



Safeguarding Children Policy

Reaching People Safeguarding Children Policy

January 2017

Introduction

Policies and procedures; protocols for working and safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Reaching People has the following policies and procedures in place for managing projects:

Complaints Policy Policy- GDPR	Confidentiality Policy	Data Protection
Environmental Policy Lone Working Policy Selection Policy	Equal Opportunity and Diversity Policy Participant Involvement Policy (draft)	ICT Policy Recruitment and
Safeguarding Policy Interest	Staff Code of Conduct	Trustees Conflict of Policy

Reaching People also has the following financial control policies and. procedures:

Purchasing Policy	Investment Policy	Banking and Custody Policy
Credit Control Policy	Expenses and Reimbursement Guidelines	Treasurer Duties

Statement on how Reaching People works with children and vulnerable adults and the safeguards used.

Reaching People and its member organisations carry out activities which bring staff, volunteers and contractors into contact with vulnerable adults and children. We are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for everyone and all reasonable steps are taken to prevent all parties from harm.

The Care Act 2014 provides us with the statutory guidance with the following 6 principles of safeguarding which we have adopted throughout this policy and in our training;

Empowerment — person-led decisions and informed consent

Prevention — it is better to take action before harm occurs

Proportionality — proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

Protection — support and representation for those in greatest need

Partnerships local solutions through services working with their communities

Accountability - accountability and transparency in delivering safe guarding

Reaching People has a Safeguarding Policy for children and vulnerable adults in place for its activities and services; all project staff employed by member organisations are required to

adhere to the policy and to undergo dedicated safeguarding training. Reaching People Trustees review the policy regularly and update it in keeping ' with changing guidance as necessary. Staff recruited to Reaching People projects through member organisations will have been vetted by their employer and have already received comprehensive safeguarding training.

The procedures listed in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for safeguarding adults, and the Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Children Boards Procedures Manual for safeguarding children, form the basis of our practice together with safe-guarding training for all staff.

REACHING PEOPLE is committed to creating an environment that enables children and young people to learn, develop, and express themselves in a safe, understanding and encouraging environment. We aim to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people participating in our activities.

The Children’s Act makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and it gives everyone involved in the care of children a responsibility for the protection of those children. It is also essential that we honour the trust of those who allow us to care for their children.

REACHING PEOPLE recognises that work with disabled children may attract potential abusers in terms of staff or volunteers, especially with those children who are unable to report any abuse because of their disability. **REACHING PEOPLE** also recognises that being disabled does not protect a young person from abuse within their circle of family and friends and may well increase that risk.

Therefore it is necessary that all concerned:

- have an understanding of the issues involved
- know procedures are in place and are understandable to anyone providing a service to young people and easy to implement

The Child Protection Worker in **REACHING PEOPLE** is the CEO. The appropriate Senior Manager if the CEO isn’t available is the Project Manager.

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all involved providing service for young people. Abuse is not always easily recognisable but is generally divided into six categories.

- **Physical Abuse:** Where adults physically hurt or injure children, hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting are all forms of physical abuse. Giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison and attempted suffocation or drowning are also physical abuse.
- **Psychological:** This is where a child is persistently blamed for things outside of their control, things that they could not be responsible for, being made to feel inadequate. Being told they are “stupid”.

- **Neglect:** An adult may fail to meet a child's basic needs, like food, warm clothing or medical attention. Children might be left alone unsupervised. Abuse in any form can affect a child of any age.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent lack of love and affection damages children emotionally. Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can make the child very nervous and withdrawn.
- **Sexual Abuse:** This is where children are encouraged, or forced, to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity. This could occur through unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact or through suggestive comments or innuendo or include showing children pornographic materials.
- **Financial Abuse:** Where the young person has their money taken from them or where their benefits are being misused. e.g. where a motability car is being used for purposes other than meeting the child's needs

How to recognise abuse?

