reputation, even when allegations are later found to be incorrect, and do not take the decision to suspend lightly.

11. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 11.1 If we have reason to believe that an allegation of abuse has foundation, we will arrange a disciplinary meeting with the individual. Abuse is regarded as an act of gross misconduct and therefore may result in summary dismissal, in accordance with our disciplinary procedure.

12. DUTY TO REFER INFORMATION

- 12.1 We will discuss any safeguarding concerns with the local safeguarding team and would encourage any staff member with concerns to do the same.
- 12.2 Please remember that it is not for you to decide a child or vulnerable adult is or may be at risk of harm or abuse, but it is for you to refer that information to the relevant professional bodies who can assess risk and act as required.
- 12.3 The relevant bodies are:
 - a) The Local Children's Social Care Agency
 - b) The Local Adults Safeguarding Authority
 - c) The Police (Child Protection or Adult Protection) Investigation Unit
 - d) The NSPCC
 - e) The Care Quality Commission
- 12.4 We are legally required to refer certain information about an individual to the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 12.5 This duty applies where:
 - a) you are dismissed or removed from working in a regulated activity because you have harmed or may harm a child or

vulnerable adult.

- b) we have suspended you and have reason to believe that you have engaged in relevant conduct or have harmed or may harm a child or vulnerable adult, or have received a caution or a conviction for a relevant criminal offence.
- c) you resign in circumstances where there is a suspicion that you harmed, or may harm, a child or vulnerable adult. This may, for example, arise where an employee resigns before disciplinary action is taken by the organisation.

13.MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

- 13.1 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.