



SAFEGUARDING POLICY STATEMENT

Step 2 declares its commitment to the safety of young and vulnerable people in employment practices, access to services, service provision, committee structure, committee membership, volunteer recruitment and selection and the training of all personnel.

Step 2 will ensure that all paid workers, volunteers and trustees are familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and are able to fully implement it.

Step 2 will work to this policy and will monitor, review and evaluate its effectiveness.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Step 2 was set up to provide support to young and vulnerable people about issues and concerns which affect their lives, particularly regarding their health.

Within this, Step 2 affirms that people have the right:

- to grow up in a safe, secure, stable and caring environment.
- to be protected from all forms of harm, including neglect, abuse and exploitation.
- to be listened to and heard.
- to grow up having their cultural and racial background and experience valued and respected.
- to be considered as individuals with particular needs.
- to be given opportunities to reach their full potential.

Step 2 affirms that adults have the responsibility:

- to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected at all times.
- to provide a safe, secure and caring environment.
- to provide support, encouragement and stimulation to enable each person to reach his or her full potential.

Step 2 affirms *and* accepts the principle and intention of the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount at all times.

Step 2 has a responsibility to prepare, by initial and on-going training, all its paid workers, volunteers and trustees, to work towards the protection of all young and vulnerable people.

Step 2 has a **policy of confidentiality**.

‘All information about young and vulnerable people is treated as confidential, to be discussed only as necessary with the line-manager/appointed Trustee in support of the other workers and/or volunteers and to support the young and vulnerable person. Any disclosure of confidential information to any other person may only be undertaken with the expressed permission of the young and vulnerable person for the purpose of assisting the young and vulnerable person, except where it is considered necessary for the protection of a young and vulnerable person when information shall be shared with the appropriate authority.’

Step 2 supports the principle of openness and honesty with young and vulnerable people.

N.B. when working in schools we will endeavour to work within the schools guidelines for dealing with disclosures. However we will always keep our own records, and will ask to be kept informed of the process. If the school does not respond in a way we would consider appropriate, i.e. does not refer quickly enough, or not at all, we will use our professional judgement and make our own referral. This will follow the procedures for reporting disclosures as stated below.

SAFEGUARDING – GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE

Dealing with disclosures

Receive

- Listen to the young and vulnerable person, take what they say seriously
- Accept what the young and vulnerable person says.

Reassure

- Stay calm and reassure the young and vulnerable person that they have done the right thing in talking to you
- Don't promise confidentiality; you have a duty to refer a young and vulnerable person who is at risk
- Try to alleviate any feelings of guilt that the young and vulnerable person displays
- Acknowledge how hard it must have been for the young and vulnerable person to tell you what happened
- Empathise with the young and vulnerable person – don't tell them what they should be feeling

React

- React to the young and vulnerable person only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether or not you need to refer this matter. Do not 'interrogate' them for full details
- Do not ask 'leading' questions such as 'what did he do next'. Such questions may invalidate your evidence (and that of the young and vulnerable person) in any later prosecution in court.
- Do not criticise the perpetrator
- Do not ask the young and vulnerable person to repeat everything to another worker
- Explain what you have to do next and who you need to speak to
- Inform the designated person for Safeguarding
- Try to see the matter through yourself and keep in contact with the young and vulnerable person
- If a Social Services interview is to follow, ensure that the young and vulnerable person has a 'support person' (possibly yourself) present if they wish

Support

- Make sure that you continue to support the young and vulnerable person, providing time and a safe space throughout the process of investigation and afterwards

- Get some support for yourself, without disclosing confidential information about the young and vulnerable person to colleagues.

Recording disclosures

- Make brief notes at the time of the disclosure on any paper which comes to hand and write these up as soon as possible. These should be passed on to the named person at the earliest opportunity
- Do not destroy your original notes in case they are required by a court
- Record the date, time and place of the disclosure, along with the words used by the young and vulnerable person and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour.
- Draw a diagram to indicate the position of any bruising
- Be objective in your recording: include statement and observable things, rather than your interpretations or assumptions.

