

Community Creative

Community Creative Ltd, 171 Longfellow Road, Coventry CV2 5HN
Telephone: 0845 367 0880 Fax: 024 7601 0333

Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policy statement

Community Creative aim to ensure that any vulnerable people, whether children, young people or vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with our staff or volunteers. We will challenge abuse whenever it is encountered in the course of our activities. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

We Consider Child Protection to be very important and Community Creative undertakes to ensure that all Staff and Volunteers who work with children, young people or vulnerable adults have been checked under recognised procedures and have received information that will enable them to recognise the signs of a child in distress and to follow the referral procedure. We also recognise that we have a legal duty under the Child Protection Act and the Human Rights Act to ensure that we act appropriately if we encounter any child, young persons or vulnerable person's protection issue.

Recruitment

1. All applicants, for paid and unpaid positions, will complete an application form.
2. Short listed applicants will be asked to attend interview.
3. Short listed applicants will be asked to provide references and these will always be taken up prior to confirmation of appointment. We will follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable adults.
4. Where relevant to the post, the successful applicant will be asked to agree to an appropriate disclosure / Criminal record check. These will be requested and received prior to the applicant taking up post.
5. The successful applicant will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organisation and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure.
6. Relevant training and support will be provided on an ongoing basis, and will cover information about their role, and opportunities for practicing skills needed for the work.
7. Training on specific areas such as health & safety procedures, identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality will be given as a priority to new staff and volunteers, and will be regularly reviewed.
8. All staff and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide regular feedback and support.
9. Every member of staff and volunteer will attend an annual review, where their performance, skills, motivation and expectations will be discussed. Annual reviews will be recorded and copies made available to the member of staff/volunteer.


Dated 1st March 2009

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10. We will ensure that all staff and volunteers involved in recruitment, training and supervision, are aware of this policy and have received appropriate training and support to ensure its full implementation.



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Responsibilities of Staff and Volunteers

Staff and Volunteers have a responsibility to protect children, young people or vulnerable adults from abuse

- Staff and Volunteers must be able to respond appropriately to a children, young people or vulnerable adults disclosure of abuse, ensuring the information they receive is handled correctly
- Staff and Volunteers are not responsible for judging whether an allegation is true or for sorting it out
- Staff and Volunteers have a responsibility to report and protect

Types of child abuse

The main types of abuse are:

A. 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.

B. Sexual abuse

Girls and boys are abused by adults who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This might be full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling. Showing children pornographic magazines or videos is also included.

C. 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.

D. Neglect

An adult may fail to meet a child's basic needs, like food or warm clothing. Children might be constantly left alone unsupervised.

Abuse in any form can affect a child of any age.

Staff and Volunteers identifying signs of possible abuse

Staff and Volunteers may be important links in identifying a case where a child needs further protection. Child abuse may come to light in a number of ways.

- A child may tell you what has happened to them
- From a third party (e.g. another child)

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- Through the child's behaviour
- A suspicious, unexplained injury to the child

Recognising abuse is not easy. Most children will receive cuts, grazes and bruises from time to time and their behaviour may give reason for concern. There may be other reasons for these factors aside from abuse, but any concerns should be immediately discussed with the individuals outlined below.

Warning signs that may alert to possible abuse include:

- Unexplained bruising, cuts or burns on the child, particularly if these parts of the body are not normally injured in accidents
- An injury which a parent/carer tries to hide or for which they might have given different explanations
- Changes in behaviour such as a child suddenly becoming very quiet, tearful, withdrawn, aggressive or displaying severe tantrums
- Loss of weight without a medical explanation
- An inappropriately dressed or ill kept child who may also be dirty
- Sexually explicit behaviour, for example playing games and showing an awareness inappropriate for the child's age
- Continual masturbation, aggressive and inappropriate sex play
- Running away from home, attempted suicides, self inflicted injuries
- A lack of trust in adults, particularly those who would normally be close to a child
- Disturbed sleep, nightmares and bed wetting, particularly if a child has previously been dry.
- Eating problems, including over eating or loss of appetite

Procedures to follow with a child if you suspect abuse

1. Talk to the child sensitively to find out if there is anything worrying them.
2. Keep questions to a minimum but make sure you are absolutely clear about what the child has said.
3. Do not take sole responsibility. Discuss your concerns you're your line manager / committee member designated for Child Protection
4. Contact with parents should be delayed until advice has been sought from Social Services. The line manager / designated committee member will seek this advice.

Procedures to follow when a child discloses abuse

1. Never promise to keep a secret. If you do so and the child is being hurt you will not be able to help them. Tell the child you may need to talk to someone about it. Emphasise that you will be talking to someone who wants to help.
2. Allow the child to decide if s/he wants to open up. Do not push them to do so.
3. Avoid using "leading" or "directing" questions.
4. Allowing the child to talk at their own pace and not pressure them to disclose anything they do not want to.

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5. Do not leave the child until they are ready, and then talk to the line manager / designated committee member as soon as possible. Even if the child has decided not to disclose, you should still inform the line manager / designated committee member.
6. Staff member / Volunteer and line manager / designated committee member must compile a written report, which details all the factual information.
7. Anyone dealing with a child that has disclosed information can be referred for professional help to enable them to deal with the experience.

Behaviour guidelines for Staff and Volunteers working with children, young people or vulnerable adults

The aim of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and well being of all children, young people or vulnerable adults and to support the Staff and Volunteers in providing a safe, caring environment.

- Staff and Volunteers should set examples of appropriate behaviour. As young people learn by example, Staff and Volunteers should avoid using sarcasm or discrimination, direct criticism, labelling and unnecessary competition or comparison.
- Good behaviour should be positively encouraged.
- Staff and Volunteers should not physically punish any young person.
- Staff and Volunteers should not deprive any young/vulnerable person of, or force any child to consume, food or drink.
- Staff and Volunteers should not humiliate or frighten any young / vulnerable person
- Staff and Volunteers should avoid situations in which they risk putting himself or herself or the young / vulnerable person at risk. This includes being alone with a young person unnecessarily. Staff and Volunteers should offer respect to the young / vulnerable person at all times and strive to be sensitive to their feelings.