

Walbottle Village Institute
Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

V2(a)

16/05/2022

Walbottle Village Institute is firmly committed to the belief that all children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and fully recognises its responsibility for child and adult protection. The safety and protection of all vulnerable people that Walbottle Village Institute supports is paramount and has priority over all other interests.

There are five main elements to the policy:

- Ensuring that Walbottle Village Institute practices safely in checking the suitability of volunteers to work with young people and vulnerable adults.
- Raising awareness of child protection and vulnerable adult issues amongst volunteers.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of child or adult abuse.
- Supporting the child or adult who has been abused.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children and adults can socialise and develop new skills.

Definitions.

The following definitions apply throughout the Safeguarding Policy.

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen for most purposes.

Vulnerable Adult or Adults

The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) defined a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:

- A substantial learning or physical disability.
- A physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs.
- A significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.

The Children Act 1989 defines four types of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. These categories of abuse apply and will be relevant to vulnerable adults as well as to children who Walbottle Village Institute has contact with.

Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.

It may also be caused when a parent or carer invents the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child or vulnerable adult. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness.

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional ill treatment causing severe and persistent effects on the child or vulnerable adult's emotional development and may involve:

Making the child or vulnerable adult feel that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or unvalued. Imposing expectations causing the child or vulnerable adult to feel frightened or in danger – e.g. witnessing domestic violence.

Sexual abuse involves forcing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

Neglect involves the failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment of the neglected person's health and development. It may involve failure to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing, failure to protect from physical harm or danger or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of basic emotional needs.

The Board of Trustees and volunteers should also be aware of other factors which influence these forms of abuse such as racial or homophobic abuse.

This policy applies to all Trustees and volunteers of Walbottle Village Institute. Its purpose is to protect the personal safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults using the facilities, resources and activities provided by Walbottle Village Institute actively promoting awareness, good practice and sound procedures.

Trustees, Volunteers and Group Leaders (definition group leader - Hirer of Institute who regularly cares for, or are in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults).

All group leaders involved in groups or that have contact with vulnerable people and children are required to provide documents that Walbottle Village deems appropriate. This is an Enhanced DBS.

No new Group Leaders should start supervision of children or vulnerable adults until DBS checks have been received by the Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute and the certificate number recorded.

All Group Leaders will receive, and will be required to read and sign, the Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy. The Board of Trustees also require group leaders to provide them with a copy of their own Safeguarding policies.

Responsibilities

All Trustees and volunteers have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation relating to child and vulnerable adult protection is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

Walbottle Village Institute has a Designated Safeguarding Officer. The Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute must also be informed of issues which arise under this policy. The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for child protection and the implementation of this policy. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agency.

Designated Safeguarding Officer

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will, where appropriate, make referrals to outside agencies. Other aspects of their role include:

- Obtaining information from Trustees, volunteers, group leaders, children, parents or carers who have concerns relating to the protection of children or vulnerable adults and to record this information.
- Assessing information quickly and carefully and asking for further information where appropriate.
- Consulting with statutory child and vulnerable protection agencies e.g. the local social services department and police, to clarify doubts or worries.
- Making referrals to Social Services, or the police, without delay.

All Trustees, volunteers and Group Leaders will be made aware of the named Designated Safeguarding Officer and how to contact her. Contact details appear below. The Designated Safeguarding Officer has contact telephone numbers for the local Area Safeguarding Board and other statutory agencies.

Mrs J Morris
Designated Safeguarding Officer.
11 Dene Terrace
Walbottle Village
Newcastle upon Tyne
Ne15 8HX
Tel: 07891015620

Reporting Procedures: What to do if you suspect someone is being abused

The Board of Trustees, volunteers and group leaders working in direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable people as part of the Walbottle Village institute's activities, must be alert to the signs of abuse. Anyone who suspects that abuse is taking place in this environment or to whom a child or vulnerable adult discloses issues relating to safeguarding should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer Mrs Jo Morris, immediately.

Any suspicion or allegation must be reported as soon as possible on the day of the occurrence to the Designated Safeguarding Officer Mrs Jo Morris. Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child or adult, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour, or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to liaise with other relevant agencies where necessary and seek clarification from the Safeguarding and Protection Unit of the local police force, if there is any concern about validity of any allegation.

Any suspicion or allegation of abuse must be recorded by the observer on the appropriate incident reporting form. This form must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely following the Data Protection Procedures. The Board of Trustees, Volunteers and Group Leaders are encouraged to report the discovery of abuse or alleged abuse directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

All stages of the reporting procedure must be documented, marked CONFIDENTIAL and stored securely following the procedures laid out in the Data Protection Policy.

Allegations against Trustees, volunteers and Group Leaders.

When any form of complaint is made against a Trustee, volunteer or group leader, it must be taken seriously and the complaint should initially be dealt with by the Safeguarding Officer or by one of the Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute who is available at the time the complaint is made if the Safeguarding Officer is not available. They must then report the complaint to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible, giving details of the circumstances. The Safeguarding Officer will record an account of what has occurred from all relevant persons, including the person against whom the allegation has been made.

The Safeguarding Officer will have the right to suspend from the premises any person who is involved in the allegation until a full investigation has been made.

This action will not imply in any way that the person suspended is responsible for, or is to blame for, any action leading up to the complaint. The purpose of any such suspension is to enable a full and proper investigation to be carried out in a totally professional manner.

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Officer to make the decision as to whether to inform Social Services, NHS Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) and/or the Safeguarding Unit of

the local police force, depending on the nature of the allegation. The Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute will cooperate fully with the Police, Social Services, the NHS and all other parties involved.

The Safeguarding Officer will ensure that the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute, or in his/her absence the Secretary or Treasurer, is fully briefed. An agreed statement will be prepared for the purpose of accurate communication with external sources and for the protection of the legal position of all parties involved.

The Safeguarding Officer will make a full written report of the incident and the actions taken. This report will be stored securely following the procedures detailed in the Data Protection Policy.

Resignation

If, during the course of an investigation relating to safeguarding, a Trustee or Volunteer or group leader gives his or her resignation, or stops providing their services, the Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute is not prevented from following up an allegation in accordance with these procedures. Every effort will be made to reach a satisfactory conclusion in cases relating to the welfare of children or vulnerable adults, including those where the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.

Confidentiality

All Trustees, volunteers and Group Leaders must work under the principle that confidentiality is extremely important and plays a large part in much of the work carried out with children and vulnerable persons. However, under no circumstances will any individual on the Board of Trustees, volunteer or Group Leader, keep confidential information that raises concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or vulnerable person.

Vetting and Barring

The Safeguarding of children and Vulnerable Adults policy places a duty on The Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute to keep a record of an Enhanced DBS for all Group Leaders supervising children or vulnerable adults.

An Enhanced DBS is required for Group Leaders who regularly care for, or are in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults e.g. Leaders of groups for young people and children who are hiring the Institute for their classes or clubs..

Reporting cases to the Independent Safeguarding Authority

The Board of Trustees of Walbottle Village Institute has a duty to report and provide information to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) where, following an investigation it has been believed that an individual is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults, or may have committed misconduct. The responsibility for reporting cases to the ISA lies with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Equality of Opportunities

All children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation whatever their race, religion, gender, sexuality, age or disability. This policy relates to the Institute's legal obligation to protect children who are suffering forms of abuse as defined in the Children Act 1989 and is therefore in line with Walbottle Village Institutes's equality and diversity policy.

Outside Organisations

Any club, society, organisation or individual undertaking activities on the premises of Walbottle Village Institute involving children and vulnerable adults will be required to either adopt Walbottle Village Institute's Children and Adults Safeguarding Policies or show proof that they have their own policies in place.

Any group leader or individual working with children or vulnerable adults may be subject to random spot checks by the Safeguarding Officer to ensure policies and procedures are being implemented.

Date Composed: 30th March, 2022
Policy approved by Board of Trustees

Amended- 16th May 2022

Signed..........Chair Date...18/5/2022
Signed..........Treasurer Date...18/5/2022
Signed..........Secretary Date...18/5/2022

Date of change	Changed by	Comments
16th May 2022	S Parnell	Approved by Board

