



North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank

Safeguarding Policy

- **Purpose of the policy:**
 - To provide protection for children, young people or vulnerable adults who attend activities and events organised by the Foodbank.
 - To provide volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
- **General statement:**
 - There is a moral obligation and legal duty of care that we do whatever is reasonably practicable to ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, with whom we work.
 - All children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Volunteers will seek to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- Providing a safe enough physical environment
- Always keeping safety and welfare at the centre of what we do
- Listening to participants, taking account of their views and promoting inclusion
- Recruiting and training volunteers in safeguarding where appropriate
- DBS check when requested by school or an organisation
- Identifying the abuse of children and young people and vulnerable adults where it is occurring and responding effectively to any concerns, formal or informal complaints or expressions of anxiety
- Liaising with appropriate services and agencies in the event of a safeguarding issue
- Work with schools, colleges and other organisations to ensure permission for under 18s and adequate supervision is provided
- Managing confidentiality appropriately
- Risk assessing activities
- Following, monitoring and updating this Safeguarding policy at regular intervals or as needed in line with updates to appropriate legislation, so our policy is in line with the law.

Agreed by Trustees: 13th May 2021

Review Date: May 2022



North Oxfordshire Community Foodbank

Safeguarding Procedure

1. Definition of abuse:

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people. Abuse may be single or repeated acts. It can be:

- **Physical:** for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining or giving the wrong medication.
- **Psychological and emotional:** for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse or manipulating a person to take part in acts that they do not wish to.
- **Financial:** including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money or other valuables.
- **Sexual:** such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent. Sexual intercourse with any person below the Age of Consent (16 years of age) is illegal.
- **Discriminatory:** including any physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct which targets the gender, sexual orientation, race, colour, nationality, religion, disability or age of the victim, having the purpose or effect of violating the recipient's dignity or creating an intimidating, degrading or offensive environment.
- **Institutional:** the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** including ignoring medical or physical care needs.

2. Procedures for safe working:

- **Direct supervision:**
 - There will always be at least two volunteers in any room where clients are present.
- **Working with children, young people (under 18) and vulnerable adults:**
 - Children or vulnerable adults must be accompanied by a parent, carer or legal guardian. The child or vulnerable adult will remain the responsibility of that supervising adult.
 - Children under 18 attending activities with their school, college or with another organisation will be the responsibility of the teachers or staff of that organisation. The Foodbank will work with those bodies to ensure permission is obtained and adequate supervision is provided, including getting to and from the activity.
 - Volunteers should never be left alone with a child or a vulnerable adult or work with them away from their supervising parent or carer, unless they are DBS checked and have undertaken appropriate safeguarding training.
 - Volunteers will be required to read the safeguarding policy and procedures and sign a log to ensure their awareness

– **Risk assessments and Health & Safety:**

- All activities must be preceded by a risk assessment. This will enable planning for safety to take place ensuring that the activities are safe and enjoyable.
- Any accidents or incidents will be recorded.
- There will be a first aid kit on site at all times; volunteers will make themselves aware of any First Aiders present during their activities

– **Photography and filming:**

- Taking pictures or filming of children, young people or vulnerable adults must never be undertaken without written permission (of a parent or guardian if under 18 – to be sought from school, college or other organisation). No pictures or film may be shared without the consent of all identifiable people in the picture or film.

– **Recognising concerns or evidence of abuse**

Concerns about or evidence of abuse might be raised through:

- A direct disclosure by the child, young person or vulnerable adult
- A complaint or expression of concern by another volunteer, carer/parent/guardian or a member of the public
- An observation of the behaviour of the child, young person or vulnerable adult by the volunteer.

– **Dealing with abuse discovered, disclosed or alleged:**

Action must be taken immediately in ALL cases. Do not assume someone else will act. It is the responsibility of the volunteer becoming aware of a situation to:

Respond and make safe:

- Deal with the immediate needs of the child, young person or vulnerable adult. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the person is in no immediate danger and seek medical treatment if required.
- Report the allegation of abuse to the team leader but do not discuss it with other volunteers, group members, parents/guardians or the alleged perpetrator.
- If a volunteer is involved in the allegation or concern, or they have been witnessed behaving in a way that caused or could cause harm to a child or vulnerable adult then they must be removed from the activity immediately and suspended from volunteering whilst an investigation takes place. The volunteer should be treated fairly and honestly with reassurance that this removal does not imply any guilt, but is to protect them as much as the person making the allegation. The relevant agencies will take responsibility for investigations.
- Do not disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm and in this case only wash the area that needs immediate treatment.
- Respond to the person who made the disclosure by:
 - Reassuring them that they have done the right thing
 - Giving them time to talk without probing, pushing or asking leading questions. Investigation is the responsibility of the relevant agencies
 - Avoiding making promises you will be unable to keep, including that discussions are confidential

- Explaining to the person that you will share this information with the relevant agencies only.

Record:

- Record what was said before it is forgotten and keep it somewhere secure. The record should include:
 - The date, time and location the disclosure was made
 - The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident and what the person said in their own words about the abuse
 - The appearance and behaviour of the victim including any injuries observed
 - The actions taken

Inform:

- If there is a safeguarding concern or disclosure that is demanding of urgent attention, contact the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) team in the first instance immediately on: 0845 0507666. The duty worker will advise on the next steps and the volunteer may be asked to fill in a referral form. An example of an urgent situation might be:
 - A child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses physical or sexual abuse
 - If there are signs of physical abuse e.g. injury
 - A child, young person or vulnerable adult presents as very different/scared to go home/anxious and you are aware home could be risky
- If the disclosure is regarding child sexual exploitation or if you think a child may be at risk of sexual exploitation you can also contact the Kingfisher Team on: 01865 309196. Out of hours calls to this number will be diverted to the Thames Valley Police Referral Centre.
- Only contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed, the child, young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of abuse or an assault is taking place.
- Providing the volunteer who has handled the disclosure has followed the procedures above to ensure the safety of the child, young person or vulnerable adult they should keep all information about the disclosure confidential or on a “need to know” basis with other members of the group in order to protect the child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Volunteers who have handled the disclosure may find this distressing and should have access to support. The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is available 24 hours a day and provides counselling, information and advice for anyone concerned about/accused of child abuse. NSPCC Helpline number 0808 800 5000.

I have read and understood this policy.

Volunteer name:

Position:

Signature:

Date: