
CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT POLICY

Statement of Policy

We will endeavour to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded from harm while they visit our property or participate in our activities.

We will do this by:

1. Making sure our **trustees, staff and volunteers** are **carefully selected**
2. Providing appropriate **training** in issues of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults
3. **Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare** of any child or vulnerable adult in contact with the organisation
4. **Not physically, emotionally or sexually abusing** any child or vulnerable adult in contact with the organisation
5. **Taking all reasonable steps to prevent** anyone involved in the organisation or any persons working for us or member of the public from putting any child or vulnerable adult in a situation in which there is an **unreasonable risk to their health and safety**
6. **Upholding British Values**, defined as 'democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs'.
7. **Taking all reasonable steps to prevent** anyone involved in the organisation, persons working for us or member of the public **from physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or vulnerable adult**
8. **Reporting** to a Designated Officer any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused in contact with the organisation
9. **Implementing** this policy in conjunction with any Health and Safety guidelines already in place

A Recruiting Staff and Selecting Volunteers

All members of staff and volunteers shall be given a personal copy of this policy (and will sign a form to say that this is the case) before taking up their duties, and are informed in writing of any changes to this policy. Any person who feels that this policy needs to be added to or changed in any way should contact the Designated Officer.

In recruiting and appointing workers we Faiths4Change will be responsible for the following:

- Identifying the tasks and responsibilities involved (by producing a job description) and the type of person most suitable for the job (by producing a person specification)
- Drawing up the selection criteria and putting together a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience

The process for applications for employment or volunteering:

- All applicants should apply in writing and their application will cover their personal details, previous and current work / volunteering experience.
- We will always send a copy of our Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding policy with the application pack
- We will make sure that we measure the application against the selection criteria
- All applicants need to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- We will request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant
- We will always interview our candidates, ask for two references and a police check
- We will have at least two people from our organisation on the interview panel
- For those staff or volunteers who are coming into contact with children or vulnerable adults - we will request two written references from people who are not family members or friends and who have knowledge of the applicant's experience of working with children or vulnerable adults (where they have it). We will ask the referee to also comment on their suitability for working with children or vulnerable adults. We will also try and follow up written references with a telephone call
- We will only confirm appointment when the successful applicant obtains an appropriate DBS certificate (Enhanced or Standard) from the Criminal Records Bureau (as required for the role). Employment with Faiths4Change will not commence until a DBS Certificate has been obtained.

B Definitions of Abuse

Neglect:

The actual or likely persistent or significant neglect of a child or vulnerable adult, or the failure to protect a child or vulnerable adult from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or persistent failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child's or vulnerable adult's health or development.

Physical injury:

Actual or likely deliberate physical injury to a child or vulnerable adult, or wilful neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child or vulnerable adult.

Sexual abuse:

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult. The involvement of children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend or to which they are unable to give informed consent.

Emotional abuse:

Actual or likely persistent or significant emotional ill treatment or rejection resulting in severe adverse effects on the emotional, physical and / or behavioural development of a child or vulnerable adult. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment.

Financial:

Usually associated with the misuse of money, valuables or property. This includes unauthorised withdrawals from a young person or vulnerable adult's bank account, theft, fraud, exploitation or pressure in connection to wills or inheritance.

Verbal:

Any remark or comment by others that causes distress. This includes demeaning, disrespectful, humiliating, sexist or sarcastic comments; or excessive / unwanted familiarity, shouting, swearing or name calling.

Forced Marriage:

This is a separate issue from arranged marriage and is a human rights abuse.

Female Genital Mutilation:

This is an illegal practice in the UK and is internationally recognised as a violation of human rights of girls and women.

Radicalisation:

The Government's Prevent Duty Guidance defines radicalisation as 'the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups'.

C Children and Vulnerable Adults Safety and Welfare Guidelines**These guidelines apply to:**

- Any situation involving children and young people up to age 18, whether or not accompanied by adults, and vulnerable adults (see Appendix A for definition of vulnerable adult)
- All staff, contractors and consultants working at the organisation's property or events.

a) General duties of all staff and volunteers in regard to the safety and welfare of children and similarly vulnerable adults:

- to take all reasonable steps to protect children and vulnerable adults from hazards;
- to take appropriate action if an accident occurs;
- to strictly observe the code of behaviour given here;
- to take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children or vulnerable adults in contact with the organisation;
- to report any incident or suspicion of abuse.

b) Code of behaviour for all staff and volunteers

People working with the organisation must always observe the following requirements where children, young people or vulnerable adults are concerned.

You should always:

- Uphold the spirit and specific provisions of the Statement of Policy and these Guidelines.
- Do your best to behave in an open and friendly manner, but avoid being over familiar in word or action.
- In so far as possible, avoid situations in which you are alone with children or vulnerable adults. If necessary, move to a place where you can both be seen by other colleagues or other adults.
- If a child is hurt or distressed, do your best to comfort or reassure them without compromising their dignity or doing anything to discredit your own behaviour.
- Try to avoid any physical contact or behaviour that could be unwelcome or misconstrued. Physical touch should only be in response to a child or vulnerable adults need and should respect their age and individual stage of development – it may be appropriate to hold a child's hand, to put a comforting arm around their shoulder or carry them – for instance, if they have fallen. However, you should first explain what you have in mind and ask directly if that is what they want. Otherwise, it may be unwelcome or misinterpreted.
- Where you have to rely on your own judgement, always treat the child or vulnerable adult's welfare as paramount.

You have a strict duty never to subject any child or vulnerable adult to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to honour this will be treated as gross misconduct. This means that it is unacceptable for example:

- to distress a child or vulnerable adult by shouting at them or calling them derogatory names;
- to slap a child or vulnerable adult;
- to hold a child or vulnerable adult in such a way that it causes pain, or to shake them;
- to physically restrain a child or vulnerable adult, except by using minimum necessary force*, to protect them from harming themselves or others.
*By way of guidance, Section 76(7) of the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 explains that this covers force used with a legitimate purpose; with an honestly-held belief that it was necessary to prevent crime or further harm; and that no alternative means was available of achieving a lawful objective;
- to take part in horseplay or rough games;
- to allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind;
- to do things of a personal nature for vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves or an accompanying adult can do for them;
- to do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves or an accompanying adult can do for them; this includes going to the toilet with a child unless another adult is present;
- to allow or engage in sexually suggestive behaviour within a child's sight or hearing, or make suggestive remarks to or within earshot of a child;
- to give or show to a child anything which could be construed as pornographic;
- to seek or agree to meet children / vulnerable adults anywhere beyond normal visitor areas or off the organisation's property without the full prior knowledge and agreement of their parents or carers.

c) Support in exercising your best judgement

If you witness or suspect abusive behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult, you should use the procedural guidelines that follow. We all appreciate that this may call for fine judgement and even courage.

As long as you honour this Code of Behaviour and the other guidance given here, you will have the practical, moral and legal support of senior colleagues in any situation where you have to rely on your own judgement. If you are in any doubt as to what to do then you should contact the Designated Officer who will be able to provide you with the necessary advice.

Guidelines: What to do in particular circumstances

1 Protecting children and vulnerable adults from hazards or rash behaviour

We recognise that it is impossible to ensure that a person never comes to harm.

However, you should also at all times be alert to potential dangers, taking swift appropriate action to ensure safety, for example, getting repairs done, new warning notices, altering barriers etc. 'Reasonable' and 'likely' are the operative terms here. **This means allowing for factors such as the following**, especially when children or vulnerable adults are unaccompanied by adults:-

- Children are usually smaller than adults. So, for example, something set at a reasonable height for an adult may be dangerous for a child or above their sight line.
- Also children are usually less strong than adults, which may affect the design of doors or gates.
- Children are primed to explore or play games. This means that we have got to do our best to anticipate adventurous behaviour and assess the risks involved.
- Children and possibly vulnerable adults may have less experience or a lower degree of understanding as to what constitutes danger. They can be unaware or heedless of dangers you can clearly recognise. Even when aware of danger, they may act through bravado.

