**SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**General Safeguarding of all Centre users**

**Aims and Purpose:**

Coniston Community Association is committed to safeguarding all children, young people and vulnerable adults that come into contact with our work. We believe that all children, young people and vulnerable adults have an equal right to protection from abuse, regardless of their age, race, religion, ability, gender, language, background or sexual identity and consider the welfare of the child/ young person / vulnerable adult is paramount. This includes protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults who are at risk of being radicalised.

We will take every reasonable step to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected where our staff and associates are involved in the delivery of our work. All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. Any concerns regarding radicalization will be referred to the South Gloucestershire Channel Process and logged through our internal safeguarding processes.

We enable all our staff and those who work with us to make informed and confident decisions regarding safeguarding. We expect everyone (staff, board, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of the organisation) to have read, understood and adhere to this policy and related procedures. established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002, and in line with government publications: ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2013, Revised Safeguarding Statutory Guidance 2 ‘Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families’ 2000, ‘What to do if You are Worried a Child is Being Abused’ 2003. All staff and volunteers will undertake WRAP as part of their induction in order to identify and respond to risks to children, young people and adults from extreme or radical views. The policy reflects our responsibilities with regard to the Prevent Strategy 2011.

Coniston Community Association recognises its role in identifying indoctrination into any form of extreme ideology which may lead to the harm of self or others. We will aim to safeguard young people through educating them on the appropriate use of social media and the dangers of downloading and sharing inappropriate material which is illegal under the Counter-Terrorism Act. Our definition of radical or extreme ideology is ‘a set of ideas which could justify vilification or violence against individuals, groups or self.’ Staff are trained to be vigilant for spotting signs of extremist view and behaviours and to always report anything which may suggest a person is expressing opinions which may cause concern. We place a strong emphasis on the common values that all communities share such as self-respect, tolerance and the sanctity of life.

All staff are in a position of trust and have a general responsibility to observe and apply this duty to safeguard. This means that staff must:

* 1. Act and be seen to act in the best interest of the child, young person or vulnerable adult
  2. Refer any child/ren at risk of being radicalised or extremism through the Local Authority Channel Referral and Intervention processes.
  3. Avoid any contact which may lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
  4. Take responsibility for their own actions and behavior
  5. Understand the specific responsibilities which are part of their employment or role
  6. Be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached. These may include legal proceedings if required.

This Safeguarding policy statement is displayed throughout our organisation and Amelia Wheeler who is the Safeguarding lead will have the responsibility to make sure that all staff, Trustees, volunteers and Centre users are made aware of the full Safeguarding policy and procedures.

