

**Foundry Street Community Centre**

<b>Document</b>	<b>SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN &amp; ADULTS POLICY</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>27 March 2023</b>

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# 1. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & ADULTS POLICY

## 1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 It is widely accepted that it is the responsibility of every adult to safeguard the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. This policy sets out how Foundry Street Community Centre operates to keep children, young people and adults at risk of abuse or neglect safe from abuse.

1.1.2 We recognise we have a duty of care to members, volunteers, employees, trustees as well as any children, young people, families, and/or adults at risk of abuse who use Foundry Street Community Centre. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone involved in the Centre in a paid or voluntary capacity, together with those working in affiliated organisations, has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and promoting best practice.

## 1.2 Definitions

1.2.1 **Adult at risk of abuse or neglect** for the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph the Care Act 2014:

- (a) has care and support needs
- (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- (c) As a result of their care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

We recognise that if someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service they may still be an adult at risk.

1.2.2 **Children and young people** are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old.

1.2.3 **“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children”** is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 as:

- (a) Protecting children from maltreatment
- (b) Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- (c) Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- (d) Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

1.2.4 **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** is the person appointed by the trustees of Foundry Street Community Centre to undertake this role.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

2.1.1 Foundry Street Community Centre (“the Centre”) recognises that it has a responsibility to:

- (a) Safeguard and promote the interests and well-being of children and adults at risk with whom it is working.
- (b) Take all reasonable practical steps to protect them from harm, discrimination, or degrading treatment.
- (c) Have a person-centred approach to safeguarding and respect the rights, wishes and feelings of adults at risk and involve them in safeguarding procedures where possible.

2.1.2 Children and vulnerable adults protection procedures can:

- (a) Offer safeguards to the individuals with whom we work, and to our members of staff, volunteers and those in affiliated organisations.
- (b) Help to maintain the professionalism and the standards of practice that are associated with the operation of the Centre.
- (c) We recognise that any procedure is only as effective as the ability and skill of those who operate it. We are committed to:
  - (i) Proper recruitment policies
  - (ii) The provision of support and appropriate training
  - (iii) Clear processes for recognition and responding to concerns
  - (iv) Working together with parents/carers and other organisations to ensure that the needs and the welfare of all remains paramount.

## **3. PRINCIPLES**

- (a) The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount.
- (b) All users regardless of age, culture, disability, gender identity, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- (c) All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously; and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- (d) Anyone aged 18 years or under should be considered as a child for the purposes of this document.

## **4. TYPES OF ABUSE**

4.1.1 We recognise that types of abuse can include:

- (a) Physical – for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, or restraining.
- (b) Psychological – for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating.
- (c) Financial – for example the illegal or unauthorised use of a person’s property, money, pension book or other valuables.

- (d) Sexual – for example, forcing a person to take part in sexual activity without consent.
- (e) Neglect or acts of omission – for example, where a person is deprived of food, clothing, comfort or medication.
- (f) Discrimination - for example slurs or similar treatment on the ground of a person's race, gender and gender identity, age disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- (g) Domestic abuse - for example, someone who is in a close relationship with a child, young person or adult at risk behaving in a way that causes them physical, mental or emotional damage through coercive and controlling behaviour.
- (h) Modern slavery - for example, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic slavery.
- (i) Organisational abuse - for example neglect and poor practice within an institution, care setting or care provided.
- (j) Self-Neglect – an adult at risk may also neglect themselves.

4.1.2 Child Abuse can take many forms but following guidance from Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership we recognise the key categories are Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect.

## 5. RECOGNITION OF ABUSE

5.1.1 Even for those experienced in working with children, young people and adults at risk, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. The Centre acknowledges that their staff, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, are not experts at such recognition. It therefore expects them to report any concern they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and follow actions outlined in this policy.

5.1.2 If the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is not available, or the concern relates to this person, the person who has a safeguarding concern should contact the relevant agencies as outlined in this document to report their concern and seek further guidance.