You have a duty to prevent children and vulnerable adults from coming to harm through their own rash actions.

- You need to judge carefully how to intervene.
- Often the best course is to guide them into a safe course of action, rather than just telling them to stop what they're doing – and it is better to give positive rather than negative instructions (e.g. "Walk on the grass, please" instead of "Get off the wall".) Or it may work to distract them from something dangerous.
- If you have to tell them to stop what they're doing try to be clear and definite about it. It helps to take a deep breath before you say anything!
- Avoid being officious or challenging. You need to exert your authority not 'prove' it.
- If, despite your efforts, a child or vulnerable adult persists in jeopardising their own or other people's safety, get help if you can or consider asking them to leave the site.
- If they are in serious danger and you cannot persuade them away from it, you should treat this as an emergency and contact the emergency services.

- Where circumstances lead to you considering physical restraint then care must be given to this course of action – physical restraint should be avoided as some physical restraint may be regarded as assault.

You must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that no other member of staff, volunteer or member of the public compromises the health and safety of any child or vulnerable adult in contact with the organisation. For example, someone might move a barrier that has been placed with vulnerable adults in mind, or overlook the likelihood of vulnerable adults being at an event, or suggest an activity that is inherently risky.

- This means intervening directly to prevent this, or reporting the situation to someone with more authority to intervene.
- In dealing with the person, bear in mind that the situation is more likely to arise through enthusiasm or thoughtlessness than wilful negligence.

2 What to do if an accident happens

- Depending on your judgement of the situation, go to the scene immediately if possible and / or summon First Aid assistance and / or contact the emergency services.
- With vulnerable adults it can be hard to tell whether they have been injured or whether an injury is serious. If you have any doubt about this, you should err on the side of caution and contact the emergency services. Even if a child is accompanied and you think an accident is not being treated seriously enough, get medical assistance on your own initiative if necessary.
- Normal accident recording and reporting procedures apply.

First Aid

- Unless there is good reason, first aid should not be administered without the permission of the child's parent, teacher or accompanying adult. **A child cannot give consent.** If the parent is not on site, get their phone number, if possible. However, if a child is alone and say, unconscious, the situation should be dealt with as for any other visitor.
- If at all possible, treatment should only be given by a trained first aider or appointed person.
- Provided this does not in itself put the child or vulnerable adult at risk, always try to administer first aid within sight and sound of other adults.
- Always tell the child or vulnerable adult exactly what you are doing and why.
- Unless it is irrelevant, ask the child or vulnerable adult if they use medication (e.g. for asthma, diabetes, and epilepsy) or have any allergies. Some people have allergic reactions to stings. Unless it is a first occurrence, a parent, teacher or accompanying adult should know of any such conditions.
- For minor injuries, it is all right to use a non fluffy cloth or sticking plaster, but you may not offer any medication, including antiseptics or pills of any kind. If you have any doubts about helping someone to use their own medication, phone **National Health Service Direct on 0845 4647 or the emergency services.**
- Any treatment should be as little as necessary without threatening the individual's well being. **If a child or vulnerable adult comes to you for comfort** because of a minor accident or fright, it is perfectly in keeping with the Code of Behaviour to hold their hand or put your arm around them. Just make sure:
 - that you know about any injury and do nothing to make it worse.

- that physical contact is what the individual wants, and the kind of contact between you is appropriate to their age and stage of development.
- Do your best to stay in sight of other adults.

If a child or vulnerable adult needs a doctor or hospital, call the emergency services.

It is nearly always best to stay on site with them and wait for the ambulance. You should only take the risk of bringing in the individual yourself if the emergency services ask you to do so because of exceptional circumstances.

3 What to do if someone is being violent to a child or vulnerable adult

If you come across someone hitting, hurting or violently shouting at a child or vulnerable adult, you should try to prevent the abuse, if you can do so without unreasonable risk to the child / vulnerable adult or yourself.

