



CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

Date of Issue: 29 January 2020

This replaces any previous issues of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Note: Where either 'children', 'young people' or 'vulnerable people' are mentioned all three are usually intended.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Community Chaplaincy Norfolk (CCN) recognises that it works in a sector where it comes into regular contact with vulnerable adults and may from time to time come into contact with children, normally in the context of their being children of its clients. CCN values and encourages the involvement of people who may be vulnerable, both in its own work and in the work of other organisations. Through its Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy, CCN is committed to promoting their well-being and enjoyment and protection of their health, safety and general welfare while in the company or care of staff or volunteers.

INTRODUCTION

Vulnerable people are normally involved with CCN as clients, but may be, from time to time, volunteers or staff. In promoting this policy CCN will take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of vulnerable people;
- Keep them safe from harm while in the care of its staff or volunteers;
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements; and
- Support and protect the interests of staff and volunteers who have contact with, or access to, children, young people and others who may be vulnerable.

This policy is intended as a practical guide for staff and volunteers involved with vulnerable people.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY AND THOSE AFFECTED

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers (including Board members), and others representing CCN who have contact with vulnerable people.

In law a child is anyone under the age of 18. However, older children, for example, teenagers, may prefer to be called young people.



A vulnerable person is anyone with special needs who may need extra support, such as someone with a physical or learning disability, mental health problem, frailty due to old age, recovering from addiction, or disempowerment due to illness.

It should be recognised that people with special needs are able to cope in many situations, so sensitivity and common sense should be exercised.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The main contact between CCN and vulnerable people will be via its employed Project Leader or other staff and/or its volunteer mentors. CCN ensures that it employs suitably trained and experienced staff for its employed roles and seeks to deliver training where necessary to its volunteers to support this policy and good practice within the organisation. Staff and volunteers training should be reviewed/refreshed every 3 years.

CCN will continually seek to raise awareness of the dangers to which vulnerable people may be susceptible:

- **Physical** – where vulnerable people receive physical hurt or injury;
- **Neglect** – where adults fail to care for vulnerable people and to protect them from danger, seriously impairing their health, well-being or development;
- **Emotional** – where vulnerable people are harmed by a constant lack of love and affection or intimidated by threats or taunts; and/or
- **Sexual** – where vulnerable people are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity by adults or children. This also includes the use of sexualised language.

Common sense should be relied upon to recognise the warning signs. However, it is essential to rely on facts rather than opinions and not to jump to conclusions.

In welcoming, and working with, people who are vulnerable CCN will:

- Provide a friendly welcome for them and promote their general welfare, which must always be paramount;
- Recognise their rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect;
- Consistently apply fair and objective methods of selecting employees, volunteers and contractors. A thorough selection procedure for positions, both paid and unpaid, which could involve unsupervised access to any vulnerable groups is probably the most effective way of assessing a person's suitability, and may act as a deterrent to those with an increased potential to mistreat others;
- Ensure that any employees and volunteers, who will have substantial unsupervised contact with vulnerable people, are DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked and where necessary CTC (Counter Terrorism Check) checked; and
- Plan activities involving vulnerable people with care to minimise risks to their health and safety.



Employees and volunteers should:

- Remember they are role models and provide an example for those they work with to follow;
- Bear in mind that some actions, no matter how well-intentioned, may be easily misinterpreted and so leave all parties vulnerable;
- Be alert to any potential harm or inappropriate behaviour by people who are vulnerable;
- Respect individuals' rights to privacy;
- Provide access for vulnerable people to discuss any concerns they may have; and
- Speak to their line manager if they have concerns about an individual's safety.

Employees and volunteers should not:

- Arrange to see vulnerable people in circumstances unconnected with their work;
- Be unnecessarily left alone for substantial periods of time with anyone who is vulnerable. Where one to one work is necessary they should inform another staff member where they are going, with whom and for how long;
- Permit abusive behaviour by others or engage in it themselves;
- Show favouritism to, or become too closely associated with an individual. Nor should they get drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour (e.g. crushes);
- Allow or engage in suggestive remarks, gestures or touching of a kind which could be misunderstood;
- Promise to keep secrets;
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- Do anything which might undermine a good reputation for providing a safe environment; or
- Hesitate to share concerns on any of these matters with the appropriate representative.

PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO ALLEGED OR SUSPECTED HARM

If a vulnerable person wants to talk about harm, it is **essential** that the employee or volunteer:

- Listens carefully to what the person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly;
- Lets them know that to help them someone else must be told;
- Reassures them that they are not to blame;
- Is aware that they may have been threatened;
- Does not push them for information;
- Reassures them that they are right to talk about it and what they say is accepted; and
- Lets them know what will happen next and undertakes to let them know the outcome.

If a person who may be vulnerable has talked about harm, or harm is suspected, the employee or volunteer **must** do two things:



- a) Write down accurately what the person has said using the pro forma for recording disclosures or signs of abuse witnessed (see Appendix 1).
- b) Notify their line manager, giving them the completed pro forma/written information.

Where the line manager is unavailable, and the vulnerable person is in imminent danger, staff should contact the relevant authorities themselves. Contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service on 0344 800 8021, or the Safeguarding Adults team on 0344 800 8020 at the County Council. They should then inform the line manager as soon as possible on their return.

Dealing with incidents of harm is difficult for any individual so employees and volunteers **should not:**

- Act alone;
- Start to investigate; or
- Make any assumptions about the persons involved.

Any employee or volunteer who is involved in a disclosure of any kind may feel that they need to speak to a child care professional to reassure themselves that they have done the right thing. The NSPCC operates a 24 hour help line for anyone concerned about a child or young person. It is primarily for use by adults and can be used anonymously: **0800 800500**.

Where it is suspected that an employee or volunteer may be involved in the abuse, employees and volunteers should let their line manager know as soon as possible. The employee or volunteer should be immediately removed from access to vulnerable people, but should be assured that no presumptions have been made and that the allegation will be fully investigated by the relevant authorities.

If gross misconduct is reasonably suspected, it may be appropriate to ask them not to attend the office or property at all while the matter is under investigation (suspended on full pay if an employee). Once the relevant authorities' enquiry has concluded, the line manager should decide what further action is appropriate in conjunction with other relevant policies.

Full and accurate notes (i.e. **word for word**) must be written as soon as possible, using pro forma if available (Appendix 1). Records should be as accurate as possible as they may be invaluable to the investigation and used as evidence in court.

When dealing with personal and emotive details of this nature, confidentiality must be maintained at all times since the allegations or suspicions may prove to be unfounded. Notes and records should be kept in a secure place and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation (See Confidentiality Policy).



No assumptions of guilt should be made unless and until an actual conviction has been obtained in the proceedings. Impartial contact will be maintained by a nominated staff member during this process.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees:	
Name of Trustee:	Matthew Hutton
Date of approval by the Board of Trustees:	29/01/2020
Date of First Review	January 2021
Date of Next Review	Annually



Appendix 1: Pro forma for recording disclosures or signs of abuse witnessed

To be completed by person receiving disclosure or witnessing signs of abuse.

Name of person disclosing or displaying signs of abuse:

Date and time disclosure received/signs of abuse witnessed:

Day	Month	Year	Time
			am/pm

Gender of the person disclosing

Male Female

Date of birth

Day	Month	Year

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

City/Town

Post Code

Please detail what the person said (word for word) or signs of abuse witnessed:

(Continue on separate numbered sheets if necessary) Sheet 1 of



Other observations / comments:

Name of person completing form: _____ Dated: _____ this

Signed: