



# Safeguarding Policy

## **Introduction:**

This document is the 'Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable People' for The Lucy Rayner Foundation which will be followed by all members of the Foundation, followed and promoted by those in the position of leadership within the Foundation.

The purpose of the Lucy Rayner Foundation is:

To raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety in young people. To provide emotional support and education for young adults and vulnerable people with mental health issues. To help families of young adults, with ill mental health, build emotional resilience.

We understand that being a young or vulnerable person can make someone vulnerable to abuse by adults. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work carried out by the Foundation are transparent and safeguard and promote the welfare of all young people.

If any parent or young person has any concerns about the conduct of any member of the Foundation, this should be raised in the first instance with your department manager and then with Jenny Rayner.

This document is written in accordance with Salford's Area Child Protection Policy and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' produced by the Department of Health in 1999.

## **Principles upon which the Children and Vulnerable People Policy is based:**

- The welfare of a child or vulnerable person will always be paramount.
- The welfare of families will be promoted.

- The rights, wishes and feelings of children, young and vulnerable people and their families will be respected and listened to.
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the Foundation will work in accordance with the interests of children and young or vulnerable people and follow the policy outlined below.
- Those people in positions of responsibility within the Foundation will ensure that the same opportunities are available to everyone and that all differences between individuals will be treated with respect.

## Child & Vulnerable People Protection Policy

### 1. Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with children and families.

In all cases, it is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the children E.g:

- If emergency medical attention is required. This can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child is in immediate danger the police should be contacted (dial 999) as they alone have the power to remove a child immediately if protection is necessary, via Police Protection Order.

### 2. Recognition of Abuse or Neglect

Abuse or neglect of a child or vulnerable person is caused by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children, or a vulnerable person may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or more rarely by a stranger.

#### Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms, of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child or vulnerable person whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly

described using terms such as, fabricated illness by proxy or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy.

### Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's or vulnerable persons emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or vulnerable person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child or vulnerable person. It may involve causing a child or vulnerable person to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation/corruption of children/vulnerable people. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or vulnerable person though it may occur alone.

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child/young or vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g., rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving a child or vulnerable person in 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 or vulnerable persons basic physical and/or psychological needs. This is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's or vulnerable persons health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child or vulnerable person from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or vulnerable person's basic emotional needs.

Individuals within the Foundation need to be alert to the potential abuse of a child or vulnerable person both within their families and also from other sources including abuse by members of that organisation.

The Foundation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse involving children or vulnerable people. There is an expected

responsibility for all members of the Foundation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

When appropriate, it is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns.

However, you must not discuss your concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse is suspected.
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected.
- Where fictitious illness by proxy (also known as Munchausen Syndrome by proxy) is suspected.
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

### What to do if children talk to you about abuse or neglect

It is recognised that a child or vulnerable person may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect or talk spontaneously, individually, or in groups when you are present.

In these situations, you must:

- Listen carefully to the child or vulnerable person. DO NOT directly question the child.
- Give the child or vulnerable person time and attention.
- Allow the child or vulnerable person to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child or vulnerable person who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's or vulnerable persons presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's or vulnerable person's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable person that you are glad they have told you, they have not done anything wrong and what you are going to do next.
- Explain that you will need to get help to keep the child or vulnerable person safe.

- Do NOT ask the child or vulnerable person to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.

### 3. Consulting about your concern

The purpose of consultation is to discuss your concerns in relation to a child or vulnerable person and decide what action is necessary.

You may become concerned about a child or vulnerable person who has not spoken to you, because of your observations of, or information about that child or vulnerable person.

It is good practice to ask a child or vulnerable person why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused or respond to a child or vulnerable person wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

If you are concerned about a child or vulnerable person you must share your concerns. Initially, you should talk to one of the people designated safeguarding lead within the Foundation as responsible for a child or vulnerable person's protection. In this organisation this person is Larry Watson - Mob: 07771703184, Deputy Zilla Yarde - Mob: 07880353490. If one of these people are implicated in the concerns, you should discuss your concerns directly with Social Services.

The DSL will then inform the CEO.

Verbal referrals to C-SPA or MASH must always be followed up by a written referral within 48 hours. All action taken must be recorded by the DSL. The DSL will ensure that Ofsted is notified if a section 47 is opened by the local authority, and if a section 47 is closed by the local authority, or if the incident is deemed serious following discussions with other professionals.

You can consult externally with your local Social Services Department in the following circumstances:

- When you remain unsure after internal consultation as to whether a child or vulnerable person's protection concerns exist.
- When there is disagreement as to whether a protection concern exists for a child or vulnerable person.
- When you are unable to consult promptly or at all with your designated internal contact for a child or vulnerable person's protection.

- When the concerns relate to any member of the organising committee.

Consultation is not the same as making a referral but should enable a decision to be made as to whether a referral to Social Services or the Police should progress.

#### 4. Making a referral

A referral involves giving Social Services or the Police, information about concerns relating to an individual or family to ensure that enquiries can be undertaken by the appropriate agency and followed by any necessary action.

In certain cases, the level of concern will lead straight to a referral without external consultation being necessary.

Parents/carers should be informed if a referral is being made except in the circumstances outlined on p4.

However, inability to inform parents for any reason should not prevent a referral being made. It would then become a joint decision with Social Services about how and when the parents should be approached and by whom.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from someone not known to the child or the vulnerable person's family, you should make a telephone referral directly to the police and consult with the parents.

If your concern is about abuse or risk of abuse from a family member or someone known to the children or vulnerable person, you should make a telephone referral to your local Social Services Office (see list on p.7).

#### Information required

Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available). Unavailability of some information should not stop you making a referral.

- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child and siblings.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.

- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals' known to be involved with the child/family eg: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern, and foundation for them.
- An opinion on whether the child or vulnerable person may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child or vulnerable person and family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with parental responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

#### Action to be taken following the referral

- Ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time.
- Put your concerns in writing to Social Services following the referral (within 48 hours).
- Accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

#### 5. Confidentiality

The LRF should ensure that any records made in relation to a referral should be kept confidentially and in a secure place.

Information in relation to child's or vulnerable adult's protection concerns should be shared on a "need to know" basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child's need for protection.

If in doubt, consult:

#### 6 Useful Telephone numbers

- LRF Contact Number: 01737 910907
- Surrey County Police: 01483 571212 24
- Samaritans: 116 123
- ChildLine: 0800 1111
- London Safeguarding Children's Board: 0207 934 9714

#### **Further Action**

***Should a thorough investigation prove that abuse has taken place by an employee of the Foundation then appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. The Foundation will ensure that all details associated with the allegations of abuse are recorded clearly and accurately. The records will be maintained securely in line with the Foundation's confidential record keeping procedures (GDPR policies)***

*Updated 10th January 2025*

#### Additional Information (Counsel360 System)

**Upon the installation of the CRM system, there are new steps that will need to be followed should a safeguarding issue arise. As mentioned above:**

'If you are concerned about a child or vulnerable person you must share your concerns. Initially, you should talk to one of the people designated within the Foundation as responsible for a child or vulnerable person's protection. In the Foundation these people are Larry Watson - Mob: 07771703184, Deputy Zilla Yarde - Mob: 07880353490.'

We would urge counsellors to use their own supervision as well as alerting our safeguarding leads.

At this stage, you should also update the system by adding a note which states that a safeguarding issue has been flagged. In the note entry, you should briefly outline the actions in which you will be taking and tick the box that shows there is a safeguarding issue.

*Updated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025*

**Due to be reviewed April 2027**