

Safeguarding Policy

Purpose

All children and young people have the right to be protected. At Future Youth Zone we need to ensure that all members are safeguarded and protected from harm, whatever their specific needs and circumstances. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, volunteers, trustees and external agencies including partners delivering on behalf of Future Youth Zone are aware of their legal and personal responsibilities to ensure the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people. Future Youth Zone is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults at risk by implementing:

- Safeguarding procedures including additional safeguards to protect disabled children
- Safer recruitment and vetting of staff and volunteer's policy
- A code of conduct
- Support for staff and volunteers
- Supervision
- Training
- Safeguarding expectations for external agencies and partners delivering on behalf of Future Youth Zone.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

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

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults is defined for the purpose of this policy as:

- Ensuring they can live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- Empowering them by encouraging them to make their own decisions and provide informed consent.
- Preventing the risk of abuse and neglect and stop it occurring.
- Promoting their well-being and take their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs into account.

Our Legal Responsibilities

Future Youth Zone recognises that we all have a legal responsibility to take all reasonable actions to ensure that the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults' welfare is minimised and a duty of care is always exercised towards them. The document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)' sets out the arrangements for how all organisations must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

"Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children, child protection should take priority over all other work"

The Care Act 2014 sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

Adult protection is part of safeguarding and refers to,

"An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves" (Care Act 2014).

Application

This policy is;

- aimed (and applies to) at all Future Youth Zone employees, trustees and volunteers including external agencies or partners delivering on behalf of the Youth Zone;
- provides an outline on how to recognise the signs and symptoms of possible abuse to ensure that they recognise the significance of what they are observing, and the procedures that they need to follow if they have a concern.

This policy concerns all children and young people under the age of 18 (as defined by the Children Act 1989) and vulnerable adults aged 25 or under who are accessing the Youth Zone or who Youth Zone staff and volunteers come into contact with as a result of their activity with young people, in the case of any concerns with members who are 19 and without a disability, they will be dealt with as vulnerable adults.

All staff members and volunteers are to read this document and sign to say they have done so. In addition, all staff and volunteers are required to complete the local "Safeguarding Children - Basic - Level 1", on an annual basis, provided by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Safeguarding Toolkit

This policy is supplemented the "Safeguarding Tool Kit" which provides further detail, examples and training for employees, trustees and volunteers who work directly with children and young people. Staff and volunteers will be required to make themselves familiar with aspects of the toolkit as directed by the Youth Zone Designated Safeguarding Leads and/or their line manager.

Recognising Abuse

Abuse is "a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children."

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018)

Questioning Behaviours

The signs of child abuse might not always be obvious, and a child might not tell anyone what is happening to them. You should therefore question behaviours if something seems unusual and try to speak to the child, alone, if appropriate, to seek further information.

Be Alert, Question Behaviours, Ask for Help, Refer

Types of Abuse

In relation to child protection there are 4 kinds of abuse defined in "Working Together", they are:

1. Physical abuse

May involve hitting shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

2. Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include

interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur on its own.

3. Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse or not accessing appropriate antenatal care. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4. Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Adults at Risk

The Care Acts 2014 makes it clear that specific adult safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- Has care and support needs and
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect and
- Is unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs.

An adult with care and support needs may be:

- A person with a physical disability, a learning difficulty or a sensory impairment
- Someone with mental health needs, or a personality disorder
- A person with a long-term health condition
- Someone who misuses substances or alcohol to the extent that it affects their ability to manage day-to-day living.

This is not an exhaustive list.

Types of abuse for adults at risk:

- Physical abuse.
- Domestic violence or abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Psychological or **emotional abuse**.
- Financial or material abuse.
- Modern slavery.
- Discriminatory abuse.
- Organisational or institutional abuse.