1. **Health & Safety** 
   1. Staff should refer to the General Statement of Health & Safety, signed by the Manager.
   2. All members of staff, including volunteers, should make themselves aware of the Health & Safety procedures for their specific project and / or property.
   3. Where the health and safety procedures of the site used are not available or adequate, the general procedures should be used.
   4. No procedure will cover every single incident or issue. Staff are expected to take a common-sense approach to health and safety and use their professional judgment and initiative.
2. **Risk assessments**
   1. All members of staff should make themselves aware of the risk assessments and controls for their specific project, activity and / or property.
   2. Relevant managers are responsible for reviewing risk assessments at least every six months.
3. **Emergency Procedures.** 
   1. The Manager will take charge in an emergency and needs to ensure that all members of staff are aware of the emergency procedures.
   2. If an accident occurs on the premises, the priorities are to:
      1. assess the situation
      2. safeguard the uninjured members of the group
      3. attend to the casualty
      4. inform the emergency services and everyone who needs to know of the incident
   3. The key steps to take are:
      1. Establish the nature and extent of the emergency as quickly as possible.
      2. Ensure that all the group are safe and looked after.
      3. Establish the names of the casualties and get immediate medical attention for them.
      4. Record details of the incident, to include: nature, date and time, location of incident, name(s) of casualty and details of their injuries, action taken so far and action yet to be taken. If possible, use the standard reporting form.
      5. If the casualty needs to go to hospital, a member of staff must accompany them and stay until the parents/carers arrive.
      6. Contact the parents/carers and notify them of the situation.
      7. If the Manager considers the situation to be serious, contact either the line manager or the head of the Board of Trustees.
      8. The Manager should ensure that they have the emergency/ mobile contact numbers for room hirers, trustees and staff. The individual groups will be required to keep records of the emergency/mobile contact numbers for parents, carers and have the Centre Manager and Caretakers mobile number in case of emergency too.
4. **Accidents & incidents:**
   1. Staff must use the standard form to report incidents or accidents.
   2. You should return this form to your line manager. Please report within 24 hours – or by end of session if serious (hospital, police etc.).
   3. Parents or carers of children affected should also be contacted.
5. **Confidentiality** 
   1. Our work with room hirers often brings us into contact with confidential information. In order to ensure that all those using and working with Coniston Community Association can do so with confidence, we respect confidentiality in the following ways:
      1. Confidential information on users will be stored securely in the appropriate office.
      2. Users will have ready access to their files and records but will not have access to information about any other Centre users.
      3. Staff must not discuss individual users, other than for purposes of group management, with people other than the business partner or family of that user.
      4. Information given by Centre users to staff will not be passed on to other people without permission.
      5. Any anxieties/evidence relating to a user’s personal safety will be kept in a confidential file and will not be shared within the group.
      6. All confidential information must be marked as such and communicated securely. This means that e-mail must be secure, or use first class post marked ‘personal and confidential’, or use secure delivery by hand.
      7. Confidentiality is crucial to all our relationships, but the welfare of the child is paramount. The law does not allow anyone to keep concerns relating to child abuse to themselves.
      8. Confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of the information will prejudice the welfare of the child.
      9. Due to the confidential nature of such investigations, where information has been reported to any agency, there may not be feedback from them. Staff should not seek feedback from them, other than to check if necessary that their communication has been received and understood.
6. **Prevention**
7. **Recruitment of Staff, Volunteers and Trustees**
   1. The organisation’s managers will ensure that people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe to do so. Two references will be taken up for new staff and volunteers. The Association will ensure that they have an up to date enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check.
   2. All trustees and senior managers will be required to sign an Automatic Disqualification declaration prior to appointment and annually in January, to comply with changes by the Charity Commission from August 2018.
   3. As part of their induction new recruits are, as are all staff, required to familiarise themselves with this Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures, and to complete the Safeguarding Checklist.
   4. New staff are also given child protection and WRAP training if they have not had training within the past two years***. Refer to Recruitment Policy***
   5. Coniston Community Association will ensure that all staff and volunteers recruited go through a number of checks to ensure their eligibility and safety to work with adults who may be vulnerable. This will include our Trustees where they may have access to vulnerable adults as part of their Trustee duties.
   6. Coniston Community Association will ensure that these checks are undertaken in line with the law including employment law for staff.
   7. Coniston Community Association will ensure for all roles within CCA that relate to working with vulnerable adults that:
      1. There is a clear job description for staff and role description for volunteers and a personnel/volunteer specification outlining the key skills and abilities and qualifications, if any, required.
      2. There is an open recruitment process.
      3. There is an application form that covers past work/volunteering
      4. There is a declaration form requesting information on previous convictions and investigations
      5. There is an interview process suitable to the post/role and task.
      6. Written references are sought (and followed up when necessary).
      7. If a professional qualification is a requirement of the post, a registration check is made with the appropriate Professional Regulatory Body.
      8. Where required, an appropriate disclosure barring check (DBS) is carried out.
8. **Professionalism**

We realise that professional conduct is essential for the prevention of children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm. Staff need to be aware of their personal / professional boundaries when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

1. **Social Contact**
   1. Staff should not establish social contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults or their families for the purpose of securing a friendship. If a person using our services seeks to establish such contact, the member of staff should exercise their professional judgment in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued. This means that staff must:
      1. Be aware that even well intentioned social or physical contact may be misunderstood by the child, young person, vulnerable adult, or by an overseer or anyone to whom the action is described.
      2. Always follow the management procedures for obtaining prior approval for any planned social contact with children, young people or families.
      3. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical and social contact will be open to scrutiny.
      4. Never indulge in horse-play, tickling or fun fights. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

Staff working in a 1-2-1 situation with children, young people, vulnerable adults or their families may be more vulnerable to allegations. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of all parties are met. This means that staff must:

* + - 1. Consider the needs and circumstance of that child, young person or vulnerable adult involved.
      2. Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door.
      3. Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
      4. Always report to their line manager any situation where a child, young person or vulnerable adult becomes distressed or angry.
      5. Consider the need to make a written note of the meeting.
      6. See also Lone Working Policy

1. **Working Together**
   1. At Coniston Community Association we understand that we can reduce the risks of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults by working together, both within our organisation and / or with other agencies.
   2. We are working towards integrating our service delivery so that:
      1. staff who are working in different teams or projects within the organisation, but who are supporting the same Centre users share information and work together on common action plans where appropriate
      2. staff share information and work together with different agencies on common cases whose safety is at risk, for example through multi-agency panels, or by using the Single Assessment Framework (eSAF) in cases of children or young people in need.

With regard to confidential, secure and appropriate sharing of information, we respect our obligations under Every Child Matters and follow the guidelines set by the local authority, as well as our own Confidentiality Policy

1. Coniston Community Association is committed to ensuring that our safeguarding policies and procedures are working, and we will regularly review the application of this policy and associated procedures and hold an annual session with Trustees, Staff and Volunteers and Centre users to review its effectiveness.
   1. We recognise that staff or volunteers working with Centre users are in a position of authority in relation to users of the services they provide. We will make sure that services are provided in an environment that lessens the imbalance of power and encourages the independence and well-being of Centre users.
   2. We understand that people who are subject to safeguarding procedures have the right to be involved as fully as possible in all aspects of the process and will address any communication needs will be addressed to make sure this takes place.
2. **Procedures for the effective management, support, supervision and training of staff and volunteers.**

Coniston Community Association will ensure that for all staff and volunteers there is:

* 1. An induction process into the organisation and the post/role
  2. A probationary period for staff and trial period for volunteers.
  3. Relevant training provided as appropriate to the post/role
  4. A robust structure and process for support and supervision appropriate to the post/role
  5. An annual appraisal for staff and review for volunteers.

Comprehensive, written records are kept of: training completed; support and supervision; and annual appraisals

1. **Safe Environment** 
   1. All staff must act on their shared responsibility to provide a safe environment for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.
   2. Staff must follow the procedures for reporting and acting on incidents where children, young people or vulnerable adults have been harmed or their safety has been jeopardized. Parents / carers of children or young people affected by incidents should normally be contacted as soon as possible.

**SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY**

1. **Registration & Consent** 
   1. All children and young people up to the age of 18 must be registered with the informed consent of parents / carers for participation.
   2. Registration for our hirers is advised and should include:
      1. Name of child / young person
      2. Address
      3. Parent/Carer Name
      4. Contact telephone numbers
      5. Emergency contact name and telephone numbers (if different)
      6. Information for parents & carers about the activity / project, including venue, dates / times, programme, staff, insurance
      7. Parental agreement on behaviour and collection / departure arrangements
      8. Name & contact details of doctor
      9. Information on medical conditions or allergies and medication
      10. Signed and dated consent to:
          1. Emergency medical or surgical treatment, including anesthetic or blood transfusion
          2. Photographs / video
          3. Activity / project overall
   3. Consent
      1. All consent forms should be held centrally by relevant department and a copy given to whoever the home base contact is.
   4. Authorisation
      1. Authorisation for activities will normally be given by the relevant manager by way of signing the risk assessment.
      2. Authorisation for trips and residentials must be obtained from the Manager at least two weeks before the activity. *See also ‘Trips and residentials’ below.*
   5. Attendance
      1. The names of all children and young people up to the age of 14 who actually attend activities must be recorded. For ready access, the record of attendance may include the emergency contact numbers of children or young people and important notes on any additional needs and record of any subs paid.
   6. Staffing
      1. We advise that as a minimum there must be 2 members of staff for any group activity. One must be female, one must be a Team Leader or manager. However, if it is a male only piece of work there is no need for a female worker to be present.
      2. When considering staff ratios activity leaders need to take into account:
         1. The sex, age and ability of group
         2. The competence and behaviour of group
         3. Nature of activities, requirements of venues to be visited
         4. Competence of staff
      3. In addition, there needs to be enough staff to cope with an emergency. For the protection of both staff and children / young people all staff should ensure that whenever possible they are not alone with a young person.
   7. Trips & Residentials
      1. In addition to all the sections above, staff must follow the ‘Trip Guidelines’ flowchart*.*
      2. As with all activities, staff need to check with families how and when children, young people or vulnerable adults are getting home.
2. **Child Protection**
   1. This policy is in line with the procedures of the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group. It is intended to provide staff with:
      1. a summary of the main forms of child abuse
      2. guidelines about what they should do in the event of suspecting abuse or receiving a disclosure of abuse
      3. guidance in the event of allegations against staff.
   2. It is not an exhaustive guide to child protection, nor does it take the place of formal child protection training. Advice and information not covered by this policy can be obtained through:
      1. Coniston Community Associations designated Child Protection Officer (CPO)
      2. Child protection training (see your CPO or line manager)
      3. South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Group – visit: <http://www.swcpp.org.uk/WebHelp/kidkare3.htm>
3. **What is Abuse?**
   1. The 1989 Children Act recognises four categories of abuse against children:
      1. Physical Abuse
      2. Sexual Abuse
      3. Emotional Abuse
      4. Neglect
   2. **Physical Abuse -** Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after.
   3. **Emotional Abuse -** Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
   4. **Sexual Abuse -** Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape and buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
   5. **Neglect -** Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.
   6. As a member of staff or volunteer, you have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a child or young person. Not all concerns about children or young people relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what you know about the child and his/her circumstances. If you are worried, it *is not* your responsibility to decide if it is abuse. It *is* your responsibility to act on your concerns and to do something about it.
4. **What To Do If abuse is disclosed**
   1. If a child discloses abuse, you should take the following action:
      1. Inform the child that this cannot be kept confidential and will have to be passed on to the appropriate agencies. Offer reassurance to the child or young person that they were right to tell you. Do not promise the child that this can be kept secret, as subsequent disclosure could then lead to the child feeling betrayed.
      2. I**mmediately after communicating with the child**, make a detailed record of the conversation. This should include:  
         1. Name of the child
         2. Parent’s/Carer’s details
         3. The child’s address
         4. Date of birth
         5. School attended
         6. Family details, e.g. siblings
         7. Relevant phone numbers
         8. What the child / young person says has happened
         9. When and where it occurred
         10. Who else was there
         11. What was said by those involved.
         12. Your own concerns and observations, including a diagram to show the position of any bruises or marks the child or young person shows you, trying to indicate the size, shape and colour.
         13. Additional information that would be helpful includes:
             1. Gender issues
             2. Race, culture and language
             3. Any other information – e.g. pending court case, family bereavement
         14. Remember, all records should be kept in a secure place and should be confidential. Parents have the right to see any records kept on their child. *Section A2 ‘Confidentiality’ applies.*
         15. **Within 24 hours,** discuss your concerns with:
             1. The parents / carers, unless this would put the child or yourself in danger.
             2. Your line manager. If agreed with your manager, inform parents/carers that you are going to report your concerns to South Gloucestershire Council Children & Young People’s Services.
             3. The Chair of the board if your line manager is unavailable.
             4. A Designated Professional in South Gloucestershire Council Children & Young People’s Services.

If there is no answer from any of the South Gloucestershire Council numbers **do not leave a detailed message,** please state it is a child protection issue and leave your name and contact details.

**In an emergency, or if you believe the child to be at risk of significant harm, and if you cannot get hold of the Designated professional please, ring the Emergency Duty Team or the Police**.

* + - * 1. Follow up phone calls with your written report. You may be asked to make a formal referral to Children & Young People’s Services (social care)
        2. It is the responsibility of the line manager to inform the designated Child Protection Officer of all child protection cases, unless you have already informed her in the line manager’s absence.
        3. It is the responsibility of the Coniston Community Associations designated Child Protection Officer to inform the manager of all child protection cases, unless you have already done so in their absence
      1. ***See the communication flow chart.***
      2. Your concerns should only be discussed with members of the Coniston Community Association staff team who have a direct relevance to the case. Efforts should be made to ensure it is not discussed in front of the wider team members. It is important that only those who need to know do, in order to respect the child’s confidentiality as far as we can and to avoid rumours and gossip that could affect the child, family and the staff team.

1. **Historical Abuse**
   1. There may be occasions when a child will disclose abuse (either sexual or physical) which occurred in the past. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current child abuse. The reason for this is that the abuser may still represent a risk to children now.
   2. **If abuse is suspected**
      1. Recognising abuse is one of the first steps in protecting children and young people. There could be signs or behaviour that make you feel concerned. Staff should be alert to the following type of behaviour in the children:
         1. Becoming excessively withdrawn or exclusively clinging
         2. Seeming to be keeping a secret
         3. Personality changes – becoming insecure
         4. Unreasonable fear of certain people or places
         5. Acting out in an inappropriate way perhaps with toys or objects
         6. Unexplained bruising, injuries or burns
         7. Sexually explicit language or actions
         8. Inappropriate clothing
         9. Unhealthy risk taking behavior
   3. **Within 24 hours,** discuss your concerns with:
      1. The child or young person’s parents / carers, unless this would put the child or yourself in danger.
      2. Your line manager or Child Protection Officer (CPO) if your line manager is not available. If agreed with your manager or CPO, inform parents/carers that you are going to report your concerns to South Gloucestershire Council Children & Young People’s Services.
      3. If agreed with your manager or CPO, a Designated Professional in South Gloucestershire Council Children & Young People’s Services.
      4. If there is no answer from any of the South Gloucestershire Council numbers **do not leave a detailed message,** please state it is a child protection issue and leave your name and contact details.
   4. **In an emergency, or if you believe the child to be at risk of significant harm, and it has not been possible to speak with your line manager or Child Protection Officer, you should contact Children’s Services Emergency Duty Team. See the flow chart for the number. If you still do not manage to speak with anyone, you should call the police on 999.**
      1. Follow up phone calls with your written report. You may be asked to make a formal referral to Children & Young People’s Services (social care)
      2. Keep monitoring the behaviour of the child / young person.
      3. You and / or your line manager may find it useful to seek guidance or advice from other agencies on a ‘what if’ basis, i.e. without mentioning the child’s name.
      4. Remember that if you do report concerns, you are not reporting the parents or carers, you are reporting to protect the welfare of the child.
      5. Your concerns should only be discussed with members of the team who have a direct relevance to the case and efforts should be made to ensure it is not discussed in front of the wider team members.
2. **Allegations against staff, board members or volunteers**
   1. With regard to allegations, as with all safeguarding matters, all members of staff should remember that the safety and welfare of the child is the overriding concern.
   2. If you receive an allegation or observe or judge that a member of the board, member of staff or a volunteer has behaved in a way that may have harmed a child / young person, or has behaved or spoken in an inappropriate manner, then you should note your concerns securely (who, what, where, when) and tell your line manager AND the trustee committee immediately.
   3. You should not:
      * 1. attempt to deal with the situation yourself;
        2. make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents;
        3. keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality
        4. share the information with anyone except those who need to know, normally, in the first instance, your line manager
        5. take any action that might undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents or carers.
        6. It is the responsibility of the line manager, or Trustee member in their absence, to ensure that during the remainder of the working day that person is not left in sole charge of the children.

It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager or a committee member responsible for child protection, as appropriate, to investigate the matter further and involve other agencies or authorities as required: the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Tina Wilson 01454 868508, email address [tina.wilson@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:tina.wilson@southglos.gov.uk), social care and / or the police.

* + - 1. The person against whom an allegation is being made may be suspended during this investigation, depending on the advice of the Local Authority Designated Officer. Suspension should be considered in any case where:
         1. there is cause to suspect, or it is clearly evident that, a child is at risk of or
         2. has suffered significant harm,
         3. the allegation warrants a police investigation,
         4. the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal.
      2. As required by the Protection of Children Act 1999, if necessary we will refer to the Protection of Children Act (PoCA) List the names of individuals who we consider unsuitable to work with children.
    1. ***Please refer also to the Disciplinary Policy.***

1. **Support to staff and volunteers**
   1. As a result of dealing with disclosure or reporting your concerns, you may feel angry or upset. It is important that you are able to work this through. The management committee fully supports all members of staff in following this procedure and if you wish you should talk to the child abuse representative from the management committee. Your line manager will also be able to provide information on support agencies.
   2. Staff will also be offered support if they are subject to allegations of being inappropriate or abusive towards children / young people.
   3. However, the committee and managers will ensure that any agency concerned is given all assistance in pursuing any investigation and the disciplinary procedure may be implemented.

**CHILD PROTECTION FLOW CHART**

YOU HAVE A SUSPICION OR DISCLOSURE WHICH MAKES YOU CONCERNED THAT A CHILD IS AT RISK

MAKE A DETAILED RECORD OF ALL CONCERNS

TALK TO THE PARENT / GUARDIAN AND CHILD / YOUNG PERSON ABOUT YOUR CONCERN, UNLESS YOU FEEL THAT THIS WOULD PUT THE CHILD OR YOURSELF IN DANGER

SPEAK WITH YOUR LINE MANAGER OR IN THEIR ABSENCE:

THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER (CPO), Amelia Wheeler 07896 574 117

IF BOTH YOUR LINE MANAGER AND CPO ARE UNAVAILABLE:

CONTACT Patchway Town Council 01454 868 530

**CONTACT SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICES:**

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| --- | --- |
| Normal Working Hours  If an incident occurs and advice is needed during office hours (8.30 – 5pm Monday to Friday)  **YOU MUST:** Contact the South Gloucestershire Council Team on: **01454 866000** | Outside Working Hours  Outside of normal hours advice is available between (5 – 11pm)  **01454 615165** |

* **If no answer from any of these, please leave your contact details, so someone can return your call a.s.a.p. Do not leave a detailed message, please state it is a child protection issue.**

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy**

1. We acknowledge that all adults have the right to live a life free from violence, exploitation and abuse. We are committed to upholding this right and operate a policy of zero tolerance of abuse wherever it occurs.
2. We believes that all people have the right to live an independent lifestyle and to make choices, even if some of those choices involve a degree of risk
3. Our Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy aims to:
   1. Enable adults to be safeguarded against abuse
   2. Raise awareness about the abuse of adults
   3. Reduce the risk of abuse in all settings
   4. Ensure that when allegations of abuse come to light appropriate actions are taken.
4. Our policy and associated procedures follow guidelines set out in the South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Boards Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2010 (which should be read in conjunction with this policy) and have been approved by the Board of Trustees and are reviewed regularly.
5. Our Safeguarding Policy and associated Procedures include a Code of Behaviour which we expect to be followed by all staff, trustees, volunteer, Centre users and visitors/members of the public participating in our activities.
6. **Who is a vulnerable adult:**
   1. The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who:
      1. is or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness
      2. AND is unable to take care of him / herself
      3. OR is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation
      4. Coniston Community Association recognises that some people can be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation than others because their impairments leave them disempowered within society. This includes people with physical, sensory and mental impairments.
      5. Notwithstanding the above, Coniston Community Association understands that abuse occurs within all sections of society and there should be no discrimination based on assumptions about impairment, age, class, gender, sexual identity, family relationships, religion, ethnic background, race or culture.
      6. Coniston Community Association assumes that people entitled to support under this policy have mental capacity to make decisions about their own well-being. Where people lack capacity, suitable support will be provided to ensure that any actions taken or decisions made are carried out in their best interests.
      7. Any person making a report of abuse to Coniston Community Association will be listened to, their information acted upon, and wherever appropriate they will be informed about the outcome.
7. **Types of abuse**
   1. **‘No secrets’** Department for Health/Home Office 2000 lists the following types of abuse
   2. Any of these forms of abuse can be either deliberate or be the result of ignorance or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way they are also being abused in other ways.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Physical** | This includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking or restraint or inappropriate sanctions |
| **Sexual** | This includes rape, sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented could not consent or was pressured into consenting. |
| **Psychological** | This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. |
| **Financial or material** | This includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. |
| **Neglect or acts of omission** | This includes ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care, social care, education services or misuse of medication, adequate nutrition or heating. |
| **Domestic Violence** | When any of the above take place in a domestic setting they can also be indicators of domestic violence, which is defined as “the use, attempt, or threat of violence, whether physical, emotional, sexual, mental or economic, within an intimate and/or family relationship. It reflects and reinforces inequalities of power within relationships and within society” |
| **Discriminatory** | This includes racist, sexist or homophobic abuse that is based on a person’s impairment, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. Some of these can also be hate crimes or hate incidents. Hate crime is defined as any offence, which is committed against a person or property that is perceived by the victim or any other person to have taken place because of their race, ethnic origin, nationality or national origins, religion, sexual orientation or disability. |
| **Institutional abuse** | This can sometimes happen in care homes or hospitals when people are mistreated because of poor or inadequate care, neglect and poor practice that affects the whole of that service. |

1. **Who abuses?**
   1. The person who is responsible for the abuse is often well known to the person abused and could be:
      1. relatives and family members
      2. professional staff
      3. paid care workers
      4. volunteers
      5. other Centre users
      6. neighbours
      7. friends and associates
      8. strangers
   2. There can be abuse in any relationship, often occurring where the person abusing is in a more powerful position than the person being abused.
   3. The abuser may be more able than the person being abused, or the abused person may be dependent on the abuser in some way.
   4. The abuser might be another person eligible for community care services, such as another resident in a care home or an adult with learning disabilities caring for an elderly and/or frail parent.
2. In any formal caring situation the person providing care is in a position of trust, which entails a power imbalance between the member of staff, paid carer or volunteer and the person in receipt of the service.
3. **Where does abuse take place?**
   1. Abuse can take place at any location, including in the individual’s own home, in the home of a friend or family member, in a public place, or in a care setting such as a hospital, residential/nursing home or day service.
   2. Abuse is more likely to take place and continue in settings where people are isolated. Isolation is not just about the physical location, but also about whether there is any outside monitoring or other people/agencies involved.
   3. It can also be to do with people being unable to communicate their feelings, needs and express choices because of lack of opportunity, lack of access to equipment, lack of information or not being listened to. Isolation can occur equally in peoples own homes or in regulated services.
4. **How might we notice abuse?** 
   1. Coniston Community Association understands that concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:
      1. A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult.
      2. A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
      3. An observation of the behaviour of the vulnerable adult by the volunteer, member of staff or carer.
5. **What do to if you have a concern?**
   1. If a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, dial 999 and ask for police assistance.
6. Alerters at Coniston Community Association may be Centre users, members of the public and staff/volunteers who may discover or have information disclosed about alleged abuse.
7. Alerters should contact Amelia Wheeler who is the lead for Safeguarding at Coniston Community Association and they will support the alerter to pass this information on to the South Gloucestershire Council Customer Services Desk **01454 868007.**
8. What to do as an alerter if you suspect abuse has happened or is likely to happen:
   1. listen to the person, believe the person and record carefully what has happened or has been said
   2. make sure the person is safe and the risk of further abuse is prevented – call for emergency help on 999 if necessary
   3. keep any evidence safe – ensure that it is not contaminate
   4. call the police if there is evidence that a crime has been committed
   5. report to Amelia Wheeler who is the lead contact for Safeguarding as soon as possible and always on the same day
9. **Coniston Community Association - Our values and principles**
10. We are committed to keeping vulnerable adults safe from harm and exploitation and to upholding their rights; that is, always acting in their best interests and with their consent unless there is a reason in law.
11. Our safeguarding policy sets out how we will do this and is guidedby a number of values and principles as set out below.

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| **Access to information and knowledge** | All vulnerable adults will have access to information that they can understand to make an informed choice, including access to expert knowledge and advocacy, as required |
| **Choice** | All vulnerable adults will have the opportunity to select independently from a range of options based on clear and accurate information |
| **Confidentiality** | All vulnerable adults will know that information about them is managed appropriately and there is a clear understanding of confidentiality and its limits among staff/volunteers |
| **Consent** | All vulnerable adults have the right to be supported to make their own decisions and to give or withhold their consent to an activity or service. Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service. It may be signaled verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing.  No one can give, or withhold, consent on behalf of another adult unless special provision for particular purposes has been made for this, usually by law |
| **Dignity and respect** | All vulnerable adults will be accorded the same respect and dignity as any other adult, by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs |
| **Equality and diversity** | All vulnerable adults will be treated equally and their background and culture will be valued and respected |
| **Fulfillment** | All vulnerable adults will be invited to engage in activities and offered services that enable them to fulfill their ability and potential |
| **Independence** | All vulnerable adults will have as much control as possible over their lives whilst being safeguarded against unreasonable risks |
| **Privacy** | All vulnerable adults will be free from unnecessary intrusion into their affairs; and there will be a balance between the individual’s own safety and the safety of others |
| **Safety** | all vulnerable adults will feel safe, and live without fear of violence, neglect or abuse in any form |
| **Support** | All vulnerable adults will be supported to report any form of abuse and to receive appropriate support following abuse for as long as may be required. |

