



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Get Me Out The Four Walls is committed to providing a safe environment for everyone involved with the charity. We recognise that, we have a duty of care, to ensure we make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, and to protect adults at risk from abuse or from the risk of abuse.

Everyone, without exception, has the right to be protected from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs. It is the responsibility of everyone to prevent and report the physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect of a person. You should raise any concerns you may have, or those reported to you, to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, according to this policy. It is not your responsibility to decide, or investigate, if there has been a safeguarding concern.

The legislation and guidance relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk includes the following: The Children and Social Work Act (2017), The Children Act 1989 and 2004, Working together to safeguard children (2015), No Secrets (2000), The Crime and Disorder Act (1998), The Health and Social Care Act (2008) and the Care Act (2014).

2. SCOPE

The policy is to be used by any member of staff or volunteer, including Trustees, working directly with children and young people, and Adults at Risk, during the course of their work for Get Me Out The Four Walls.

The policy applies to anyone with whom we are in contact with during the course of our work, who is a child, a young person, or an Adult at Risk. Where the policy or procedure refers to a 'child' or 'young person' we mean anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18 years. An adult at risk is someone aged 18 years or over '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 take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation' (Department of Health, No Secrets, 2000).

This policy is reviewed, endorsed, and approved by the board of trustees annually, or when legislation changes.

3. OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Get Me Out The four Walls will:

- Take reasonable steps to prevent unknown persons gaining access to GMOTFW closed groups. All requests to join the group will go through a vetting process before being accepted into the group.
- Details of meets will only be available on the closed groups.

- Ensure that Staff and Volunteers are adequately trained and kept up to date with relevant changes in the law.
- Review the effectiveness of the policy annually.
- Respond quickly and appropriately to any suspicions or allegations of abuse.

4. DEFINITIONS

CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

A child or young person means someone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

This could refer to the child/young person we are working with directly, or the child of one of these young persons, or of another person, with whom we are in contact during our work.

When concerns are raised about the child of a service user (child or vulnerable adult), the needs of the youngest take's precedence.

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse means a child's rights and needs are not being met as defined in The Children's Act 2004 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Abuse may occur through the actions of an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Where a child is disabled, injuries or behavioural symptoms may mistakenly be attributed to his/her disability rather than the abuse. Similarly, where a child is black or from a minority ethnic group, aggressive behaviour, emotional and behavioural problems and educational difficulties may be wrongly attributed to racial stereotypes, rather than abuse. Cultural and religious beliefs should not be used to justify hurting a child. Safeguarding for all children and young people is the same regardless of disability or ethnicity.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces or causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is called Induced Fabrication Illness by a Carer (formerly known as Munchausen's by proxy).

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment 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 feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Witnessing the harm of another person, such as in the case of domestic violence, is a form of emotional abuse. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse & Sexual Exploitation

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including sexual exploitation, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening, and whether it is for money or reward or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative contact (e.g. rape) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in seeing or receiving or sending sexually suggestive emails or text-messages, or inappropriate behaviour in Internet chat rooms, involving children looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur because of maternal substance abuse during pregnancy. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Abuse of Disabled Children

Disabled children are at increased risk of abuse and those with multiple disabilities are at even more significant risk both of abuse and neglect. Parents of disabled children may experience multiple stresses. This group of children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse for several reasons including:

Having fewer social contacts than other children

Receiving intimate personal care from a larger number of carers

Having an impaired capacity to understand what they are experiencing is abuse or to challenge the abuser

Having communication difficulties resulting in difficulties in telling people what is happening

Being reluctant to complain due to a fear of losing services

Being particularly vulnerable to bullying or intimidation

Being more vulnerable to abuse by peers than other children

Disability is defined as:

A major physical impairment, severe illness and/or a moderate to severe learning difficulty.

An ongoing high level of dependency on others for personal care and the meeting of other basic needs

Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). There is increasing use of new technologies as a tool for bullying and such incidents should be taken seriously.

Self-Harming Behaviour

Children and young people who harm or attempt to harm themselves should be taken seriously. The self-harming behaviour may cause impairment of the child's health or development and in some circumstances present significant harm or the risk of significant harm.

Self-harming behaviour may also arise alongside eating disorders and/or drug misuse.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation is a collective term for procedures that include the removal of part or all of the external female genitalia for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons. The practice is medically unnecessary, extremely painful and has serious physical and mental health consequences both at the time and in later life. The procedure is typically performed on girls of 4 - 13 years but may be performed on new-born babies or on young women. FGM can result in death.

FGM is a criminal offence (Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act 2003). Under the act it is an offence to arrange, procure, aid, or abet female genital mutilation. Parents/carers may be liable under this act. It is also an offence to allow the procedure to be undertaken in another country. Where agencies become aware that a girl is at risk of FGM a referral should be made to Children's Social Care

Domestic Violence as Abuse

Domestic Violence is defined by the Home Office as: 'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so called 'honour killings'.'

The term domestic violence is used to include any form of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse between people in a close relationship. It can take several forms such as physical assault, sexual abuse, rape, threats, and intimidation. It may be accompanied by other kinds of intimidation such as degradation, mental and verbal abuse, humiliation, deprivation, systematic criticism, and belittling. The term domestic violence includes the term domestic abuse.

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is one that is conducted without the full consent of both parties and where duress is a factor. Forced marriage can amount to sexual and emotional abuse and put children or adults at risk of physical abuse. In circumstances where there are concerns that someone is at imminent risk of a forced marriage urgent referrals should be made to Children's Adults' Social Care. In the case of a young person at risk of forced marriage it is likely that an initial discussion with the parent, carer or other community member may significantly increase the level of risk to the young person.

Internet Harm

Sexual exploitation (see above) also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in seeing or receiving or sending sexually suggestive emails or text-messages, or inappropriate behaviour in Internet chat rooms, involving children looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Trafficking

Children can be trafficked into, within and out of UK for many reasons and all different types of exploitation. Trafficking is a form of child abuse and needs an appropriate safeguarding response. Any child who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured, or received for exploitative reasons is considered to be a victim of trafficking, whether or not they have been forced or deceived. This is because it is not considered possible for children in this situation to give informed consent. Even when a child understands what has happened, they may still appear to submit willingly to what they believe to be the will of their parents or accompanying adult. It is important these children are protected too.

Children are trafficked for many reasons, including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, labour, benefit fraud, forced marriage, begging and involvement in criminal activity such as pick pocketing,

theft and working on cannabis farms. They are likely to be subjected to other forms of abuse, as a means of coercing and controlling them.

Trafficking is carried out by individual adults and organised crime groups.

Sexual activity

Sexual activity with child/young person under the age of 18 or living away from home Consensual sexual activity involving a young person under 18 years is not always abusive, but it may be. A child's or young person's ability to consent can be impaired due to lack of freedom, capacity or choice; for example because of an age/power imbalance; because it is leading into sexual exploitation; because one person is in a position of trust with the other (e.g. a teacher); where one person is vulnerable because of disability or capacity; where the child/young person is in the care of another away from home. No child under the age of 13 or under can consent to any sexual activity according to the Sexual Offences Act (2003).

Child Criminal Exploitation

Child Criminal Exploitation is common in 'county lines' and occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur using technology. Criminal exploitation of children is broader than just county lines and includes for instance children forced to work on cannabis farms or to commit theft.

VULNERABLE ADULTS

This policy applies to any 'Adult at Risk', defined by the following:

Any person aged eighteen or over who -

Is or may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and
Is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

WHAT IS ABUSE OF AN ADULT AT RISK?

Abuse is a violation of a person's rights or dignity by someone else. It can be done by anyone including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other users of services, neighbours, friends and associates or strangers. There are many kinds of abuse including:

Physical

This could be hitting, slapping, pushing, and kicking.

Sexual

This includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult is at risk:

- The Adult has not consented
- The Adult could not consent
- The Adult was pressured into consenting

Emotional/Psychological

This could be:

- emotional abuse
- threats of harm or abandonment
- depriving the person of contact
- humiliating
- blaming
- controlling
- intimidating
- coercing
- harassing
- verbally abusing
- isolating
- withdrawing a person from services or support networks

Financial or material

This includes:

- theft
- fraud
- exploitation
- pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance, or financial transactions
- misusing or misappropriating property, possessions, or benefits

Neglect or acts of omission

This includes:

- ignoring medical or physical care needs
- failing to provide access to appropriate health care, social care, or education services
- misusing medication
- inadequate nutrition or heating

Discriminatory

This includes:

- racist behaviour
- sexist behaviour
- harassment based on a person's ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, age or disability
- other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment

5. REPORTING

Actual, potential, or suspected incidents of abuse must be reported immediately. Where appropriate you should make a report to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). The DSO will ensure that the matter is appropriately investigated. There is a Safeguarding Concern form to record details of your concerns.

