



POCKTHORPE
COMMUNITY GROUP

NR3

Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures

Statement of Purpose

The introduction of this 'Vulnerable adults policy and procedures document' should highlight the fact that the Pockthorpe Community Group (PCG) is determined to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm, those adults who participate in activities organised by the PCG.

This policy establishes the PCG position, role and responsibilities and clarifies what is expected from everybody involved within the project. It very clearly highlights the importance placed by the PCG in the protection of vulnerable adults. It is our policy that carers remain responsible for their vulnerable adults' welfare throughout all work undertaken by the PCG.

Every vulnerable adult who participates in the activities of the project should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of all members involved in this organisation.

Definition of Adults at Risk

The definition of a vulnerable adult as expressed in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 2002 is "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 including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
- a significant reduction in physical or mental capacity."

Abuse

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human rights. It can be single or repeated acts. Abuse can include: physical, financial/material, sexual, psychological, discriminatory, and emotional abuse and neglect or an omission to act. It may be something that is done to the person, or something not done when it should have been.

What to do

The following procedure refers to abuse or suspicion of abuse of a vulnerable adult that volunteers become aware of whilst performing their roles at the PCG.

Any volunteer who becomes aware that a vulnerable adult is, or is at risk of, being abused should raise the matter immediately with the designated safeguarding member. You should together decide whether you feel the person is a vulnerable adult and whether they are at risk of abuse/experiencing abuse. If you feel it is a case of abuse towards a vulnerable adult, you should inform the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0344 800 8020.

When appropriate to report an incident to MASH, explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell, to the person involved or the person informing of the abuse. Ensure that they are kept informed about what will happen next, so that they can be reassured about what to expect.

If a disclosure is to be made, you will need to decide if it is to be made by you or the designated safeguarding officer. Ensure that the person subject to alleged abuse is safe and supported before proceeding with any further action. In most situations, there will not be an immediate threat and the decision about protecting the vulnerable person will be taken by MASH. Where a vulnerable adult is at risk of immediate harm; immediate action should be taken by calling the police on 999.

A direct call to the police on the non-urgent number 121 is appropriate if the vulnerable adult wishes to talk to the police at that time, and/or there is evidence to preserve and/or the alleged perpetrator of the offence may return before you can act to protect the vulnerable adult.

Consider whether the victim requires additional specialist support: e.g., referral to victim support.

Record the incident(s) and your actions as soon as possible and give this record to your designated safeguarding officer.

The procedure - what you should do if a vulnerable person reports abuse to you:

If someone discloses that they are being abused, then upon receiving the information you should:

- react calmly;
- reassure the vulnerable adult that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what the vulnerable adult says seriously;
- keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details;

- reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments;
- inform the vulnerable adult what you will do next;
- make a full and written record of what has been said / heard as soon as possible and don't delay in passing on the information;
- talk to your designated officer as soon as possible.

The report will include the following:

- the vulnerable adult's name, age, and date of birth;
- the child's home address and telephone number;
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else;
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and special factors and other relevant information (include quotes where relevant);
- make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion, or hearsay;
- a description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also, any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes;
- details of witnesses to the incidents.

Support to Volunteers

The designated safeguarding officer should be available to the volunteers reporting the incident to talk it through and offer additional support. If the police or other agencies need further information or involvement, you will need to decide with the Chair who will talk to them and how this will happen.

Volunteers may be subject to allegations of abusing vulnerable people. While support will be offered by the PCG, the police or other agencies are given all assistance in pursuing any investigation. Suspension from the organisation may be implemented.

Confidentiality

The PCG respects everyone's right to confidentiality. However, we believe that the welfare of vulnerable people has to take priority and we have a duty to disclose abuse to the appropriate agency, if deemed necessary.

Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess volunteers' suitability for positions of trust, the PCG complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or any other information revealed.

WE make every subject of a DBS Disclosure aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice.

The PCG requests that their carers or a family member accompanies vulnerable adults. In the rare case that volunteers may be working directly and unsupervised with vulnerable adults, we will request DBS Disclosure forms and ask questions about criminal records including spent convictions. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking a position before offering or withdrawing a volunteer role.

In accordance with the DBS Code of Practice, Disclosure documents and associated paperwork will be stored securely for a maximum of six months and then shredded.

Contacts

Designated vulnerable adult safeguarding officer name: Gary Champion

Mobile: 07746343183

Email address: info@pockthorpecommunity.org

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0344 800 8020

Police emergency number: 999

Police non-emergency number: 101

This policy and procedures will be reviewed annually and signed and dated by the executive committee.

Signed:  (Secretary)

Adopted by Executive Committee: 1 February 2022