1. **Managing allegations against staff, volunteers or Trustees**
   1. Coniston Community Association has a dual responsibility when responding to an allegation made against a member of staff, volunteer or trustee firstly, to the vulnerable adult, and, secondly, to the staff member/volunteer.
   2. Coniston Community Association procedures for dealing with allegations against a staff member/ volunteer or Trustee which, in the case of a concern about a vulnerable adult, will run parallel to the process for reporting a concern about a vulnerable adult set out in Section 7 above.
   3. Coniston Community Association understands that allegations against members of staff or volunteers or Trustees can be traumatic and unsettling and for this reason, Coniston Community Association ensures that all staff, volunteers and Trustees have a clear understanding of how allegations will be handled and can expect that the Coniston Community Association disciplinary procedure will be consistently implemented.
   4. Coniston Community Association recognises that it is our responsibility to ensure that the investigation is handled sensitively from initiation to conclusion and we will manage any anxieties expressed or demonstrated by any vulnerable adult, carer, family member advocate or any other member of staff, volunteer or Trustee
   5. It is Coniston Community Association policy to suspend without prejudice when an allegation of abuse or harm is made, all members of staff, volunteers and Trustees we will make sure that everyone is aware that this is our policy.
   6. Initially, all details of the incident will be recorded fully by Amelia Wheeler, the Centre Manager, the Safeguarding Lead who will pass it on to the Trustee board.
   7. The individual’s Line Manager/Chairman of the Board will take the actions outlined below. It is possible that the actions outlined will occur virtually simultaneously and not necessarily sequentially.
      1. The Manager will contact South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults team to consult with them and to ensure that any subsequent action taken Coniston Community Association does not prejudice any further investigation
      2. Following the above consultation, the staff member/volunteer or Trustee will be informed that an allegation has been made against him/her and will be provided with an opportunity to respond to the allegation.
      3. Through the Safeguarding Lead, discussions will be held with the South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Manager to agree the most appropriate way forward.
      4. All measures taken will be in line with the CCAs disciplinary procedures and this include taking protective measures, which may include suspending the staff member/volunteer or Trustee and moving him or her to alternative duties.
      5. It should be noted that suspension in this instance is a neutral act to allow the investigation to proceed and to remove the employee/volunteer or Trustee from the possibility of any further allegation.
      6. Where suspension is considered necessary, it will be dealt with as quickly and sensitively as possible.
2. **Possible outcomes of investigations** 
   1. Coniston Community Association understands that if the staff member/volunteer or Trustee resigns or retires at any point during the investigation process, the investigation should nevertheless be concluded and a referral should be made to the DBS if the investigation concludes that harm or risk of harm to a vulnerable adult has occurred.
   2. As a result of the investigation, the allegation may or may not be substantiated. There are 4 possible investigation outcomes as outlined below:

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| **Outcome One**  **The Allegation of harm/risk of harm substantiated – individual removed from regulated activity** | The investigation finds that the allegation is substantiated, that is harm or risk of harm to a vulnerable adult has occurred and the individual is removed from regulated activity  Under these circumstances the Coniston Community Association will be under a legal duty to refer to the DBS |
| **Outcome Two**  **Allegation of harm/risk of harm substantiated - individual reinstated to regulated activity** | The investigation finds that the allegation is substantiated but the circumstances of the case are such that the individual can be reinstated to the post/role subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions, training/retraining being undertaken and support and supervision arrangements being put in place.  The relevant professional body may also need to be informed.  Despite the finding that harm/risk of harm has occurred, the decision to return the individual to the post/role means that a referral to the DBS is not required. Is this right? |
| **Outcome Three Allegation of harm/risk of harm unsubstantiated - ongoing concerns** | The investigation finds that the allegation is unsubstantiated, that is the individual has not harmed or placed at risk of harm a vulnerable adult. However, CCA has ongoing concerns about the conduct of a staff member/volunteer. may conclude that the individual can be reinstated with additional support, supervision and training/retraining. The relevant Professional Regulatory Body may also need to be informed |
| **Outcome four Allegation of harm/risk of harm unsubstantiated - no ongoing concerns** | The investigation finds that the allegation is unsubstantiated, that is, the individual has not harmed or placed at risk of harm a vulnerable adult.  The staff member/volunteer may be reinstated and provided with support, training and supervision if necessary |

## Refer someone to DBS - Contact the barring helpline for help referring someone to DBS.

**DBS barring helpline** Telephone: 01325 953795

Employers must [refer someone to DBS](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-referrals-form-and-guidance) if they:

* sacked them because they harmed someone
* sacked them or removed them from working in [regulated activity](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-regulated-activity) because they might have harmed someone
* were planning to sack them for either of these reasons, but they resigned first

**Informing Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care services. The CQC has a range of statutory enforcement actions to use where care does not meet the essential standards of quality and safety. CQC will ensure that it responds to adult safeguarding issues in accordance with the regulatory framework requirements working with commissioners and providers to respond to all adult safeguarding issues in accordance with local policy and procedures.

Useful contacts: [CQC (Care Quality Commission)](http://www.cqc.org.uk/) 03000 61 61 61  
Email: [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk) Police 101 or 01275 818340