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as becoming very quiet; withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Engaging in sexually explicitly behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected
- Difficulty in making friends
- Unkempt appearance: dirty or ill fitted clothing
- Very hungry or scared of eating; stealing food from another child
- Looking poorly or tired; falling asleep
- Poor personal hygiene

If you notice any social changes in the behaviour of a child, worrying marks or bruises or hear a child or children talking about things which give cause for concern then your first responsibility is to the child.

It is not safe to assume that someone else will take action. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action. Recognising, and coping with child abuse is very stressful and the person reporting the concern will not have to cope alone.

What to do if you suspect abuse?

If a child spontaneously talks of experiences which give cause for concern, you should:

1. Believe the child. You cannot keep any allegations or concerns confidential. You need to tell the child that.

2. Listen to the child without questioning him/her. Be aware of your own reactions, as showing disapproval may stop the child from continuing with their disclosure
3. Do not try to stop the child from recalling events. Make note of what is said, in what context, the setting, the timing and which people were present. (complete a log if you have one)

Inform the CEO immediately or if they are unavailable an appropriate Project Manager immediately. You will need to pass your notes to the CEO/ Project Manager

4. The CEO or Project Manager will contact the appropriate authorities including the Duty Social Worker in the area where the child lives as soon as feasibly possible.

It is not the job of staff or any volunteer at **REACHING PEOPLE** to investigate any situation where abuse is suspected. This is the role of Social Care Services and the police, and can be reported via the link below.

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-social-care/child-protection/>

Further Measures

The following extra measures will be adopted to ensure the safeguarding of young people at **REACHING PEOPLE**:

- We ensure that recruitment of all staff and volunteers is conducted in a way to safeguard young people and all staff will undergo an enhanced DBS Check as part of this process
- All workers and volunteers will be given a copy of the summary safe guarding policy and receive training as part of their induction to **REACHING PEOPLE**
- New staff and volunteers will not take up work without having 2 references provided.

Protecting Staff

- Never believe that “it couldn’t happen to you”
- If you suspect that a young person is developing an inappropriate affection for you, discuss it with your line manager and explore constructive ways of dealing with it
- If you develop an abnormal affection for a young person withdraw from the situation and discuss the matter with your line manager
- Be aware that young people can fabricate stories that can place you in a bad light. Do not take any chances nor allow yourself to be in a situation where stories can be given credence
- Always report and record any allegations made by children. Do not let them go unchallenged

Behaviour guidelines for those working with young people

The aim of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and well being of all young people and to support providing a safe, caring environment.

DO’s

- Always be publicly open when working with children.
- Avoid being alone with children unnecessarily. Avoid taking children alone on car journeys unless there is no other option and the child's parents have given permission.
- Where possible parents must take responsibility for their own children.
- Gain parental/ guardian permission for all work with children and young people.
- Set an example of appropriate behaviour. Young people learn by example.
- Offer respect to the young person at all times and strive to be sensitive to their feelings.
- Good behaviour will be positively encouraged.

DON'Ts

- Never engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay. Nor engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Avoid using sarcasm or discrimination, direct criticism, labelling and unnecessary competition or comparison.
- Never physically punish any young person.
- Do not deprive any young person of, or force any child to consume food or drink.
- Do not humiliate or frighten any young person.
- Do not carry out personal care tasks with children or young people.

[Allegations against a member of staff: Whistle Blowing and Complaints](#)

REACHING PEOPLE will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation.

[Action if there are concerns](#)

Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the CEO or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Chair of **REACHING PEOPLE** who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the organisation should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

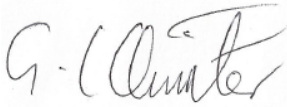
Concerns about suspected abuse:

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the CEO, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The CEO will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or if it is out of hours the CEO may go directly to the police.
- The CEO will handle contacting the parents or carers of the child as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the CEO is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Chairperson of **REACHING PEOPLE** who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

Internal Enquiries and Suspension:

- The CEO will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social service inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of social services or police inquiries **REACHING PEOPLE** will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, **REACHING PEOPLE** must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child will remain of paramount importance throughout.

Document Control	
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