The need to report arises in the following instances:

- Abuse is observed or suspected
- An allegation of abuse is made
- Someone discloses abuse

WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE

- Firstly, you should never guarantee absolute confidentiality. They should be told that you will not share information with everyone, but you will need to tell someone else. “No Secrets” should be the guiding principle.
- Listen to the person, rather than question him or her directly.
- Offer him/her reassurance without making promises and take what the person says seriously.
- Allow the person to speak without interruption.
- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you must do and whom you must tell.
- Use the person’s words or explanations – do not translate into your own words in case you have misconstrued what the person was trying to say.

Record any discussion or actions taken within 24 hours, using the Safeguarding Concern form. You can submit the completed Safeguarding Form, by emailing the DPO. The Safeguarding Concern Form can be found on our website.

Details must include as far as practical:

- Name of person
- DOB/Age (if known)
- Home address (if known)
- Name/s and address of parent/s with parental responsibility – if under the age of 18.
- Telephone numbers if available
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details.
- What has prompted the concerns? Include dates and times of any specific incidents.
- Has the person been spoken to? If so, record details
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details.
- Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

It is important to note that where representatives report concerns, it is not their responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, but it is their responsibility to pass these concerns on. Care must be taken regarding confidentiality and the sharing of information with appropriate people.

Any written records taken must be kept securely in a locked place or in a confidential electronic folder.

Under no circumstances should any individual attempt to deal with the problem of abuse directly. Concerns should be reported in the first instance to the DSO, or if unavailable, the Designated Safeguarding Trustee.

The Get Me Out The Four Walls Designated Safeguarding Officer is:

Name: Lucinda Terry

Email: admin@getmeout.org.uk

The Get Me Out The Four Walls Designated Safeguarding Trustee is:

Name: Lucy Shires

Email: lucyshires@getmeout.org.uk

The DSO will contact the following organisations should there be a safeguarding concern regarding a child or vulnerable adult.

Norfolk County Council 0344 800 8020

Norfolk Safeguarding Board

www.norfolkscb.org

Suffolk County Council 0808 800 4005

Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership

<https://suffolksp.org.uk/>

6. RECRUITMENT

This section summaries some aspects of Get Me Out The Four Walls' recruitment procedures. The procedures set out below apply to both paid staff and Volunteers, including Trustees and Ambassadors.

Applicants for both paid and Voluntary positions, will undertake Enhanced DBS checks upon being recruited.

No-one shall work for the charity who:

Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against children.

Has been convicted of or has received a formal police caution concerning an offence against adults.

After appointment, all staff and volunteers will be inducted and trained in the Charity's Policies and procedures, including Safeguarding. Training and development needs will be reviewed regularly.

As part of that training all paid staff and Volunteers will undertake certified Safeguard Training Level 1, in both Vulnerable Adults and Children, should their role involve working with children or vulnerable adults.

The board of Trustees recognises that we can all take steps to assess the suitability of a potential employee or volunteer to work with children, but that these do not guarantee that an individual is safe to work with children and/or vulnerable adults. Therefore, Trustees and managers will ensure that appropriate management, supervision, and support systems are in place to reduce any risk to vulnerable people.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

In cases of disclosure of abuse, by either children or parents, we are obliged to share the information and refer our concerns to other services such as Social Services.

8. STAFF ALLEGATIONS

Should you have concerns about the behaviour of a staff member or volunteer within our organisation, this should be reported immediately to the DPO or the Designated Safeguarding Trustee.

Get Me Out The Four Walls will take any necessary disciplinary action against staff or volunteers if they are found to have breached our Safeguarding policy.

The DPO will contact Social Services or the police as appropriate.

Policy Approved by: The Board of Trustees

Date: 29th September 2020