Reporting disclosures

If concerned:

- The worker/volunteer should contact the named person who has been designated to deal with Safeguarding issues. (name and contact numbers appear in the appendix which will be updated as appropriate)
- If the young and vulnerable person is suffering from injury or illness the worker/volunteer must ensure that the young and vulnerable person receives medical attention
- If the young and vulnerable person needs emergency medical treatment the worker/volunteer must contact the emergency services and contact their line manager/Trustee as soon as possible within the next 24 hours.
- If the worker/volunteer finds a young and vulnerable person in immediate danger and feels unable to defuse the situation, s/he must contact the police immediately. The worker/volunteer must inform their line-manager/Trustee of the incident as soon as possible within the next 24 hours
- The young and vulnerable person must be informed from the outset that workers/volunteers will discuss concerns regarding them with the named and may pass these concerns to Social Services if they feel it is appropriate.
- If there is any risk to the reputation of the organisation as a result of the allegation then the chair of trustees will also be informed.

Dealing with concerns

Where a worker/volunteer shares a concern about a young and vulnerable person with the named person, it must be discussed fully with regard to:

All details of the concern about the young and vulnerable person

- Where the information came from
- Other information known to Step 2 about the Young and vulnerable Person
- The worker's/volunteer's view of the situation.

The named person should be aware of the potential impact on the worker/volunteer and ensure that appropriate support is provided.

After discussing the concern, the named person may seek advice from a representative from Social Services. Written records of all concerns will be kept confidentially.

After discussing the concern, the line-manager/Trustee's decision may be that no action will be taken at present but that the worker/volunteer will remain aware of the situation, maintain a supportive role and must keep the line-manager/Trustee informed of any future developments.

An accurate, detailed and contemporaneous written report will be made of all Safeguarding concerns and kept in the young and vulnerable person's file.

Contacting Social Services

The named person, after discussion may decide that the concern needs to be referred to the Safeguarding Unit/Social Services.

- If the young and vulnerable person already has a social worker the information will be passed to that social worker or, if unavailable, the principal social worker.
- If the young and vulnerable person does not have a social worker the referrer will contact the Duty Officer at the local social services office.
- If the referrer needs to report a concern outside normal office hours, s/he must contact the Emergency Duty Team
- In an emergency, the line manager/Trustee will contact the police, ambulance or fire services before making contact with Social Services.

An accurate, detailed and contemporaneous written report will be made of all concerns referred to Social Services and kept in the Young and vulnerable Person's file.

These procedures will apply to information received from any source within Step 2

Support for Workers/Volunteers

- The named person must support the worker/volunteer involved in the disclosure
- The named person must be aware of the potential emotional impact on the worker/volunteer and be able to help and offer support to deal with this.
- The worker/volunteer may be asked to attend a 'case conference' and guidelines should be given by the named person as to the limits of the worker/volunteer's participation. The named person may attend with them if appropriate
- The named person must inform the worker/volunteer about the outcome of any Safeguarding case conferences.
- The named person must make a written report of the outcome of the case conference which will be placed **in a file in the management office.**

The named person must provide support for the worker/volunteer as required in the period after the case conference. The named person should share information as appropriate with colleagues so that they can also give support if required.

Allegations against a worker/volunteer of Step 2

Action to be taken:

- Where Step 2 is aware that an allegation of child abuse has been made about a worker/volunteer, the worker/volunteer will be informed by the line-manager/Trustee that s/he must not attend any Step 2 meetings, activities involving young and vulnerable people.
- The Chair of the Trustees will be informed
- This procedure will be followed whether the allegation concerns the worker/volunteer's work with Step 2 or in any other capacity. All relevant information will be reported to Social Service by the line-manager/Trustee in consultation with the Trustees
- The line-manager/Trustee will decide on appropriate action to be taken in consultation with the Chair of the Trustees.
- The LADO (Local Area Designated Officer) will be informed

Allegations against a member of the Trustees

Where Step 2 is aware that an allegation of child abuse has been made about a Trustee, the Chair (or vice-chair if appropriate) will immediately suspend the Trustee pending investigations. This procedure will be followed whether the allegation concerns the Trustee's work within Step 2 or in any other capacity.

Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks

All applicants for paid or unpaid positions, including Trustees of Step 2, are required to have an enhanced disclosure certificate from the DBS. For trustees, if they have a certificate which is less than a year old this will be acceptable. All employees and volunteers must have a check completed on appointment, and every subsequent three years. Olive Branch Trust carry out the checks on our behalf, and any concerns will be passed to the chair of trustees.

