



LitterfreeSB

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

September 2021 edition

INTRODUCTION

We aim to safeguard the welfare of children participating in litter picking activities. In order to give children protection from potential and actual abuse or harm it is important that all concerned have a basic understanding of the issues involved and that procedures are in place that are understandable and easy to implement by all responsible adults concerned.

LitterfreeSB is committed to ensuring that all children and vulnerable adults can participate in litter picking activities safely.

LitterfreeSB's Safeguarding Policy arises from the following principles:

- Welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is our first consideration
- All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender or ethnic origin have a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

Background

Abuse of children and vulnerable adults is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all involved. It is not easily recognisable and individuals often fear reading too much into a situation. Many children and vulnerable adults experience minor accidents causing injuries, but there may be occasions where you are concerned over the nature and frequency of injury.

This document contains information on some of the signs that may give cause for concern. The principle of this document is that:

“It is *not* our responsibility as members LitterfreeSB to decide whether or not child abuse is occurring, but it is *your* responsibility to act on those concerns and do something about it.”

What Is Abuse?

Do not ever think that you could never be placed in the position of reporting abuse.

The generic term 'abuse' is used to describe various ways in which children or vulnerable adults are harmed or mistreated. There are many different ways in which children or vulnerable adults can be harmed, all with a common factor that the individual feels undervalued and worthless.

Abuse can happen anywhere, but research indicates that the perpetrators of such abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child or vulnerable adult.

TYPES OF ABUSE:

Physical Abuse

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

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children or vulnerable adults in looking at,

or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the individual's emotional development. It may involve:

- Telling a child or vulnerable adult they are worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child or vulnerable adult
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- A child or vulnerable adult seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying
- Causing a child or vulnerable adult to frequently feel frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption of a child or vulnerable adult

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health and development. Neglect may occur:

- During pregnancy as a result of substance abuse
- Failure to provide adequate food and clothing
- Failing to provide shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Failing to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical harm or danger
- Failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- Failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Discriminatory Abuse

Discriminatory Abuse includes racist, religious and sexist abuse, plus abuse based on a person's disability.

Indications that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child or vulnerable adult describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child or vulnerable adult
- Unexplained changes in behaviour or emotions such as becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexual explicit behaviour, sexually explicit talk
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Uncharacteristic eating disorders, depression and suicide attempts
- The child or vulnerable adult may become withdrawn, introverted and depressed and have low self-esteem and lack of confidence

TEACHERS AND EMPLOYEES SHOULD:

- Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage those, including reporting any potential risks to at least two committee members
- Plan and organise work and the workplace so as to minimise risks
- As far as possible, be visible when working with a child or vulnerable adult. Do not spend time alone with a child or vulnerable adult away from others
- Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised or discussed
- Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
- Talk to children or vulnerable adults about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns.
- Empower students by discussing with them what they can do if there is a problem
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism

NO ONE MUST:

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- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse others
- Use physical force against a participant, unless it constitutes reasonable restraint to protect yourself or another person or property from danger or harm. In this situation the minimum amount of force should be used for the minimum amount of time and a report of the incident should be recorded in writing immediately afterwards
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with a child or vulnerable adult
- Develop relationships with a child or vulnerable adult which could in any way be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Act in any way that may be abusive or may place a child or vulnerable adult at risk of abuse.
- Use language, make suggestions or offer advice which is inappropriate, discriminatory, offensive or abusive.
- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative. There may be rare occasions when a child or vulnerable adult, particularly a young child, is distressed and needs physical comforting – discretion must be used to ensure that this is appropriate and any contact is necessary and justified.
- Take a child or vulnerable adult with whom they are working to, or allow a student to stay overnight at, their home.
- Give a child or vulnerable adult alcohol, cigarettes, drugs or other stimulants.
- Do things for a child or vulnerable adult of a personal nature that they can do for themselves (e.g. taking them to the toilet). In the case of very young children it may be necessary for them to be offered assistance in using the toilet – this assistance should, wherever possible, be provided by someone of the same sex and discretion should be used so that any assistance is appropriate and any contact is necessary and justified. Prior parental consent should always be obtained.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade a child or vulnerable adult or otherwise engage in any form of emotional abuse.
- Discriminate against, show deferential treatment, or favour a particular child or vulnerable adult to the exclusion of others.
- This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The underlying principle is that actions or behaviour which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour should be avoided.

