



## **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy**

This Policy applies to all paid staff and volunteers including within the charity including the board of trustees, committee members, play workers, kitchen helpers or anyone working on behalf of us. This applies whether they are seasonal or permanent workers, work experience students, agency staff. It also applies to families using our sessions.

### **The purpose of this policy:**

- To protect all vulnerable adults linked with Incredible Kids services. This includes the vulnerable adults who attend with their parent/carer, and other vulnerable adults in relation to the adults and children who use our services. And also our volunteers and staff who are vulnerable adults.
- To provide staff, volunteers and families with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding adults.
- Incredible Kids believes that an adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

### **Who is a Vulnerable adult.**

An Adult is a person who is 18yrs or older.

“Vulnerable Adult is a person Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to care for him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.”  
(Lord Chancellor’s Department (1997) Who decides?)

This can include a person:

- living in a care or nursing home.
- receiving support to live independently
- who has a learning or physical disability
- who has a Alcohol or drug addiction
- who has a Mental illness
- who has ill health
- with an impairment in ability to communicate.
- With an impairment in ability to protect them self from abuse.
- Who’s life event has impacted them (bereavement, actions of others)

Therefore anyone linked to Incredible Kids could be a vulnerable person including the 18-25year olds with additional needs, their parents/carers using our service, our staff and our volunteers.

### **What is abuse**

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

It may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or physiological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of the person subjected to it.  
(DoH No Secrets)

Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence, ignorance or lack of training, knowledge or understanding.

Abuse can take place in any context from the persons home to support services, public places and places previously assumed safe, like organisations and charities. Abuse can also take place via the internet and other technology.

#### **The different types of abuse are**

- **Physical Abuse** – Results in the actual or potential physical harm from interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonable within the control of a parent or other person
- **Sexual abuse** - when someone is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.
- **Psychological abuse** - The threshold of significant harm is reached when the abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the person and the abuser.
  - **financial or material abuse**, - Involves the stealing or defrauding of a persons finances or property
  - **neglect and acts of omission** - The threshold of significant harm is reached when the person's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected
  - **discriminatory abuse**- can be a factor within the other types of abuse due to not seeing the person as individual and making assumptions based on stereotypical ideas about one aspect of person
  - **Institutional abuse** - Takes place within a care setting when the needs of the institution is the focus and not needs of the individuals.

Further details of each type are listed in appendix 1

#### **Who may be the abuser:**

Vulnerable adults may be abused by anyone who they have any type of contact with.

Including:

- An individual or a group of people
- Someone from any age group from child to adults
- Male or female
- Professionals; teachers, health and social care staff
- Related to, responsible for or friends of the adult
- Someone thought of as a nice person
- Strangers
- Other vulnerable adults

#### **We recognise that:**

- The welfare of the adult is paramount
- All persons, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

#### **Responsibilities of Incredible Kids Trustees**

- Selection and training:
  - The Trustees, all of whom have an enhanced DBS check for Child and Adult Workforce, will ensure all those in the charity are carefully selected.

- This selection and training includes ensuring individuals have an enhanced DBS check for Child and Adult Workforce where needed, everyone knows this policy and its appendix, understanding what process must be followed if abuse is suspected.
- **Supervision:**
  - providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support and supervision.
- **Consideration as to:**
  - What activities are undertaken by Incredible Kids and who leads them.
  - Sharing information about safeguarding adults and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
  - Sharing safeguarding adults concerns with agencies who need to know including adult social care, police and involving parents and the vulnerable adult appropriately.
  - To support and where possible ensure the safety of all individuals.

**Responsibilities of all Incredible Kids staff and volunteers:**

- To familiar themselves with and follow this Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy and other relevant policies.
- Every Volunteer or staff member has a duty to take appropriate action if abuse is suspected/disclosed to them.
- To promote the promotion of good practice, when working with vulnerable adults, to other team members.
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions.

**Vulnerable adults have the right to:**

- Be made aware of this policy.
- Have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously.
- Receive fair and respectful treatment throughout.
- Be involved in any process as appropriate.
- Receive information about the outcome.

Incredible Kids are committed to reducing abuse at an organisation level and service provision level

**Organisational Level**

- The best interests of people are maintained within our revision of care and implementation of services.
- We have a system for continuous improvement of quality of service/care that is in place.
- When reviewing, planning, implementing and evaluating our service we take into account our all our users individuality which includes their ethnicity, religion, belief, culture, language, age, gender, physical, sensory, sexual orientation, development, mental health, social and environmental needs.
- We continually monitor the effectiveness of our service provision. It is our members/users views through feedback that help the development of our charity and enable us to provide a service that best meets their needs.
- We effectively communicate with other services and share information. Ensuring we have written consent whilst when needed whilst maintaining the best interests of individuals when they lack the capacity to make a specific decision.