- You have to judge whether it is a fleeting incident, which warrants showing your disapproval or a threat of actual harm that requires someone to intervene.
- You also have to judge whether intervening is likely to stop the abuse or to inflame the situation. This can be even more complicated if one child / vulnerable adult is being abused by another.
- So long as you are mindful of the individual's welfare, you are entitled to intervene by:
 - asking or telling the perpetrator to stop.
 - explaining that such behaviour is not acceptable on the organisation's property or at its events.
 - restraining a child / vulnerable adult from abusing another.
 - saying that you will report the incident – as a matter of fact, not a threat
 - summoning help.
 - notifying the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) or the police.
 - asking the perpetrator to leave the property.
- While you have to be firm, it can only help if you are calm and not antagonistic. Bear in mind that you may be dealing with an upset or angry adult as well as a distressed child.
- Never use or threaten physical force as this could inflame the situation and result in further violence.
- If you have any doubt about what to do, consult the Designated Officers or one of the following:
 - 24 hour NSPCC Protection Helpline;
 - the local Social Services, there is normally a duty social worker available at all times.
- If you are worried about any incident, you should record the details and report it to the Designated Officer.

The same principles apply if there is someone behaving suspiciously towards children / vulnerable adults.

4 If you suspect a colleague / receive an allegation of abuse

We hope that you will never encounter any situation of abuse while you are with the organisation. However, you must know what to do if you discover an incident of abuse, suspect a colleague of abuse or receive an allegation of abuse.

If you suspect a colleague:

It is your duty to report your suspicions to the Designated Officer. **It is not your responsibility to investigate your suspicions.** Nor should you concern yourself with looking for evidence of abuse. This requires expertise you are not expected to have; your role is to respond appropriately.

If an allegation is made to you about a colleague

It is not your responsibility to investigate any allegation. Nor should you concern yourself with looking for evidence of abuse. This requires expertise you are not expected to have. Your role is to respond appropriately and to report what you have been told to the Designated Officer.

If a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure to you about abuse not involving organisation staff or volunteers

It is not your responsibility to investigate any disclosure. Nor should you concern yourself with looking for evidence of abuse. This requires expertise you are not expected to have. **Your role is to respond appropriately and to report what you have been told to the NSPCC or local social services.** You should also inform the Designated Officer.

If a disclosure or allegation is being made to you:

- Listen carefully and sensitively, stay calm, and offer understanding and re-assurance.
- Check your understanding of the situation, without being investigative.
- Record what you have been told.
- Alert a senior colleague at the earliest opportunity within 24 hours.

Guidance on responding to a disclosure of abuse

Do your best to:

- Stay calm
- Receive the information
- Listen, reassure
- Record the information
- Report to an appropriate colleague
- Accept your own feelings and consider getting support for yourself

Do not

- Probe in an investigative way or ask leading questions

- Make a child / vulnerable adult repeat the story unnecessarily
- Promise confidentiality

If you become suspicious about the behaviour where children / vulnerable adults are concerned of a colleague or someone associated with the organisation, steps 2, 3 and 4 above also apply.

If you think the situation is sufficiently serious and urgent, contact the Designated Officer or, failing that the police. Don't let anxiety that you might have jumped to a wrong conclusion deter you from reporting any genuine worries that you have. Procedures put in place will be used to follow up any such report, and we will not hold it against you should a well-intentioned but mistaken report be made.

If you feel you need expert support, because you come across abuse while working with us, we recommend that you discuss it with the Designated Officer.

5 If an allegation of abuse is made against you

- If an allegation is made directly to you, you should advise the Designated Officer, even if you think it is trivial.
- If we receive an allegation against you, we will inform you.
- All allegations of misconduct will be subject to standard disciplinary procedures.
- You are entitled to the moral and practical support if an unwarranted allegation of misconduct is made against you. As long as your behaviour is in line with the policy and these guidelines, we cannot envisage any allegation of misconduct being justified.
- Any allegation will be scrupulously investigated, with due regard for confidentiality.
- In itself this should not be interpreted as indicating culpability. It is part of our duty to protect people working with us from any unfounded allegation.
- If your behaviour contravenes this policy and guidelines, it will be treated as gross misconduct.
- If you have concerns about how an allegation against yourself or anyone else is being dealt with, you should inform a colleague at the most senior level you think appropriate.

D Supporting the Policy

Confidentiality

We recognise that it is important for us all to feel that any information about alleged or actual abuse will only be disclosed where it is in best interests of the child / vulnerable adult to do so. Furthermore, we have a responsibility to protect the identity of anyone reporting suspected or actual abuse. No such disclosure will be made without careful consideration.

The role of the Designated Officer

The nominated child and vulnerable adult protection officer is:

Designated Officer

Name: Helen Eaton

Contact information: heaton@myerscough.ac.uk

Tel: 01995 642368
Mob: 07825 117953

Their role is twofold: to serve as a centre for information and guidance on child and vulnerable adult welfare issues, and to support Trustees, staff and volunteers in dealing with any suggestion of misconduct or need for expert advice (see Appendix B).

Disseminating information about this policy

- Everyone working or applying to work for us is to be made aware of our policy for children and vulnerable adult's welfare. Furthermore, these guidelines are being issued to all trustees, volunteers, staff and other people who are likely to have contact with children as part of their work with us.
- Queries or suggestions regarding the policy or guidelines should be channelled through the Designated Officer.

Policy reviewed and adopted by: Trustees 17th December 2021



Signed

Phil Leigh, Chair of Trustees

Review date: 17th December 2026 or earlier should legislation change

Appendix A: Definition of Vulnerable Adult

A vulnerable adult is a person who is aged 18 years or older and:

- is living in residential accommodation, such as a care home or a residential special school;
- is living in sheltered housing;
- is receiving domiciliary care in his or her own home;
- is receiving any form of health care;
- is detained in a prison, remand centre, young offender institution, secure training centre or attendance centre or under the powers of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- is in contact with probation services;
- is receiving a welfare service of a description to be prescribed in regulations;
- is receiving a service or participating in an activity which is specifically targeted at people with age-related needs, disabilities or prescribed physical or mental health conditions or expectant or nursing mothers living in residential care (age-related needs includes needs associated with frailty, illness, disability or mental capacity);
- is receiving direct payments from a local authority/HSS body in lieu of social care services;
- requires assistance in the conduct of his or her own affairs.

Appendix B: The Role of the Designated Officer

The Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy must include the name(s) of the Designated Officer(s), her / his role and responsibilities and how s/he can be contacted.

The Designated Officer(s) should ensure that they are knowledgeable about child and vulnerable adult protection and that they undertake any training considered necessary to keep updated on new developments.

The Designated Officer(s) is the link between the members of the public, staff and statutory agencies. They will take responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Board on how the policy impacts on vulnerable adults and organisation staff / volunteers.

The Designated Officer(s) will have the following functions:

- To promote awareness of the child / vulnerable adult safeguarding policy within the organisation;
- To influence policy within the organisation in order to prioritise the needs of children and vulnerable adults;
- To be an advisor on best practice in regard to the child / vulnerable adult protection policy;
- To advise on and co-ordinate training for others, as appropriate;
- To build a network with relevant personnel in the Statutory Authorities;
- To agree incident reporting procedures;
- To keep records of incidents and reports, together with any other relevant information;
- To report incidents to the Statutory Authorities and ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing, under confidential cover;
- To ensure that individual case records are maintained of the action taken by the organisation.

The Designated Officer does not have the responsibility of investigating or validating protection concerns within the organisation and has no counselling or therapeutic role.

Appendix C: Referral Contact List

- **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) 24 HRS Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000**
- **Liverpool Social Services:**
0151 233 3700 for Careline Children's Service
0151 233 3800 for Careline Adult Services (for all queries about people aged 18 and over)

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
(Manages and oversees individual cases, provides advice and guidance)