Further detail and training resources can be found in the **"Safeguarding Toolkit"**

Taking Action

What to do if you suspect abuse

A young person may choose to disclose concerning information to any employee, trustee or volunteer, or may be observed carrying out concerning behaviour that raises concerns around possible abuse. It is not the duty of employees, trustee or volunteers to investigate the issue themselves, however it is their responsibility to gather as much information as possible. Where you suspect a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or there is potential for harm you should discuss your concerns with designated safeguarding lead or deputies who will help decide what action should be taken.

If there is a real concern the safeguarding lead or deputies will contact Children's Services and/or the Police. They will need your support in making the referral to ensure the details are recorded correctly.

If you are not sure or have any concerns, speak to the designated safeguarding lead or deputies. Remember that is what they are there for, to deal with any concerns and offer advice and support.

What to do if a young person tells you about abuse

If a young person/vulnerable adult makes a disclosure about abuse or you suspect they may be about to do so, it is imperative they understand you cannot keep this 'secret' but that you have a duty to report it to other professionals who will help keep them safe. Be honest and open about who you will speak to and why.

You should find a quiet place to talk where they feel comfortable. Ensure you give them the time they need to talk but be aware they will need to give a full account to Children's Services so avoid subjecting them to lengthy or multiple 'interviews' as it can confuse and jeopardise evidence. Try to keep eye level equal or lower than theirs.

Non-recent historic abuse

Non-recent child abuse, sometimes called historical abuse, is when an adult was abused as a child or young person under the age of 18. Non-recent historic abuse refers to one of 3 situations:

1. An adult making an allegation of abuse when they were under 18 years of age, that occurred at least 1 year before it was reported.
2. A child making an allegation of abuse that occurred at least 1 year before it was reported.
3. Someone reports an allegation, on behalf of someone else, relating to an offence committed over a year ago. NSPCC (2018).

Such disclosures can occur after long periods of time as the complainant may now feel comfortable that they are no longer at risk, have the confidence to make an allegation that will be believed, become aware that there have been other reports, or feel they need closure to move on. Whatever the motive, and however long ago the allegation, action must be taken because:

1. The alleged may not have been an isolated incident.
2. It may be part of a wider abuse situation.
3. The person(s) may still be abusing individuals and/or working with children.
4. There may be ongoing legal action.

Should an allegation or disclosure be made it is important to record and report such information as you would if it were a current situation. This includes allegations about staff or volunteers that no longer works/volunteers at Future Youth Zone and incidents that involved young people that no longer attend Future Youth Zone.

Golden Rules –

Remember it is not the duty of staff members and volunteers to investigate the issue but it is their responsibility to gather as much information as possible

The ‘5Rs’ underpin these reporting procedures as follows:

- **Recognise** concerns that a child/young person is being harmed or might be at risk of harm.
- **Respond appropriately** to a child/young person who is telling you what is happening to them.
- **Refer** the concerns on to your Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy, Session Lead or straight to the emergency services (if the incident warrants this)
- **Record** the concerns appropriately and any subsequent action taken
- **Resolution** and escalation are the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead/deputy to follow up referrals made to the authorities and if necessary, escalate concerns if identified risks remain.

Talk to staff

Employees / volunteers must:

- Find a quiet place to talk
- Listen, but do not press for information
- Stay calm and be reassuring
- Believe what you are being told
- Listen to the young person; if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it
- It is acceptable to observe injuries such as bruises, but not to ask a child to remove or adjust their clothing to observe them (injuries must be recorded on a Cause for Concern Form, Appendix 1)
- Do not question the child in a way that will introduce new words, phrases or concepts into their minds (leading questions)
- Do not challenge, confront or criticise their information, even if it seems unlikely or if there are obvious errors; they may be unable to give accurate timescales or dates
- If a disclosure is made, the pace should be dictated by the child without their being pressed for detail by being asked such questions as ‘what did they do next?’ or ‘where were you when this happened?’; the employee’s/volunteer’s role is to listen, not to investigate
- Use open questions
- Acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you this
- Do not criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love
- Do not promise confidentiality, reassure the young person that they have done the right thing, explain who you will have to tell and why; it is important that you do not make promises that you cannot keep