**Service Provision Level.**

- We have effective leadership (trustees) within the charity ensuring policies and procedures are followed by themselves as well as the staff and volunteers
- Confidentiality is maintained by all staff members. Ensuring information is shared on a need to know basis.
- We take all reasonable measures to ensure that any risks of harm to the welfare of those using our service as well as our staff and volunteers are minimised

- We help reduce social isolation through families coming to the sessions we run, and we direct families to other support providers increasing their support network.
- We monitor the training needs of our volunteers and staff and provide a variety of training needed for their individual roles.
- We use evidence based policies and procedures for our service delivery.
- We adopt safeguarding adults practices through procedures and a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- We keep clear records which are up to date in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines
- We have robust safeguarding systems in place enabling our staff and volunteer's to not only identify but respond appropriately to abuse.
- We have a clear complaints procedure.

Furthermore we recognise that it is always good practice to

- **Treat all children, young people and adults with respect**
- **Avoid inappropriate conduct in speech or action**
- **Challenge unacceptable behaviour**
- **Respect the right of individuals to privacy and dignity**
- **Be cautious when discussing sensitive issues with children, young people, vulnerable adults and parents/carers**

**If abuse of a vulnerable adult should ever occur then the following should be followed.**

Person initially identifying/receiving this information should.

Pass information onto the Incredible Kids nominated child protection / vulnerable adults safeguarding person as soon as possible, at least within 24hrs.

DO

- **Try to move somewhere more private.** But ensuring you are not alone with the person.
- **Listen and continue to listen** allow for pauses and silences, let person talk at their pace and without interruption. It could be an adult or child disclosing information to you.
- **Reassure them** that they have done the right thing telling you
- **Always take the person seriously**, believe what they are telling, showing or informing you.
- **Explain what will happen next** who you are going to talk to help with the situation but will still be confidential between only people who need to know. Where a vulnerable adult expresses a wish for concerns not to be pursued and be kept a secret it must be explained this can't be done, so you can help them.
- **Seek help from Police, Social Services or Medical Staff if there is immediate risk.**
- **Write a factual account of the situation and immediately sign and date.** This must be done as soon as possible, at least on the same day. If you write this up neatly later you must also keep the original.
- **Report discreetly to the nominated child protection / vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Person** at earliest opportunity, at least within 24hrs.

DON'T

- **Discourage those who are wanting to talk to you** about the attitudes and behaviours of others
- **Be shocked, angry or disgusted**, stay calm remember to breath.
- **Laugh or joke out of nervousness/embarrassment.** You need to clearly show through your words and body language that you are taking this seriously
- **Jump to conclusions or make assumptions** stick to the facts only.
- **Question or investigate.** That is the job of the police or social care to do. Once you suspect abuse asking any questions can interfere with procedures and later you can be blamed for leading the person to tell stories.

- **Promise to keep a secret / confidentiality.** Explain that if they tell you something that makes you think someone is hurting them or someone else you have to pass it on
- **Say it will be ok,** as at that moment everything is not ok for the person.
- **Tell others not in the reporting process,** this must be kept confidential telling only those who need to know.
- **Confront the accused,** this is the job of the police you could make matters worse and unsafe for yourself and the person talking to you.
- **Risk contaminating evidence.** If relevant ensure the area involved is kept clear of others and is not cleared up or touched.
- **Don't break confidentiality,** don't tell others not involved in the reporting process.

**The Nominated person will then:**

- Ascertain if an individual situation falls within definitions of abuse as outlined in this policy and its appendix.
- Ascertain if immediate action is required, is the adult safe?
- Consider vulnerable adults capacity to make decisions.
- Who else needs to be informed, Police, adult social care
- Is an internal investigation required.
- Provide support to the person initially told about the abuse.
- Document the situation including discussions undertaken, the outcome of the persons decisions and who the incidence was further reported to, if relevant.
- (see Appendix 2 for Further Information for the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Person.)

The Primary nominated person is Jeanna Bhalero/

If this primary nominate person is away or the abuse involves them, then the Secondary Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults nominated person Santie Human is to be approached.

As long as the incidence does not involve the other nominated person, as needed each should be used to support the other to discuss situations and make further decisions together.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on: February 2020

Signed: ...Jennie Prewett.....  
(the safeguarding lead on our board of trustees)

This must be read in conjunction with Incredible Kids other policies and procedures, specifically the:

- Behaviour code for children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Behaviour code for parents and carers
- Behaviour code for staff and volunteers
- Child protection policy
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults policy
- E-safety policy
- E-safety agreement

**Appendix 1**

**Types of Abuse**

**Physical Abuse - Results in actual or potential physical harm from interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonable within the control of a parent or other person**

May involve hitting, slapping, poisoning, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, burning or scalding, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions, Inducing illnesses or fabricating illnesses, domestic abuse, forced marriages.

