

Working Actively To Change Hillfields Ltd [WATCH]

Child & Vulnerable Person Protection Policy

Introduction and Policy Statement

Safeguarding children and adults is everyone's business. This statement sets out what safeguarding means for WATCH and Hillz FM, what our roles and responsibilities are.

We all have a responsibility to make sure children and young people are safe from harm or abuse. If you have any suspicion, or information, suggesting a child is being harmed, don't ignore it.

There are significant differences in the laws and policies that shape how we safeguard children and how we safeguard adults. The legal framework to protect children is contained in Working together to safeguard children (2015). For adults, the Care Act 2014 gave safeguarding adults a legal framework for the first time. However, the overarching objective for both is to enable children and adults to live a life free from abuse or neglect. This cannot be achieved by any single agency. Every organisation and person who comes into contact with a child or adult has a responsibility and a role to play to help keep children and adults safe

WATCH recognises that the protection of children and vulnerable persons is a core requirement for an organisation that exists exclusively to provide support for young volunteers who work largely for the welfare of young and vulnerable people.

This policy therefore encompasses all the guidelines provided by the Charities Commission after their consultation with the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and Save the Children UK.

Definitions

Safeguarding children and young people and promoting their welfare means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing wherever possible impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is defined as being part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It is the work done to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

The Working together to safeguard children 2015 guidance states that:

"children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together."

In addition, the guidance states that "effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children."

"We believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them".

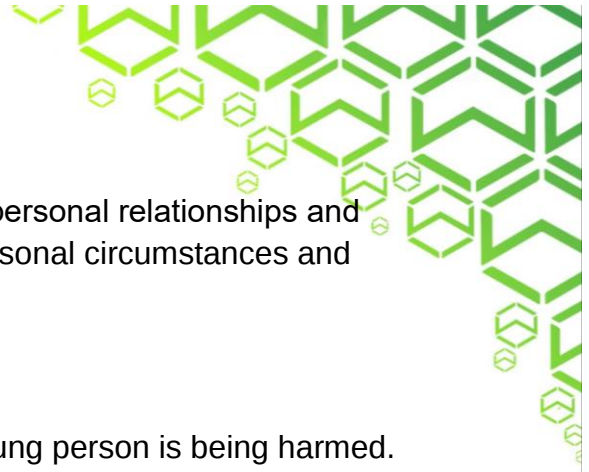
At its core, equality represents the fundamental belief that every individual should be treated with fairness, respect, and dignity, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or any other characteristic.

"We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation".

WATCH recognises the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, for example with communication or the impact of discrimination.

Safeguarding adults means:

- Protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- People and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.
- People and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings, and beliefs in deciding on any action 8.

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- Recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear, or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or wellbeing.

Signs of Abuse

The information below may help if you think a child or young person is being harmed.

Signs which may suggest physical abuse

- Any bruising to a baby - pre-walking stage
- Multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- Bruising of different colours, showing repeated injuries
- Fingertip-shaped bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- Burns of any shape or size
- An injury for which there is no proper explanation

Signs of possible sexual abuse

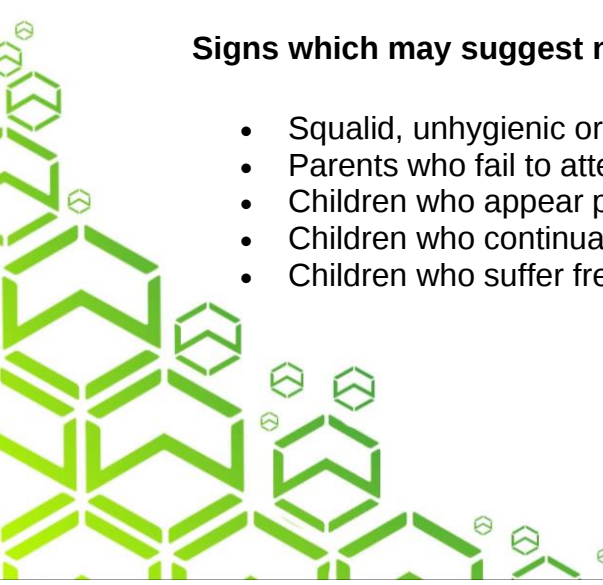
- Something a child has told you
- Something a child has told someone else
- A child who shows worrying sexualised behaviour in their play or with other children
- A child who seems to have unsuitable sexual knowledge for their age
- A child who may be visiting or being looked after by a known or suspected sexual offender

Signs which may suggest emotional harm

The following signs may be present in children whose parents are over-critical and emotionally distant, or who are unable to meet their child's emotional needs:

- Children whose behaviour is excessive. For example, excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking, head banging.
- Children who self-harm. For example, they may cut or scratch themselves or overdose.
- Children who attempt suicide
- Children who persistently run away from home
- Children who show high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- Children who usually seek out or avoid affection.

Signs which may suggest neglect

- Squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions
 - Parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs
 - Children who appear persistently undersized or underweight
 - Children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy
 - Children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision.
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Responsibility of WATCH

- To nominate a named safeguarding officer, the Chief Executive Officer or a member of the senior management who should have links with the local safeguarding board.
- WATCH works together with other organisations such as local authority, colleges, schools and community groups, to ensure that children/vulnerable people are protected and that the duty of care is shared.
- To ensure that staff have received training in safeguarding.
- To have clear policies and reporting mechanisms in place.
- To clearly advertise in spaces where children spend time on how to report concerns.
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers understand their rights.
- To ensure that employees and volunteers are able to recognise and deal with actual or alleged safeguarding issues involving children or vulnerable people.

Reporting Procedure

- Anyone working or volunteering at WATCH or Hillz FM must report an actual or any alleged abuse to a senior member of staff on duty at the time of the incident.
- If a member of staff or a volunteer suspects a colleague of child abuse, that member of staff is required to follow the same reporting procedures as for any other incident of suspected child abuse.
- All information about the actual or alleged event should be clearly reported and recorded. This should include any observations or reports made, date, time, who was involved, any marks, behaviours or other observations.
- All issues of actual or alleged abuse must be report to the local authority – Local Safeguarding Board [LSB] so they can take the necessary action to safeguard the child or vulnerable person.
- **Any actual or alleged abuse must be reported to the Board of Trustees at the earliest opportunity.**
- Any employee or volunteer suspected of abuse will be immediately suspended without judgement until a full investigation has taken place to ascertain the facts. If it is found that the employee or volunteer has been involved in an act of abuse they will be immediately dismissed from their role and the incident will be reported to the Vetting and Baring Scheme. The act may also be reported to the police.



The designated safeguarding officer will communicate with the Local Safeguarding Board or delegate this role to an appropriate manager.

- All those involved in the safeguarding will be kept informed at a level that is appropriate.

Prevention

One to one supervision is a time for staff or volunteers and their manager to reflect on the staff member's/volunteer's workload, performance, development and any issues affecting their work. It should enable problems to be shared and dealt with at an early stage. Paid workers should generally have supervision once a month. For volunteers it may be more difficult to arrange formal supervision, although this is not an excuse for supervision not taking place at all.

All staff should receive training in the recognition and prevention of abuse
There should be clear reporting mechanisms in place and an open and transparent management to enable whistle blowing to take place

There must be regular discussion of issues related to risk, safety of users of the service and staff issues to ensure that any concerns are dealt with

There must be a loan working policy and clear lines of reporting.

All staff both employed and volunteers must have Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) and Employment Checks

- Enhanced DBS checks are carried out for all staff. DBS checks are also conducted for young people (aged 16 and over) who intend to volunteer with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Staff and volunteers may be excluded from being DBS checked if they are able to provide a copy of DBS clearance which has been given in the last 12 months. If there is any doubt, another DBS check is undertaken.
- Young people who are, or intend to, volunteer at organisations whose policy is to conduct DBS checks, may be checked via this route (see section below on partnership working).
- Prior to DBS results, staff or volunteers will not be able to work alone with children/vulnerable people. They are supervised at all times by a member of staff or a volunteer who has been checked by the DBS.

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- If a DBS check indicates that a staff member is not suitable for working with children and vulnerable people, the board will almost certainly elect to terminate their probation period. If a young person's DBS check indicates that they are not suitable for volunteering with children and vulnerable people, an alternative opportunity, such as working on the Radio can be offered.
 - All new staff and volunteers are requested to provide two referees and must disclose any cautions and convictions.

Useful contacts and information

How do I contact someone if I am concerned about a child or young person?

If you do need to speak to somebody about your concerns:

- Contact a social worker: 0247 697 5483

What should I do if a child is in immediate danger or left alone?

If you are concerned that a child is at risk of or has been harmed, please contact **MASH 024 7678 8555** or the police on 101 or 999.

Or call one of the following for advice

- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
- Child Line (for children and young people) 0800 1111

For professionals

You have a responsibility to report the allegation or concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer on 024 7697 5483 or by completing this online reporting form.

<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/ladorefferral>