

## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

(Updated: October 2023)

### **1. Purpose**

1.1 This policy ensures that all staff working within client establishments where they have access to children (or vulnerable adults), such as in schools, are clear about the actions necessary with regard to child/ vulnerable adults protection. Its aims are:

- 1.1.1 To ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff working in client environments where they have access to children/ vulnerable adults;
- 1.1.2 Raise awareness of child/ vulnerable adult protection issues;
- 1.1.3 Help in identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse;
- 1.1.4 Forms part of the training provided by the Company for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

### **2. Aims and Objectives**

2.1 The Clean Space Partnership recognises that our staff may have contact with children/ vulnerable adults at particular client establishments (e.g. schools) and therefore could observe the outward signs of abuse. Therefore, the aim and objectives of this policy is for staff to understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and to clarify the reporting procedures to be followed to report such incidents to the client.

### **3. Definition**

- 3.1 An abused child is a person under 18 years who has suffered from or is believed to be at significant risk of physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse.
- 3.2 An abused vulnerable adult is over the age of 18 who has a disability or illness and may be unable to protect him or herself and suffered from or is believed to be at significant risk of physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse.
- 3.3 Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, pushing or squeezing, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child/ vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child/ vulnerable adult.

- 3.4 Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person, or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child/ vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children/ vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children/ vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- 3.5 Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's/ vulnerable adults basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's/ vulnerable adults health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's/ vulnerable adult basic emotional needs.
- 3.6 Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/ vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's/ vulnerable adult 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/ vulnerable adults. They may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child/ vulnerable adult participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children/ vulnerable adult frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children/ vulnerable adult. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child/ vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.
- 3.7 Significant harm
- 3.6.1 'Harm' means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development, including, for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- 3.6.2 'Development' means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.
- 3.6.3 'Health' means physical or mental health.
- 3.6.4 'Ill-treatment' includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

- 3.6.5 Where the question of whether harm suffered by a child/ vulnerable adult is significant turns on the child's/ vulnerable adult's health and development. The health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child/ vulnerable adult.

#### **4. Designated Person**

- 4.1 All client sites that work with or have access to children/ vulnerable adult's will have their own local procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse which our staff should be aware of. As part of these local procedures there will normally be a designated person who should be contacted to report any allegations of abuse.
- 4.2 At most schools, the Head Teacher is designated as having responsibility for liaising with Children and Young Peoples Services (CYPS) and other agencies, over cases of abuse.
- 4.3 Therefore, in schools all concerns that are raised by staff should be initially referred to the Head Teacher or to the Deputy/ Assistant Head Teacher.

#### **5. Procedures**

- 5.1 Vetting. We require all staff employed by working within a school environment to have their application vetted through DBS checks in order to ensure that there is no evidence of offences involving children, vulnerable adults or child abuse. The Company's Recruitment Policy gives further guidance on ensuring appropriate procedures are followed.
- 5.2 If a DBS discloses any offence the Company will immediately inform the client to discuss whether the employee is suitable to work in their particular environment, taking into consideration the nature of the offence, any potential risks and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 5.3 In cases where the Company is awaiting a DBS then:
- 5.3.1 The employee concerned will not be allowed to work at the client site until an acceptable DBS is received, or
- 5.3.2 With the agreement of the client, the employee may commence work at the client site, but only where they are closely supervised (shadowed) and are not left on their own.
- 5.4 All our staff have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children/ vulnerable adult's and must familiarise themselves with and follow these and any local procedures as part of the child/ vulnerable adult protection training.

## **6. What to do if you are worried a child/ vulnerable adult is being abused**

6.1 The designated person for child/ vulnerable adult protection or their deputy should be contacted immediately whenever there are concerns about a child's/ vulnerable adult's welfare to discuss the concerns. The purpose of the discussion is to decide whether the child is:

6.1.1 In need of simple support that could be provided by referral to another agency or service, or

6.1.2 In need of a referral to Social Care to assess either a complex support need or a child/ vulnerable adult protection concern.

6.2.1 The designated person or deputy will consider all the known information about the child/ vulnerable adult, their family and any incident in deciding the best course of action and consult with the child's/ vulnerable adult's social worker if they have one or with the duty social worker or with the local councils

## **7. Emergencies**

7.1 In the event of serious physical injury or neglect then the member of staff should inform the designated person for child/ vulnerable adult protection or their deputy (e.g. Head Teacher or the Deputy/ Assistant Head Teacher) **immediately**.

## **8. Handling Information**

8.1 Child/ vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality that should be clearly understood by all staff.

8.1.1 Staff have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children/ vulnerable adult with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. If a child/ vulnerable adult confides to one of our staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child/ vulnerable adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the designated person for child/ vulnerable adult protection or their deputy (Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Teacher) for the child's own sake. The child/ vulnerable adult should be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it;

8.1.2 Staff who receive information about children/ vulnerable adult and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts;

8.1.3 It is the duty of all members of staff to ensure that child/ vulnerable adult protection information remains confidential.

## **9. Identifying Abuse**

- 9.1 Because of daily contact with children/ vulnerable adult, staff may observe outward signs of abuse or changes in behaviour.
  - 9.1.1 These signs can do no more than give rise to suspicion - they are not, in themselves, proof that abuse has occurred. We should always be alert to such signs and be familiar with the set procedures to be followed;
  - 9.1.2 Sometimes concerns may be raised due to reasons other than a direct allegation from the child/ vulnerable adult due to a mark or injury that does not tally with the explanation given;
  - 9.1.3 Information from a third party that the child/ vulnerable adult is being abused;
  - 9.1.4 Concerns about the child's/ vulnerable adult's presentation or behaviour.

## **10. Disclosures**

- 10.1 Children/ vulnerable adults who make allegations or disclose information have a right to be listened to and taken seriously. However, it is not the job of our staff to investigate any allegations and these must be referred to the designated person for child/ vulnerable adult protection or their deputy (Head Teacher/ Deputy Head Teacher).
- 10.2 Listening to Children / vulnerable adult
  - 10.2.1 Listen to the child/ vulnerable adult and show you are listening rather than directly questioning him or her;
  - 10.2.2 Do not be verbally critical of the perpetrator; the child/ vulnerable adult may still have very positive feelings towards that person;
  - 10.2.3 Tell the child/ vulnerable adult you're pleased they've spoken to you, you know how difficult it must have been and that you will support them.
- 10.3 Be reassuring;
  - 10.3.2 Never stop a child / vulnerable adult who is freely recalling significant events;
  - 10.3.3 Use open questions rather than direct, e.g. "Tell me what has happened" rather than "Did they do x to you?"
  - 10.3.4 When a child/ vulnerable adult has finished, if appropriate, tell them what you are going to do, i.e. pass the information on to the designated person (e.g. Head Teacher);
  - 10.3.5 If the child/ vulnerable adult requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the child/ vulnerable adult sensitively that the designated person (Head Teacher) must be told in order to help the child/ vulnerable adult.

- Reassure the child/ vulnerable adult that the matter will only be disclosed to people who need to know about it;
- 10.3.6 Pass any disclosed information immediately to the designated person (Head Teacher) and any subsequent events or concerns.

## **11. Children with Special Educational Needs**

- 11.1 Children with SEN. may be especially vulnerable to abuse.
- 11.2 Extra care must be taken to interpret apparent signs of abuse and neglect correctly.
- 11.3 Indications of abuse of these children must be reported exactly as for other children according to the locally established procedures.

## **12. Allegations against Staff**

- 12.1 Staff who have daily contact with children/ vulnerable adult in a variety of situations are vulnerable to accusations of abuse. Their relationships with a child / vulnerable adult may in rare instances lead to allegations against them being made a child/ vulnerable adult or by parents/carers. Those allegations may be false, malicious or misplaced and may be either deliberate or innocent of such intent.
- 12.2 If a member of staff is informed of an allegation of abuse against another member of staff or against an employee of the client etc, they should report the matter immediately to the designated person for child/ vulnerable adult protection or their deputy, unless the designated person is the person against whom the allegation is made.

## **13. Allegations Against a Designated Person**

- 13.1 If the allegation is against the designated person (e.g. Head Teacher) then the deputy should be informed instead (e.g. Deputy Head/ Assistant Head Teacher).

## **14. Employee Declaration**

I hereby confirm having read and understood this Safeguarding Policy:

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Block Capitals)

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE FORWARD THE SIGNED DECLARATION TO THE HR DEPARTMENT.**

## Version control

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Page(s)</b>	<b>Issue Date</b>	<b>Additions/Alterations</b>	<b>Initials</b>
1.0	All	3 December 2016	Safeguarding policy First Authorised Issue	AB
1.0	7	1 June 2018	No change except included version control form	AB
2.0	None	8 October 2019	Document reviewed, no amendments	SF
3.0	None	20 October 2020	Document reviewed, no amendments	SF
4.0	None	20 October 2021	Document reviewed, no amendments	SF
5.0	None	21 October 2022	Document reviewed, no amendments	SF
6.0	None	23 October 2023	Document reviewed, no amendments	SF