Indicators include:

- Bruises: especially not on areas associated with normal trips/falls i.e. on knees. e.g. on areas like trunk, upper inner arms, face, neck, shoulders, fingertip bruising, bruises on top of bruises.
  - Burns and scalds: especially those that could be a cigarette burn or indicate lengthy exposure to heat.
  - Bite marks.
  - Fractures, swellings, reduced ability in limbs compared to individual's abilities.
  - Flinching when approached, unwilling to cooperate with personal care.
  - Aggression to others or extremely passive.
  - Untreated injuries, unexplained falls or major injuries
- Indicators are especially a concern if story told seems inconsistent

**Psychological abuse - The threshold of significant harm is reached when the abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the person and the abuser.**

Includes: emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, Causing person to feel frequently frightened or in danger, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Indicators include:

- Developmental delay
- Passive acceptance of excessive punishment.
- Over reactions to mistakes
- Continual self depreciation.
- Sudden speech disorder.
- Inappropriate emotional responses,
- Change in behaviour including neurotic behaviours, thumb sucking, rocking, hair twisting.
- Poor self esteem, withdrawal, mental health problems,
- Change in appetite/weight

**Sexual abuse – When someone is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others.**

May include: rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

Indicators of:

- Damage to genitalia
- Soreness in genitalia, anus, mouth.
- Sexually transmitted infections,
- Unexplained, recurrent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain,
- Unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls.
- Age inappropriate sexual play, language, drawings, acting out,
- Age (ability) inappropriate wetting / soiling.
- Sexually provocative behaviour.
- Sexualised behaviours in very young children.
- Self harm, sadness, depression, loss of self esteem.
- Change in behaviour

**Financial or Material Abuse** Involves the stealing or defrauding of a persons finances or property. 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.

Indicators of.

- Unexplained withdrawals from persons bank account
- Unexplained shortage of money despite having the income.
- Reluctance for others to pay for replacement clothes or furniture.
- Disappearance of bank statements and other documents as well as valuables.
- Sudden inability to pay bills

### **Neglect and acts of omission.**

The threshold of significant harm is reached when the person's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

May include 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.

Indicators of:

- **Poor social relationships**
- **Developmental delay**
- **Absence of food, Pot belly, short stature, emaciation,**
- **Poor skin / hair tone**
- **Untreated medical conditions and failure to attend medical appointments.**
- **Being left dirty or unbathed.**
- **Constant tiredness and hunger,**
- **Unusual weight loss**
- **Compulsive stealing.**
- **Unsanitary living conditions.**
- **Unsuitable clothing for weather**
  
- **discriminatory abuse**, Can be a factor within the other types of abuse due to not seeing the person as individual and making assumptions based on stereotypical ideas about one aspect of person.
- May include: racist, sexist, that's based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Indicators of:

- Unequal treatment
- Verbal abuse
- Harassment
- Physical abuse
- Deliberate exclusion
- Low self esteem
- Withdrawal
- Depression
- Fear
- Anger
  
- **Institutional abuse, - Takes place within a care setting when the needs of the institution is the focus and not needs of the individuals.**
- this can sometimes happen in care homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and poor practice that affects the whole of that service.
- Indicators of :
- Unkempt and dirty
- Unusually subdued
- Lack of daily living aids to support different areas of life
- Anxiety and fear in presence of carers / staff
- Restrictions on going out to external run things
- Rooms / doors locked, furniture positioned to limit freedom of movement.
- Patterns of challenging behaviour
- inability to make choices or decisions
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### **Appendix 2**

### **Further Information for the nominated safeguarding vulnerable adults person.**

Incredible Kids will fully support any external investigation and provide all documents requested. Recognising that there is a need to balance the requirements of confidentiality with the consideration that, to protect vulnerable adults, it may be necessary to share information on a 'need-to-know basis' (bearing in mind the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998);

Incredible Kids will involve the police and Adult Care/Care Direct about an instance of alleged abuse. Recognising that a criminal investigation by the police takes priority over all other lines of enquiry.

Not only does Incredible Kids have a responsibility to the vulnerable adult who has been abused but may also have responsibility in relation to some perpetrators of abuse who may be linked with Incredible Kids.

Initial rejection of help from the abuse victim should not always be taken at face value. There needs to be further opportunities for them to receive help if they later choose to.

Vulnerable adults are entitled to the protection of the law the same as any other member of the public.

It is often not clear the seriousness or extent of abuse when it is first expressed. It is important to approach reports of incidences or allegations with an open mind when considering the appropriateness of intervention.

We recognise that incidents of abuse may be multiple either to one person or to more than one person so we will look beyond a single incident/breach of our standards to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. And any findings reported as necessary.

#### **The following factors will be considered when assessing the seriousness of abuse.**

- the vulnerability of the individual;
- the nature and extent of the abuse;
- the length of time it has been occurring;
- the impact on the individual;
- the risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving this or other vulnerable adults.

All reports of suspected abuse to the Safeguarding Person will be documented including discussions undertaken, the outcome of the persons decisions and who the incidence was further reported to, if relevant.

Departments within the Local Council for reporting suspected abuse.  
South Glos Adult care - 01454868007  
Bristol Care Direct - 01179222700