



# Safeguarding Policy

'Safeguarding' means doing all we can to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults as well as taking measures to protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility (to varying degrees).

Melissa Maynard Heritage (I, me or my) has a duty to assist in reducing risk of abuse by complying with the terms of this policy. I pledge to act on any suspicion or allegation of abuse immediately.

## **Vision and Values**

- Everyone has the right to live their life free from violence, fear and abuse, and vulnerable people have the right to be protected from harm and exploitation.
- It is the responsibility of everyone to play a part in preventing, detecting and reporting risk of harm to vulnerable adults and children. Melissa Maynard Heritage works together with clients and the appropriate agencies to protect vulnerable adults and children.

## **Who is covered by this policy?**

- A vulnerable adult (over 18, or someone 16 to 18 who is married)
  - lives in residential accommodation such as a care home, residential special school or sheltered housing and is receiving domiciliary care in their own home (i.e. help with feeding, transport, finances, washing).
  - A vulnerable adult is also defined as a person who, for any reason, may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. This could be a short or long term condition.
- A child is anyone under the age of 18.

## **Legal Framework**

This policy is underpinned by the legal principles listed below:

- Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004 and Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014 and Education Act 2002
- Digital Economy Act 2017
- Adoption and Children Act 2002, Children and Adoption Act 2006 and Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 and Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009
- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Education Act 2011
- A child is defined by the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts as someone under 18 years old.

## **Useful terms**

- DSO: Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- DBS: Disclosure & Barring Service. Has taken over the duties of the former Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). DBS Check: formerly known as a CRB check.
- Police check without DBS – a basic police check, useful for those who might have infrequent contact with children.
- Only those with regular contact (more than 3 times a month) can get a full Enhanced DBS (with barred list check)
- Regulated activity: the term used to describe the sorts of activity that requires a person to have a DBS check.

## **Who is responsible for safeguarding?**

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility' to varying degrees. I undertake the following:

- To ensure that I remain up-to-date with legislation and changes within safeguarding best practice.
- To undertake an Enhanced DBS check, when asked by a client, at the client's cost, if I am undertaking regulated activity on their behalf.
- To abide by a client's safeguarding policies and procedures when working on their site or on their behalf with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults. Where such a safeguarding policy does not exist, my policy and procedures will be used.

I have the following credentials with regard to Safeguarding:

- Safeguarding Arrangements for Workers
- Level 3 Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Level 3 Safeguarding Adults
- Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Registered trainer for Level 1 Safeguarding Awareness Training for Children and Young People and
- Vulnerable Adults with Trainer Courses Ltd.

## **What to do in the event of a safeguarding incident**

This may be about a child visitor, a coaching or mentoring clients, a member of the public, a volunteer or member of staff of a client's business. During a disclosure I will need to remain in a public space but I might want to talk quietly in a place that I can record details of the incident.

- As soon as possible write down details of what I have witnessed.
- If someone is speaking, let them talk. I may ask open questions and some further questions for factual information. Do not attempt to force children or vulnerable adults to speak and don't make threats, or promises.
- Make sure that my information is set out clearly and in detail. Describe the circumstances and note the setting and anyone else who was there at the time.
- In any situation, stay calm and try not to show shock, listen carefully and be supportive. I might say 'I think you're doing the right thing'.
- Speak to the person responsible for the child or vulnerable adult, telling them that I will need to record the incident as a safeguarding concern. I may seek support from others when I do this.
- It's not up to me to prove that the information about abuse or suspected abuse is true. I must not try to investigate myself.

## Promoting Good Practice

The following guidelines will help to reduce situations where abuse of children may occur and protect me by promoting good practice.

### On Site

- Avoid situations when I could be alone with a child or vulnerable adults. Make sure others are nearby.
- Don't communicate with any children or vulnerable adults linked to my work in a personal capacity, e.g. don't become 'friends' on Facebook, or exchange personal mobile phone numbers. This includes work experience students and young volunteers.
- Don't go into toilets with children or vulnerable adults. Enable responsible adults and carers to access the toilets as they require.
- Avoid prolonged physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult. Be aware that a brief touch on the shoulder or arm is acceptable but on any other area of the body. Touching should be relevant, for example when helping with costume.
- Only hold a lost child's hand if offered (by the child) and in order to lead them safely to another public space.
- Never leave a group of children under the age of 14 unattended. They may be able to move freely within one room or space but adults should be aware of the whereabouts of the child or group of children.
- Never use any form of physical discipline.
- Do not be overly familiar in your language or behaviour with children or be over-friendly with some at the expense of others.
- Don't take a child alone with me on foot and never invite a child into my car or any other vehicle. This includes work experience students.
- Give jobs to work experience students or young volunteers that can be done in public, shared or open areas of the centre.
- Always listen to and respect children and/or vulnerable adults in your charge and act upon any concerns or allegations of abuse.
- Do not invite children to join WhatsApp chats.
- Consider the risks of inviting a vulnerable adult to a WhatsApp group. This will mean a range of people have their contacts. This should be made very clear during their induction.