RECRUITMENT POLICY

LitterfreeSB is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all participants in our group to share this commitment.

When undertaking any recruitment process, we will take the following steps:

- All job descriptions and person specifications will include a specific reference to suitability to work with children and young people and refer to the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
- Comprehensive information from applicants will be obtained and scrutinised and any discrepancies or anomalies will be investigated and resolved
- Independent professional and character references relating to an applicant's suitability to work with children and young people will be obtained
- A face to face interview will be held with all successful applicants prior to engagement;
- The identity, qualifications and previous employment history of the successful applicant will be verified before appointment
- A check will be made to confirm the right of the successful applicant to work in the United Kingdom before appointment
- Where the successful applicant has lived outside the United Kingdom, such further checks as are considered appropriate will be carried out before appointment
- A check will be made on the successful applicant's mental and physical health
- A check of the relevant mandatory lists (set out below) and a disclosure (currently DBS) check will be carried out in respect of the successful applicant before appointment
- Any offer of engagement will be made conditional upon the satisfactory completion of the above checks and verifications.

LitterfreeSB will ensure that:

An individual will not be recruited to work at the centre where they are named on any of the following lists:

- The Protection of Children Act (PoCA) List (England and Wales);
- List 99 (England and Wales);
- The Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) List (England and Wales);

- The Disqualified from Working with Children List (DWCL - Scotland);
- The Disqualification from Working with Children List (Northern Ireland); and
- The Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults List (Northern Ireland).

An individual who is appointed and subsequently found to be named on any of these lists will be removed from the position forthwith.

An individual will be referred to the appropriate List where the grounds for referral under the Acts are met.

A disclosure check will be carried out on all new volunteers and further disclosure checks will be carried out periodically during their tenure (disclosure checks being conducted in accordance with the relevant legislation in force from time to time; currently via DBS (previously the Criminal Records Bureau - CRB) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and by Disclosure Scotland in Scotland).

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE IS TAKING PLACE?

If any member of our group is concerned that abuse may occur or has occurred they must refer the matter immediately to Justine Ricomini and one other committee member who will decide whether or not to report the matter further. If it is felt that further investigation is necessary in order to protect the child or vulnerable adult, the matter must be referred to Social Care. Professionals can contact Social Care for advice re concerns without giving personal details.

In the event of referral to Social Care, copies of all relevant correspondence, notes of dialogue, diagrams of any injury witnessed must be passed to the coordinator for filing. It is very important that any concerns on a child's or vulnerable adult's safety are logged.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURE

1. There will be a named person for safeguarding children who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the safeguarding of children. This person is currently Justine Ricomini
2. All committee members will be carefully selected and vetted to try to ensure they do not pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults. Those staff having contact with children will be checked through the Criminal Records Bureau at the appropriate level.
3. All committee members will receive information and basic training in safe conduct and what to do if they have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult. This will include information on recognising where there are concerns about a child or vulnerable adult, where to get advice and what to do if no one seems to have taken their concerns seriously.
4. We will endeavour to make this group a safe and caring place for children and vulnerable adults to be by having a code of conduct for all members and users. This will be given to all committee members and other members and they will be expected to comply with it.
5. Any information given to users about activities of the organisation will include information about the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures. Parents and carers of any children taking part in our activities will be given specific information about our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

LOGGING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S SAFETY AND WELFARE

Name of Child	Date of birth	Date and time form completed
Your Name	Your Organisation	Your Signature
Reason(s) for reporting this incident?		
Please fill in as much information as possible and ensure all recordings are factual.	Who	
	What	
	Where	
	When	
Give a personal opinion as to how / why the incident may have happened.		
Substantiate the opinion. Please note the action taken, including the names of anyone to whom information was passed.		

All reports relating to Safeguarding Children should be completed in black ink and stored securely.