## 6. INDICATIONS THAT A CHILD OR ADULT AT RISK IS BEING ABUSED

6.1.1 It must be recognised that the list below is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of the indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is not the responsibility of those involved in the Centre in a paid or voluntary capacity, or representatives from affiliated organisations, to decide that abuse is occurring, but it is their responsibility to act on any concerns and follow the appropriate safeguarding reporting procedures outlined in this policy.

6.1.2 Indications that a child or adult at risk is being abused can include:

- (a) Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- (b) An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- (c) The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- (d) Someone else—a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- (e) Unexplained changes in behaviour—e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- (f) Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- (g) Engages in sexually explicit behaviour in games.
- (h) Is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected.
- (i) Has difficulty in making friends.
- (j) Is prevented from socialising with other children.
- (k) Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- (l) Loses weight for no apparent reason.
- (m) Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

## **7. DISCLOSURE FROM CHILD OR ADULT AT RISK ABOUT ABUSE**

7.1.1 If an individual discloses or indicates that they are being abused, or information is obtained which gives concerns that a child or adult at risk is being abused, the person receiving this information should:

- (a) Take it seriously.
- (b) Stay calm.
- (c) Listen carefully to what is said and allow the person to continue at their own pace.
- (d) Be sensitive and reassure them that they were right to tell someone.
- (e) Communicate that you will take what they seriously.
- (f) Keep questions to a minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said.
- (g) Never confront the person thought to be causing harm.
- (h) Reassure the individual, but do not make promises of confidentiality which might not be feasible in light of the information they disclose.
- (i) Make a full record of what has been said, heard and/or seen and report this as soon as possible using the appropriate procedures outlined in this policy.

## **8. RECORDING AND INFORMATION**

- 8.1.1 Information about the concern or report of abuse must be as factual and helpful as possible to support further investigations by the police and other agencies. It is necessary to make a detailed record which should contain the following:
- (a) The nature of the allegation.
  - (b) A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
  - (c) The individuals account, if they can give this, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries (if present) occurred.
  - (d) Any times, dates, or other relevant information.
  - (e) A clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay.
- 8.1.2 Reporting the matter to the police should not however be delayed by attempts to obtain more information. Once an allegation or concern has been raised with the police, or the local authority, then the concern must be reported to the DSO (if for reasons of urgency they were not the ones reporting). The DSO will report to the trustees using the procedure outlined in this policy. Wherever possible, referrals made should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. A record should also be made of the name and designation of the police officer, or local authority contact, to whom the concerns were passed, together with the time and date of the call, in case any follow-up is needed.

## **9. RESPONDING AND REPORTING SUSPICIONS OR REPORTS OF ABUSE**

- 9.1.1 It is not the responsibility of a member of the Centre to take responsibility or to decide whether or not abuse is taking place. There is, however, a responsibility to report concerns so that appropriate agencies can then make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child or adult at risk.
- 9.1.2 The Centre appreciates that there may be some reluctance to report an incident or disclosure, especially if the person reporting is unclear as to whether abuse has occurred. As a result of this, the Centre have a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), who can be contacted at the earliest possible time after the event or allegation. The following process should be followed when reporting a concern or report of abuse:

**Child**



**Contact FSCC's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) if available**



**If the DSO is not available, or you need further advice, support or guidance, contact NSPCC:  
0808 800 5000**



**If you are reporting during normal working hours contact the Multi Agency Screening Team (MAST) on:  
01422 393 336**



**When MAST is unavailable, you can call the Out of hours Emergency Duty Team on:  
01422 288 000**



**Further guidance and information is available on the [Calderdale Safeguarding Children Partnership website](#).**

**Vulnerable adult**



**Contact FSCC's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) if available**



**If the DSO is not available, or you need further advice, contact Gateway to Care:  
01422 393000**



**To alert Gateway to Care about adult abuse, complete an [alert form](#) and send to:  
[gatewaytocare@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:gatewaytocare@calderdale.gov.uk)**



**When Gateway to Care is unavailable, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team:  
01422 288000**



**Further guidance and access to the Alert Form can be found on the [Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board website](#).**

- 9.1.3 Whilst the Centre acknowledges the importance of the role of statutory agencies involved in the individuals welfare (local authority, social services, police, NSPCC), if the individual is in immediate danger the police should be contacted.
- 9.1.4 The Centre may report the incident or disclosure to the social services department which has a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child. When a child protection referral is made its staff have a legal responsibility to investigate. This may involve talking to the child and family and gathering information from other people who know the child. Inquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.