### Best Practice when children and/or vulnerable adults are working online

- Children should be 13+ when undertaking social media
- Children should be 16+ when taking part in videoconferencing calls.
- Do not attempt to find out personal information about vulnerable adults or young people by searching for them on social media platforms.
- Stay alert to online and social media activity undertaken by young volunteers, vulnerable adults or work experience students on behalf of your organisation. If I find, during routine checks of the organisation activity, conversation threads of content that concerns me, act promptly as a safeguarding matter, working with the client as required by their policies and procedures.
- Be alert to vulnerable adults interacting with those who request money, support or other kinds of services (such as lifts in a car or meetings). Speak to the vulnerable adult initially but if concerns persist contact an emergency contact, or care home/carer.

- If problems arise always speak to the parent, carer, guardian or school. If a placement has been arranged via school, they may be my first contact but for serious concerns I should also contact parents.
- If I believe a child to be in immediate danger contact the police as an emergency on 999. For example, if a child has arranged to meet someone via an online chat and this is happening imminently.
- Remaining 'public' diminishes these problems. This means that a work experience student might post pictures of the galleries on your public Facebook page using your identifier (also called a 'handle' see 'Useful Definitions' for more information) but should never be asked to send a private message to a visitor.
- This also means that when communicating with vulnerable adults or children 16+ remotely, video or phone calls including 'Zoom' calls should be done via parents or carers and in shared spaces with parents/carers present.
- Children and/or vulnerable adults should always be given access to the social media login information and accounts that enable them to remain anonymous.
- These guidelines protect the children and vulnerable people in my care but also protect me. Situations can be misinterpreted and young people can also make false allegations.
- Regularly check search histories, be aware of social media content and ensure that private information is password protected on shared drives.
- Zoom calls should be undertaken in a professional manner. All those participating should wear suitable clothing and should use professional and respectful language.

### **Children at client events and on sites**

Unaccompanied children visiting the client's site

- When working at a client's site their policy and procedure guidelines will be followed.

Finding an unaccompanied child – not urgent

- If a child gets parted from their responsible adult, they can become very distressed. Take the child to the nearest safe location at the client's site (e.g. reception) as identified in the exchange of information or site induction.

Lost or missing children and vulnerable adults - urgent

- Gather the following information quickly and calmly if a child or vulnerable adult is reported lost or missing:
  - Name of child
  - Age of child
  - Physical description of child (height, colour of hair, clothing etc)
  - Where child was last seen
  - The time the child was last seen.
- Report this immediately to the client's volunteers and staff on site. Involve all staff and volunteers in searching for the child.
- If the child isn't found after 15 minutes ring the police (999) as an emergency.

## **Photography and Filming**

Parental, guardian or school permission will be sought for all photographs and films of children.

## **Online Age Recommendations**

It's worth noting that a range of practical and safeguarding issues need to be considered when both engaging young people using the below platforms.

Please ensure young people are the correct age for their tasks.

- Zoom and Skype 16+
- Facebook 13+
- Instagram 13+
- Twitter 13+
- YouTube 13+

Sources: <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/age-restrictions-social-media>

## **Bullying**

'Bullying is a pervasive type of aggression, which often occurs in schools and workplaces. As with other types of aggression, the harm that is inflicted – whether physical, emotional or both – is intentional. However, bullying has defining features which set it apart from other aggressive behaviours, in that it is repeated, and that the bully or bullies have greater access to power than their victim(s).' (NSPCC website accessed 24/05/12)

I will not tolerate any forms of racist, sexist or homophobic abuse from any groups or individuals representing Melissa Maynard Heritage or a client. Any incidents of racist, sexist or homophobic abuse will be reported in written form, and this information will then be passed on to the relevant agencies (e.g. the client's DSO).

## **Useful Contacts and Information**

### **Lincolnshire Children's Services**

Telephone our Customer Service Centre (8.00am to 6.00pm): 01522 782 111

Out of hours emergencies call: 01522 782 333

### **Lincolnshire Police**

Telephone on 01522 532 222 or Divisional Unit on:

Lincoln: 01522 885 316/7

Sleaford: 01529 302 420 Ext 3873

### **Other useful sources of information**

- **Childline UK** - 0800 1111
- **NSPCC** - Child Protection Helpline 24 hours, call free 0800 800500
- [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/disclosure-and-barring](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/disclosure-and-barring)
- [www.savethechildren.org.uk](http://www.savethechildren.org.uk)
- [www.charity-commission.go.uk/supportingcharities/protection](http://www.charity-commission.go.uk/supportingcharities/protection)
- [www.scoutbase.org.uk/hg/child-protection](http://www.scoutbase.org.uk/hg/child-protection)