

# Policy on Safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults

## Mission statement

In our work with everybody who may be at risk due to age, illness or disability, the Knighton Community Centre will endeavour at all times to provide services and activities which minimise risk and are as safe as we can make them.

We aim to protect our service users from harm or maltreatment, prevent the impairment of health or development, ensure the provision of safe and effective care, promote people's life chances and ensure children enter adulthood successfully.

We will work in partnership with other local and national agencies to put in place appropriate procedures for reporting, making referrals, accessing training and specialist support, as and when required.

## Safer recruitment

The Knighton Community Centre will undertake safe recruitment processes for staff by taking up references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all appropriate staff prior to appointment.

Staff and volunteers will have DBS checks depending on the tasks they undertake. A list of roles within the Community Centre is attached to this policy (see appendix 1).

We will provide an appropriate training to enable all personnel to undertake their roles safely and confidently, and ongoing training as benefits the personal and professional development of individuals and of our organisation.

All trustees are encouraged to have enhanced DBS checks, whether or not they come into direct contact with children and young people or vulnerable adults.

**Children and young people according the Children Act, 2004 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 years old, however, extensions of this exist for children who have special**

needs and for those in local authority care settings and therefore, this policy covers young people up to the age of 25.

All references to child and/or children in this document apply equally to young people.

Vulnerable adults are defined as:

- People aged 18 or over
- Who are receiving or may need community care services because of learning, physical or mental disability, age, or illness
- Who are or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

We will regularly review our recruitment procedures in response to changes in legislation and systems external to our organisation e.g. DBS and barring list checks.

## Volunteers

It is important that all volunteers are treated fairly, are given clear expectations of their role within the organisation and are supported to fulfil that role.

All volunteer roles will be supported by an appropriate leader. The Community Centre will designate a member of staff/volunteer to act as the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will maintain records on volunteers, organise training (every 3 years) and, together with the centre administrator and the Safeguarding Officer, monitor DBS checks.

Volunteers will be treated equally alongside any paid staff, and all volunteers will be offered the same opportunities for advancement, responsibility, training and gaining qualifications and acknowledgement for their contribution to our organisation. In turn, our volunteers will adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times as a representative of our organisation.

Any volunteer roles, which would be regulated activity if unsupervised, will be appropriately supervised in accordance with statutory guidance.

**Safeguarding Officer (The person who is responsible for child and young people and vulnerable adults' protection in an organization)**

The Safeguarding Officer will be available to all staff, volunteers and service users to speak to if they have any concerns, issues or complaints regarding the safety, well-being or conduct of service users, volunteers and staff. The safeguarding officer will also offer confidential help to any staff member or volunteer who wants to talk about any issue. If

Safeguarding Officer is not available, please reach out for people from Safeguarding contact (see Appendix 4).

The safeguarding officer will have access to appropriate training (**refresh in accordance to PAVO guidelines**) to support them in these roles. They will liaise with appropriate local and national agencies, contribute to appropriate policies, maintain records and keep confidentiality, adhere to and promote this policy within the organisation, and support or provide access to support for individuals suffering harm or abuse.

## Awareness of harm and abuse in our organisation

All incidents of harm to anyone involved in our service will require an appropriate response to reduce risks and improve our service (see appendix 2).

Deliberate acts of harm or abuse which includes:

- physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint.
- sexual abuse: including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material.
- psychological or emotional abuse: including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation.
- financial or material abuse: including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- neglect and acts of omission: including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs.
- discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- institutional or organisational: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment.
- **female genital mutilation: it's a form of violence against women and girls (Violence Against Women and Girls - VAWG), and violates women's and girls' rights to a life of freedom, dignity, and equality.**
- **domestic: it is any type of controlling, bullying, threatening or violent behaviour between people who are or have been in a relationship. It can also happen between adults related to one another. It can seriously harm children and young people, and experiencing domestic abuse is child abuse**

These types of abuses against the person and will incur disciplinary proceedings and require reports and referrals to social services, the police, other professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service if in a regulated activity.

## Significant harm

Significant harm is the accepted point at which it is appropriate to refer the situation to statutory agencies. The harm may take place over a number of incidents or might be a single, serious incident. It is better to seek advice than to do nothing. It is not the role of anyone in your organisation to determine whether abuse has taken place, simply to report it to the statutory agencies, whose duty it is to investigate.

Where there is risk of significant harm to our service users, volunteers or staff, the Safeguarding Officer is empowered to act accordingly.

- To log all conversations regarding the issue
- To sign and request signatures on reports and statements
- Confidentially seek advice from expert sources
- Share concerns (with consent where required and appropriate) with the Chair of the Management Committee
- Share concerns and make referrals to external agencies such as Social Services (the Local Authority Designated Officer - LADO), the Police or The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) as appropriate to the circumstances
- Make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service regarding staff or volunteers in regulated activity whose conduct is harmful to service users and when they are removed from regulated activity
- In the case of an allegation involving the Safeguarding Officer that matter should be reported to a Management Committee member, usually the Chair and arrangements should be made to ensure the matter is dealt with by an independent person or refer the named deputy. For further guidance see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

## Confidentiality

**There is nothing in legislation that prevents the sensible sharing of relevant information to prevent harm to an individual or to assist in the prevention or detection of a crime. In Safeguarding context a disclosure cannot be kept**

**confidential and people need to know that generally they cannot make promises of keeping something to themselves when approached with a concern.**

Personal information on all personnel and service users should be kept securely and not shared unless there is reason to do so. Personnel should understand that any personal information they may learn about service users in the course of their work should not be discussed outside the organisation.

All reports and logs (including personnel records) will be kept securely and confidentially according to our data protection policy and confidentiality statement, or in line with DBS Code of Practice if appropriate, until or unless it is necessary to share this material with the agencies named above. Information will be shared on a “need-to-know” basis only.

## Communication

It is vital to plan and prepare for the appropriate sharing of information within and beyond the organisation. Staff and service users, or their families may have communication difficulties, speak languages other than Welsh and English, or be unable to hear, see, read, speak etc. Everyone should know they have the right to speak up about things that concern them.

The organisation has a duty to communicate with other agencies, to best support their service users and to fulfil their safeguarding/protection responsibilities.

We will communicate this policy to all staff, volunteers, service users and their families / carers, using appropriate methods, formats and language to get the essence across.

We support and encourage all service users, volunteers and staff to speak up and contact the named Safeguarding Officer where there is

- a *concern* (a worry, issue or doubt about practice or treatment of a service user or colleague, or their circumstances), *or*
- a *disclosure* (information about a person at risk of or suffering from significant harm) *or*
- an *allegation* (the possibility that a volunteer or staff member could cause harm to a person in their care)

Staff or volunteers can report things that aren't right, are illegal or if anyone at work is neglecting their duties, putting someone's health and safety in danger or covering up wrongdoing. In the first instance they should speak with the Safeguarding Officer.

We would prefer our members and personnel to use internal processes whenever possible to make a report as above, but this does not prevent them from making a report or referral to statutory agencies such as Social Services (LADO) or the Police, in their own right as a private individual. We also support our staff or volunteers to raise concerns or

to disclose information, which they believe shows malpractice (whistle-blowing i.e., disclosure in the public interest).

To encourage everyone involved in our organisation to understand that safeguarding is everybody's business, we will hold forums, agenda trustees' meetings, provide opportunities for discussions about issues and concerns, policy and procedures to reflect, review and to continue to learn and improve in our safeguarding responsibilities.

**Updated 9.03.25** Approved by the management committee: