

Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Cheshire Community Foundation (CCF) is committed to ensuring that children, young people and adults at risk who benefit from or use the services of our grant recipients are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. Our way of working as an organisation will demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk as everyone has a responsibility for keeping them safe.

CCF does not work directly with children, young people or adults at risk. However, safeguarding issues could still occur indirectly in relation to individuals who are beneficiaries or members of an organisation applying for or receiving funding. The grant making policies and monitoring activity will ensure that grantees have safeguarding policies and procedures in place alongside appropriate training for Trustees, staff and volunteers.

The Trustees, staff and volunteers of the Foundation should be aware of their responsibilities under this policy and have a duty to speak up if they identify abuse when completing activity on behalf of CCF.

Definitions

Children and young adults under 18 years old alongside vulnerable adults, limited in their capacity to make decisions and in need of care and support, are covered by this policy.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over; who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs), and is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

This may include a person who:

- is an older person who is frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment;
- has a learning disability;
- has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment /or communication difficulty i.e. autism;
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder;
- has a long-term illness/condition;
- misuses substances or alcohol;
- lacks capacity to make specific decisions.

Roles and responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Board of Trustees with operational responsibility delegated to CCF's Chief Executive Officer, Melanie Sproston. Our CEO is our Safeguarding Officer and is therefore the point of contact for safeguarding concerns.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that Trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of this policy and that the related procedures are in place. These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as required.

The Safeguarding Officer is the point of contact for any concerns raised or reported. This includes ensuring that concerns are discussed, recorded and dealt with appropriately and, where necessary, referred to the appropriate statutory agency. Those raising concerns may be asked to complete the first account report attached. The Safeguarding Officer will support and, where possible, secure the safety of individuals. They will also ensure that all onward referrals will have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability.

It is the responsibility of Trustees, staff and volunteers to ensure that they are familiar with the safeguarding policy, complete any required training and take action in line with the agreed policy and procedures. Trustees, staff and volunteers should demonstrate an awareness of safeguarding in their day-to-day activities and be confident to speak up if they have any concerns.

Key Principles

CCF trustees, staff and volunteers do not work directly with children, young people or adults at risk or undertake 'regulated activity' as part of their roles with us and so do not have Disclosure or Barring Service (DBS) checks.

In carrying out their role with us, CCF trustees, staff and volunteers **cannot** be left in sole charge of children, young people or adults at risk when travelling to or visiting an organisation or a donor, or when attending an event, and will refuse to do so if asked. When visiting organisations that work with those covered by this safeguarding policy, CCF will disclose that our trustees, staff and volunteers are not DBS checked if requested.

Children, young people and adults at risk may be present at certain CCF events or meetings, but they must always be accompanied by an appropriate representative of an organisation, or by a family member or carer. CCF will take reasonable steps to ensure they are aware of who is attending any event or meeting in advance and work with the representative, family member or carer to ensure appropriate measures are in place.

CCF requires all grant applicant organisations which intend to work directly with children, young people or adults at risk to have an appropriate safeguarding policy in place. They will be expected to demonstrate that the policy is in the name of the applicant organisation, is regularly updated, has a named safeguarding lead and contains details on definitions of abuse as well as their reporting procedure upon any disclosures being made.

CCF cannot itself provide advice on safeguarding policies or procedures but those intending to work with children, young people or adults at risk can be signposted to other sources of support and will be advised by CCF of what they are expected to demonstrate.

Training

The policy and training is available for all staff, volunteers and trustees with training updates at least every 3 years.

What do we mean by abuse?

Abuse of a child, young person or adult at risk may consist of a single act or repeated acts and may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where they are persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not, or cannot, consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the individual. Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Concerns about abuse may be raised and reported as a result of a single incident or repeated incidents of abuse. However, some issues of abuse relate to neglect and poor standards of care. They are ongoing and if ignored may result in a severe deterioration in both physical and mental health and even death.

Anyone who has concerns about poor care standards and neglect in a care setting may raise these within the service or appropriate authorities. Where these concerns relate to a child, young person or adult at risk living in their own home, with family or with informal carers, they must be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Abuse can take a variety of forms and can be both overt and covert. The following list is not exhaustive but is illustrative of the kinds of abuse that might be experienced.

Physical abuse - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions as well as Female Genital Mutilation and honour based violence.

Sexual abuse - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable person has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Neglect and acts of omission - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Discriminatory abuse - including race, sex, culture, religion, politics, that is based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment, hate crime.

Organisational abuse - although not a separate category of abuse in itself, requires specific mention simply to highlight that people placed in any kind of care home or day care establishment are potentially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. This can be especially so when care standards and practices fall below an acceptable level as detailed in the contract specification.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking – including deprivation of liberty

Multiple forms of abuse - Multiple forms of abuse may occur in an ongoing relationship or an abusive service setting to one person, or to more than one person at a time, making it important to look beyond single incidents or breaches in standards, to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

Identifying concerns

Children, young people and adults at risk who have been abused may want to tell someone, but not have the exact words to do so. They may attempt to disclose abuse by giving clues,

through their actions and by using indirect words. Adults need to be able to notice the signs that children, young people or adults at risk might be distressed and ask them appropriate questions about what might have caused this.

Disclosure is the process by which children, young people and adults at risk start to share their journey, not one act or action. They may disclose directly or indirectly and sometimes they may start sharing details of abuse before they are ready to put their thoughts and feelings in order. It is important therefore that trustees, volunteers and staff who may be visiting a charity identify and report appropriately any disclosures made in their presence.

Not all disclosures will lead to a formal report of abuse or a case being made or a case being taken to court, but all disclosures should be taken seriously. It is vital that anyone who works with children and vulnerable people knows how to provide them with the support they need if they have experienced abuse. It is expected therefore that all grantee organisations have appropriately trained support in place and that staff, volunteers and Trustees are aware of this.

Raising a concern and reporting a Safeguarding Issue

It is important that vulnerable people are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously. This procedure must be followed when a concern is raised e.g. an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable person has been abused. Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full written record of safeguarding concerns should be made as soon as possible. This must include the date, the time and the place where the concern was raised, your name and the names of others present. Please see the attached form (Appendix 1)This written record should include as much detail as possible of what was said or noticed alongside any other relevant information e.g. where relevant the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the person who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed and the account which has been given of the allegation.

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. If CCF have reason, in good faith, to believe children or vulnerable adults may be at risk or we receive an allegation about possible abuse e.g. during a project visit or from a report received or via a third party raising concerns then there is a duty to record and report the matter internally. The organisation's Chief Executive will be notified and followed up or it may also be appropriate to notify statutory authorities.

A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made, including the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported.

Support for those who report abuse

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they are staff, volunteers or Trustees should be reassured that they will be taken seriously. Their comments will usually be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk.

Referrals

This is the process for bringing concerns and potential allegations to the attention of the relevant Local Authority. For Local Authority, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington has their own contact numbers and may have separate people responsible for

children and young people and adults at risk. The relevant contacts for safeguarding are held by the CCF Office team.

Young People and Adults at risk have the right:

- To be made aware of this policy
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- To be involved in any process as appropriate
- To receive information about the outcome.

Allegations Against Staff

In the event an allegation is made against a member of staff, volunteer or trustees then the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be notified.

The criteria for a referral to be accepted by LADO are:

- The person has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; or
- The person has possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or the person has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Staff and trustees should contact the LADO for advice or a consultation if they're unsure. They must ensure that the child, young person or adult at risk is safe and away from the person whom the allegation is made.

Following any allegation the member of staff, trustees or volunteers will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure and this could result in dismissal for gross misconduct or disqualification from the Board.

Appendix 1

Cheshire Community Foundation

SAFEGUARDING FIRST ACCOUNT REPORT

To be filled in by the person who heard, saw or suspects that abuse has happened and returned as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Lead.

PERSON REPORTING THE INCIDENT:

NAME TEL

RELATIONSHIP TO ALLEGED PERSON AT RISK:

Account

Please write below a factual account of what you saw or heard. Please continue on further sheets as required, number them, and sign and date the statement as it may be used in evidence. Suggestions for inclusion in the account:

What happened? (tell me, describe to me, explain to me)

When did it happen? Who is involved? Where did it happen? (continue on extra sheets if required)

Signed

Date