Appointment of volunteers

All volunteers will be required to complete an application and complete a confidential volunteer reference form.

Training for paid staff and volunteers

Safeguarding training should be available to all workers and volunteers and the following areas should be covered:

- Values and attitudes – leading to a consideration of what is meant by abuse
- Signs and symptoms – helping workers to be alert to significant indicators of possible abuse
- What to do – practical action to take, including responding, monitoring, recording, confidentiality and supporting.

It is recommended that all complete online training annually and face to face training every three years.

Guidelines for Safe Working practice

Work with children should be organized so as to minimise situations where abuse may occur. This not only protects children but also reduces the likelihood of false allegations being made against leaders. The following are good working practices:

1. Group leaders must work as a team and there should generally be at least two leaders at any group activity. When working with teenagers with whom you already have a relationship then one leader may be appropriate as long as this is agreed with the line manager, parents are aware that only one staff member is present, and other staff are aware of the time and place of the meeting and on call.
2. All groups with girl members must have at least one female leader.
3. Staff and volunteers must try to ensure that all members of the group feel valued and that favouritism is not shown.

4. Staff and volunteers should always act professionally and promote good practice and safety
5. Staff and volunteers should not work in isolation. If a child wishes to speak confidentially it is permissible to go into a quiet area adjacent to the main meeting room. Other staff must be made aware that this is to take place.
6. Staff and volunteers should under no circumstance physically harm a child as punishment. It is permissible to take physical action in an emergency to prevent personal injury to any child or other person or serious damage to property, ideally two leaders should be present in the room if physical restraint is used.
7. Staff and volunteers should understand the concept of confidentiality but must not agree to keep secrets before hearing what a child wishes to tell them.
8. Staff and volunteers should not, if at all possible, arrange to meet children away from the usual group meeting place without another adult or parent being present.
9. Parental consent is required to take children anywhere, and parents should be aware of the session times.
10. The premises used should be safe and secure so that strangers cannot gain access without leaders being aware.
11. The suitability of the premises and equipment being used should be assessed, and comply with Step 2's Health and Safety Policy.

There are other circumstances where special circumstances apply.

1. Travel by Minibus

- 1.1 The leader of the session must ensure the bus to be used is road worthy, all necessary checks have been completed, and that they all insurance requirements are met.
- 1.2 All who travel in the minibus must use the seatbelts
- 1.3 An adult who will be available to address discipline issues will accompany the driver. There may be times when transporting small groups where a second adult is not considered necessary. In these circumstances parental permission will be obtained.
- 1.4 Drivers should select their route carefully, to ensure they are not left alone with a young and vulnerable person in the bus for any length of time, attempting to drop off two young and vulnerable people together at the end of the run
- 1.5 All young and vulnerable people should be made aware of the 'rules of the bus' before travelling
- 1.6 Children between 3-11 and under 1.5m in height should wear an appropriate child restraint when travelling in the minibus. Where not available an adult seatbelt must be worn. Children aged 12 or 13 or older children over 1.5m in height must wear an adult seat belt. It is the drivers responsibility to ensure all under 14's wear seatbelts.
- 1.7 All drivers should carry a mobile phone. If you need to make a call remember to park up and turn off the engine before use.
- 1.8 The minibus must carry a first aid kit comprising specific items in a properly marked container
- 1.9 The bus will carry a fire extinguisher of the correct specification & clearly marked with the BSI specification number.

2. Travel by car

- 2.1 Before being allowed to use their cars to transport young and vulnerable people workers will have to show their line manager a current MOT and insurance certificate for their vehicle. They should also produce a driving licence. These will be checked every year at the annual review.
- 2.2 Where possible two adults should be present in the car. If this is not possible then using a taxi should be considered as the preferred option. However if, in the professional opinion of the worker, using their own car is the preferred option, then they should inform one other member of staff of this decision, and report back to that person when the journey is complete. The reasons for this should be recorded in the young person's notes. If young and vulnerable people are to be routinely transported by car with only one adult present parental permission must be obtained
- 2.3 All drivers should carry a mobile phone. If you need to make a call remember to park up and turn off the engine before use. A hands-free device can be used if necessary, but is not recommended.

3. Detached Work

- 3.1 All detached workers will carry a photo ID card issued by Step 2.
- 3.2 Workers will not work alone
- 3.3 Workers will not enter the home of a young and vulnerable person if other members of the family are not present
- 3.4 Workers will avoid any situations where they could be seen to be involved in any criminal activity
- 3.5 Workers should carry a mobile phone along with the numbers of other workers who could be contacted in an emergency
- 3.6 All workers must report back to a prearranged individual at the end of the session
- 3.7 A diary will be kept of each session detailing the young and vulnerable people contacted and any noteworthy events.

4. Residential

- 4.1 A risk assessment should be completed before each residential and approved by the line manager.
- 4.2 All sites used for events will have been previously checked for safety/health hazards and re-checked on arrival if there has been a significant gap since the booking.
- 4.3 There should always be a minimum of two leaders with the group
- 4.4 The leaders will quickly establish the ground rules for the trip
- 4.5 Participants attending events will be registered. Parental or carers consent will be given in writing for all those under age 18 taking part in residential events.
- 4.6 All young and vulnerable people should complete a medical details form.
- 4.7 There will be a First Aider at each event. If it is impossible to have a qualified person at an event of less than 48 hours, one team member must be made responsible to ensure that First Aid procedures are carried out and that the services of the local GP or hospital are sought.

- 4.8 All medicines will be locked away and available to under 18s only through the First Aider and only if acting 'in loco parentis'. Participants will not be permitted to hold their own medicines during the event, the only exception being asthma inhaler.
- 4.9 All participants at residential events will provide completed health forms.
- 4.10 High standards of hygiene will be observed, to minimize the risk of illness. Particular areas of care will include toilet, kitchen and eating areas.
- 4.11 Details of any accidents will be recorded in writing
- 4.12 No one will enter the sleeping accommodation of members of the opposite sex, except in emergencies.
- 4.13 In the event of a fatality, the leader must immediately inform:
- The Police (and ensure that they will be informing next of kin)
 - The Person appointed as emergency contact usually the youth work manager or an appointed director when further appropriate procedures will be decided, such as agreeing who will visit next of kin.
 - At no stage will the leader, team member or participants enter into conversation with the Press, see the disaster management policy on this matter.
- 4.14 In the event of illness parents/ carers or next of kin will be informed sooner rather than later. If taken to the doctor or hospital, the parents/guardians/or next of kin will be informed.
- 4.15 Parents/ carers /or next of kin will be informed immediately of any overnight stay in hospital.
- 4.16 In the situation where an infection affects a number of people at an event, it is recommended that a letter is sent to all parents at the end of the event.
- 4.17 It is also wise to check with the local GP in case they want to refer it to the Environmental Health Officer. They may make a recommendation as to whether the event will be shut down

Internet and Mobile phone safety

Computers and mobile phones offer many benefits but it is important to be aware of the potential risks created by the use of these technologies.

There are risks if e-mail and text messages are used to communicate with children and young and vulnerable people

- If staff and volunteers use e-mail to communicate with children and young and vulnerable people, these will be recorded, and should always be done from the work e-mail. Personal e-mail accounts should not be used for communicating with young and vulnerable people.
- If text messages are sent to young and vulnerable people these should, where possible be sent from the Step 2 mobile phones.
- Care should be taken when using text messages and e-mails to communicate with young and vulnerable people as messages can easily be mis-interpreted. If you have a concern about any message you receive, i.e. if sexual or abusive language is used then inform your line manager. The message trail should be completed while work with that young person is ongoing.

- If staff use social networking sites, they should not become friends with any young person who they are primarily in contact with through Step2.
- Step 2's social networking site can be used to communicate with young people. Records of contacts will be kept.

AWARENESS - WHAT CONSTITUTES ABUSE

Definitions of abuse

A basic definition of abuse is that it is the abuse of power by a person who is developmentally older and/or stronger than another, resulting in some distress, harm or neglect of necessary attention for the victim.

Child abuse is a term which describes all the ways in which a child's development and health are damaged by the actions or inaction of others, usually adults. Although different terms are used to describe particular types of abuse, these often overlap and many children suffer the effects of a range of destructive forms of behaviour.

Categories of abuse

The following categories are used for entry on the Safeguarding Register and for statistical recording:

- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Physical injury
- Sexual abuse
- Bullying
- Financial Abuse
- Exploitation
- Radicalisation
- Coercive Control
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation

Neglect

'Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.'

Emotional abuse

'Emotional abuse is the ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the

exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment to a child, though it may occur alone.'

Physical abuse

'Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. "Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy" may also constitute physical abuse, whereby a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child'

Sexual abuse

'Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young and vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, 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 involve non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways'

Bullying is a highly distressing and damaging form of abuse and must not be tolerated. Through this policy we wish to promote mutual respect and cooperation between staff, young and vulnerable learners, parents and other professionals e.g. teachers. Certain behaviours are thus deemed to be unacceptable and include: Sarcasm; put downs; demeaning language and gestures; any physical or verbal assault.

Financial Abuse is the misuse of a person's funds; obtaining property and funds without his/her knowledge and full consent and not in his/her best interests.

Exploitation occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child, young person under the age of 18 or vulnerable adult into activity in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

Radicalisation is a process by which an individual, or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of the nation

Coercive control is when a person with whom you are personally connected, repeatedly behaves in a way which makes you feel **controlled**, dependent, isolated or scared. The following types of behaviour are common examples of **coercive control**: isolating you from your friends and family

Forced Marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an appalling and indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, but where there's no medical reason for this to be done. It's also known as "**female circumcision**" or "cutting", and by other terms such as sunna, gudniin, halalays, tahur, megrez and khitan, among others.

(A child or vulnerable adult may suffer more than one category of abuse)

Signs and symptoms of abuse

Below is a list of signs and symptoms which may indicate abuse (either current abuse or abuse that has taken place in the past). Young and vulnerable people experiencing abuse may display some of the symptoms listed, or none at all. Presence of any of the symptoms could indicate a variety of causal factors, and is not necessarily an indicator of abuse.

- Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, attempted suicide/talking about suicidal feelings
- Eating disorders
- Depression, withdrawal
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Unexplained gifts of money
- Sleep disturbances/nightmares
- Promiscuous behaviour
- Prostitution (male and female)
- Provocative sexual behaviour
- Unexplained injuries (including burns) if recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries/improbable explanation for injuries
- Very aggressive/bullying behaviour
- Flinching – fear of physical contact
- Running away from home
- Continual self-deprecation
- Inappropriate responses to painful situations
- Compulsive stealing
- Social isolation
- Desperate attention-seeking behaviour
- Obsessive behaviour
- Phobias
- Drug/solvent abuse

What stops young and vulnerable people telling?

- Direct threats – young and vulnerable people are taught to obey their parents
- Fear of punishment
- Guilt and shame
- Lack of appropriate vocabulary

- Young and vulnerable people may not recognise the abusive experience as abuse – they may believe that sexual abuse is part of an affectionate relationship
- In sexual abuse the abusive experience may be all they receive in response to their need for love and physical contact
- In sexual abuse the young and vulnerable person may love the abuser and feel they are special, favoured in some way
- Lack of opportunity to be heard
- Awareness of the possible implications, such as family break-up, medical examination – young and vulnerable people may think that their silence protects others
- Young and vulnerable people ‘tell’ in a variety of ways – through their behaviour and creative work as well as through direct disclosure
- Many young and vulnerable people make some attempt to ‘tell’ but are not ‘heard’

Reviewing and maintaining the Safeguarding Policy

The Trustees of Step 2 will undertake to review its Safeguarding policy on an annual basis.

The Trustees of Step 2 will ensure that this policy is brought to the attention of all workers, volunteers and Trustees and that they adhere to its policy.

APPENDIX 1

The charity currently has two designated safeguarding officers, Liz Robinson CEO and Pauline Mullarkey, Counselling Manager.

Office number 01274 683118

Liz Mobile Number 07739901197

Pauline Mobile Number 07985127097

If she is not available the nominated person from the trustees will act as the named person.

This person is currently

Shelly Summers

Mobile Number - 07729 286588

If none of the above are available and you feel you need to take action, or in an emergency, please contact any of the below.

- During office hours (8.30am - 5pm Monday to Thursday, 4.30pm on Friday) call Children's Social Services Initial Contact Point - 01274 437500

- At all other times, Social Services Emergency Duty Team - 01274 431010
- If you have reason to believe that a child is at **IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM**, contact the police on 999