## 10. FSCC'S COMMITMENT

- 10.1.1 This section outlines the Centre's commitment to appropriately responding, and acting on, any reports or concerns of abuse about an individual working or volunteering at the community centre. This includes volunteers, trustees, and staff members.
- 10.1.2 If an individual has a concern about an individual involved in the Centre, they should not hesitate to gain advice from appropriate agencies (NSPCC, Multi Agency Screening Team, Gateway to Care) as outlined in this policy. It is acknowledged that feelings generated by the discovery that a member of staff or volunteer is, or may, be abusing a child or vulnerable adult will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers. However, it is important that any concerns for the welfare of the individual arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately.
- 10.1.3 The Centre would like to assure all staff, volunteers and members that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports their concerns that a colleague is, or may be abusing a child or vulnerable adult.
- 10.1.4 Where there is a complaint of abuse against a member of staff, there may be three types of investigation:
- (a) A criminal investigation.
  - (b) A child protection investigation.
  - (c) A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.
- 10.1.5 The results of the investigation undertaken by the police, and any other agencies involved, may influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.
- (a) If, following consideration the allegation is clearly about poor practice, then the Centre will deal with this as a misconduct issue.
  - (b) Any suspicion that an individual has been abused by a member will be reported to the DSO who will take such steps as they consider necessary to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other person who may be at risk.
  - (c) The DSO will refer the allegation to the relevant agency, who may involve the police.



- (d) Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.
  - (e) If the person in charge is the subject of the suspicion/allegation and is a member of the Centre, the report must be made to the Centre's DSO who is then responsible for taking the action outlined above and reporting where appropriate to the trustees. If the DSO is the subject, then the report should be made to a trustee.
  - (f) Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries, the Centre must assess all individual cases under the appropriate misconduct/disciplinary and welfare procedures, to decide whether a member should be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the trustees of the Centre will reach a decision based upon the information that is available which could suggest that on a balance of probability it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of children and vulnerable adults should always remain paramount.
  - (g) Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate to children, vulnerable adults, parents and members of staff and volunteers.
- 10.1.6 Everyone has a right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Basic guidelines will help safeguard both children, vulnerable adults, staff, volunteers and the organisation and reduce the risk of allegations being made. These are listed below.

## **11. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

- 11.1.1 We recognise that anyone could have the potential to abuse children or vulnerable adults in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working or volunteering at the Centre. It is essential the same procedure is used consistently whether in part-time or full-time occupation.
- 11.1.2 When undertaking recruitment checks the following should be included:
- (a) All volunteers and staff undertaking a role at the Centre should complete an application form designed to elicit information about an applicant's past career (including any gaps), and require the individual to disclose any spent or unspent criminal convictions.
  - (b) It is expected that through their role at the Centre, every volunteer and staff member will have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check must be completed as part of the recruitment process to maintain information about individuals who are deemed unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults
  - (c) Consent should be obtained from applicants for DBS checks.

- (d) At least two references should be taken up, including one from a professional that is unrelated to the applicant.
- (e) the Centre has effective measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of information received in relation to applicants is treated with the strictest of confidence (See Data Protection Policy for more information).

## **12. TRAINING**

It should be recognised that recruitment checks are only part of the process to protect children and vulnerable adults from possible abuse by members of staff/volunteers. The Centre trustees are required to have completed safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults training, with the Centre's course or an acceptable alternative as determined by the Centre. They should receive appropriate ongoing training and attend suitable seminars undertaken by experienced facilitators so that they are aware and sensitive to potentially abusive situations.

## **13. SUPERVISION**

Trustees and those responsible for management of the Centre and staff should be sensitive to any concerns about abuse or not adhering to good practice as set out in this policy, and act on them at an early stage. They should also offer appropriate support to those who report concerns.

## **14. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

The Centre will ensure that there is a well established complaints procedure in operation and that staff, volunteers, members and affiliated organisations have the relevant information that will allow easy access to this procedure.