Remember it is a huge step for a young person to make a disclosure

Inform the relevant designated safeguarding lead and/or session lead immediately. If the situation is an emergency and neither safeguarding lead nor deputies are available, you should telephone Children’s Services directly or, if out of hours, the Emergency Duty Social Work team or Police Child Protection Team. You can also contact the following people for support:

Cath Taylor, Safeguarding Manager at OnSide – 07704005036
NSPCC Helpline – 0800 800 500

Recording Information

Make some notes immediately afterwards (being aware that note-taking during a disclosure may inhibit that disclosure, making it harder for the young person to be open and honest); record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, recording facts and not assumption or interpretation. Any notes must be added to a completed 'Cause for concern' form via Salesforce which will trigger an electronic notification to safeguarding lead or deputies. Do not be afraid to interrupt meetings if you need to speak to someone. Note any non-verbal behaviour and ensure that the language used by the young person (do not translate into correct terminology) is recorded.

Where appropriate Youth Zone team members will record incidents relating to the safety of young people for the purposes of any subsequent investigations. These records will be maintained on Salesforce under cause for concern or the specific session they occurred on.

What to do if an allegation of abuse against of you witness abuse by an employee, trustee or volunteer

By abuse we mean that they have;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child/young person, may have harmed a child/young person or might lead to a child/young person being harmed;
- Possibly committed or is planning to commit a criminal offence against a child/young person or related to a child/young person or;
- Behaved towards a child/young person in a way that indicates s/he is or would be unsuitable to work with children/young people.

If a young person makes an allegation of abuse against a Barking and Dagenham Youth Zone employee, volunteer or trustee you should report this immediately to their line manager (where applicable) and the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer immediately to the LADO, following up a written referral within 24 hours if the criteria above is met.

You should assure the young person who made the allegation that this is a serious matter and you will follow it up with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. You should update the young person as to what action has been taken.

Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. 'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children. Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship (Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable).

A relationship between an adult and a child or young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

- Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust (Sexual Offences Act 2003) with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

This means that adults should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage.
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children or young people
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature

Informing parents

The Designated Safeguarding Lead/Session Lead will inform the young person's family/carer that an incident has taken place and/or a referral is being made unless: that would either place the young person at greater risk, place the member of staff or public at risk or impede the investigation. For example, sexual abuse or fabricated illness is suspected, or multiple abuse is suspected. In these cases, local authority or the Police will decide whether or not to inform the parents. An inability to inform parents should not delay or prevent a referral being made.

Designated Leads for Safeguarding

The designated leads for safeguarding children are:

Name: David Bigglestone, Head of Youth Work, Future Youth Zone – DSL

Email: david.bigglestone@futureyouthzone.org

Telephone: 07747 841 077

Name: Kay Constance, Junior & Holiday Club Manager, Future Youth Zone – DSL

Email: Kay.constance@futureyouthzone.org

Name: Sereena Lewis, Inclusion Manager, Future Youth Zone – DSL

Email: Sereena.lewis@futureyouthzone.org

Any employee, trustee or volunteer who is concerned about a young person should tell the appropriate designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Key Children's Services Contacts

Barking and Dagenham Social Care – MASH and Assessment Team

Address: MASH Team, Community Solutions, Ground Floor, Roycraft House, 15 Linton Road, Barking, IG11 8HE

Email: childrenss@lbbd.gov.uk

Telephone: 0208 227 3811 or 0208 215 3000 (out of hours)

In an emergency always call the police on 999. If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency call 101

Social Care – LADO

Mike Cullern –Safeguarding Lead for Education and Delegated LADO for Education and Early Years and interim LADO for non-education settings

Email: mike.cullern@lbbd.gov.uk or lado@lbbd.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8227 3934

All referrals to be made to lado@lbbd.gcsx.gov.uk, Out of Hours call to Emergency Duty Team 0208 215 3000

Appendix's

1. Future Youth Zone Cause for Concern Form
2. Safeguarding Flow Charts
3. Summary of "Safeguarding Tool Kit"