



Vulnerable Adult Policy and Procedures

1. Policy Statement

Flamingo Chicks is committed to safeguarding the wholeness and wellbeing of every person of whatever age that uses its services and engages with its activities. Flamingo Chicks acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice which reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and regulatory requirements.

The aim of this policy and these procedures is to ensure the safety of vulnerable adults accessing the organisation's provision. When working with vulnerable adults Flamingo Chicks will ensure it:

- Promotes their health and welfare
- Respects and promotes their rights
- Works in a way which safeguards the wellbeing of the vulnerable person and protects them from harm and abuse
- Enables staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific adult safeguarding issues
- Takes appropriate steps if they became aware of any signs/incidents of harm and abuse
- Ensures that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are carried out for all staff and volunteers in contact with vulnerable adults - in line with statutory requirements and good practice
- Ensures that vulnerable adults and their carers (if appropriate) are aware of what to do if they have a concern and that they would feel confident to pass their concern on.

For the purposes of this document, vulnerable adult uses 'No Secrets' (Department of Health, 2000) definition of a person aged 18 years or over 'Who is or may be in need of community care services by means of mental or other disability, age or illness' and 'Who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'

2. What is abuse?

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone. It can include:

1. Physical – non accidental harm to the body caused by the use of force, which results in pain, injury or a change in the person's natural physical state. Some examples are: hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions, rough handling, pinching, punching, shaking, burning, and forced feeding.
2. Sexual – sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent, sexual assault and rape. Other examples are indecent exposure, inappropriate touching and fondling
3. Psychological - is behaviour that has a harmful effect on a vulnerable adult's emotional health and development. Some examples are: 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, withholding affection, shouting, depriving the person of the right to choice, information and privacy.
4. Financial or material - involves the use of a vulnerable adult's property, assets or income without their informed consent or making financial transactions that they do not understand to the advantage of another person. Some examples are: theft, fraud, exploitation, and pressure in connection with wills.

5. Neglect and acts of omission - behaviour that results in the vulnerable adult's basic needs not being met. Some examples are: ignoring medical or physical care needs, persons physical condition/appearance is poor, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating and undermining personal beliefs.
6. Professional - the misuse of power and abuse of trust by professionals, the failure of professionals to act on suspected abuse/crimes, poor care practice or neglect in services, resource shortfalls or service pressures that lead to service failure and culpability as a result of poor management systems/structures.
7. Institutional - involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people.
8. Domestic - the use of physical and/or emotional abuse or violence, including undermining of self-confidence, sexual violence or the threat of violence, by a person who is or has been in a close relationship.

Other safeguarding issues that should also be considered:

Historical Abuse - There may be occasions when a person will disclose abuse (sexual, physical, emotional or neglect) which occurred in the past. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current abuse. The reason for this is that the abuser may still represent a risk to the person now.

Prevent Duty / Radicalisation - it is essential that staff and volunteers are able to identify people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and to know what to do when they are identified. Staff will be trained to recognise possible signs.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist or extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff and volunteers should be alert to changes in the person's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. It is important to take action if staff/volunteers observe behaviour of concern.

The Police Prevent Team can give advice, contact 01278 647466 or ring 101 and ask for the Prevent team, explaining you are calling about extremism or radicalisation.

In addition, if you think a person is at risk of extremism, the Counter Extremism Group must be contacted via email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk or Tel: 020 7340 7264

The DSL will take responsibility for making contact with the Police and relevant agencies, but all staff and volunteers have a responsibility for reporting any concerns to the DSL (see below)

3. Rights & Responsibilities

a. The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the welfare of vulnerable adults is given the highest priority by the organisation, its management, staff and volunteers
- Appointing a designated person (and deputy)
- Ensuring staff and volunteers are aware of vulnerable adults' need for protection
- Supporting and where possible securing the safety of individuals and ensuring that all referrals to the designated Local Authority Designated Officer provide full information in relation to identified risk and concern for the vulnerable adult's safety.

b. Staff & Volunteers are responsible for:

- Being familiar with the policy and these procedures
- Taking appropriate action in line with this document.

c. The Vulnerable Adult has the right to:

- Be made aware of this policy

- Have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously
- Receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- Be involved in any process as appropriate
- Receive information about the outcome.

4. Take Steps & Reporting

Flamingo Chicks will seek to safeguard vulnerable adults by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks (including Disclosure and Barring Service) are made – all DBS certificates will be enhanced and cover child and adult workforce.
- Sharing information about good practice with parents/ carers, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving vulnerable adults appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

All staff and volunteers will be made aware of their responsibility to report any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (see section 4).

Awareness of Online Activities

Flamingo Chicks also considers the potential risks associated with providing online classes and activities for vulnerable adults and will always ensure that these are appropriately risk assessed. Safety guidance is provided for all sessions and appropriate online platforms used at all times.

Online classes require the attendance of at least one parent/carer or member of support staff to be present with the vulnerable adults at all times, and a 'volunteer spotter' is provided by Flamingo Chicks in all classes to support teachers. Specific online safeguarding measures are in place, including ensuring people cannot use chat functions privately between themselves and parents/carers/settings have been provided with clear information on our procedures.

Online classes mean that vulnerable adults are sometimes joining our sessions from their homes – this is different to in-person sessions, which do not take place at home. Therefore, we have risk assessed this specifically, and have clear guidance for our team, volunteers, and parents/carers to ensure they are safe.

Flamingo Chicks also follows guidance from leading dance and education organisations, such as People Dancing and One Dance UK, around safety when running classes online.

Mobile Phone, Electronic Devices, and Photography/ Film

The use of mobile phones and electronic devices (including all devices with camera, video and recording technology) is taken seriously at Flamingo Chicks for both safeguarding and GDPR reasons. This section sets out the steps we take to ensure everyone is safe:

Our teachers and volunteers often have their own mobile phone/ device with them when attending our sessions and this is required for several reasons:

- Our work takes place in many different external settings and geographical locations - it is not always possible for them to leave their device in a 'secure area'.
- Our teachers work for us on a freelance basis so are not provided with a work device.
- It is important they have a means of communication should they need to contact someone in an emergency.
- Teachers may need to use their device to provide music for their sessions.

Therefore, all teachers and volunteers must action the following:

- All devices must be stored safely away in their bag and not used whilst on site at a setting (unless being used for music - see below).

- Only teachers are authorised to use their device to play music for their sessions – the device must be hidden from view and only used for this function. Flamingo Chicks will ensure the setting is aware that the device is being used for this purpose.
- They must never exchange mobile phone numbers with vulnerable adults in a setting.

Capturing photos and film:

- Photography and film are only permitted where written consent has been obtained from the vulnerable adult's parent/ carer. We endeavour to ensure consent forms are received by our core team in advance – where this is not possible, we will allow staff from the setting to give our teachers the forms at the start of the session. In any case, photos/ videos must not be taken unless the forms have been received.
- We do not accept verbal consent.
- Flamingo Chicks will endeavour to provide a professional photographer to capture photos and videos of our sessions.
- Professional photographers will be clearly briefed, ensuring they work with our teachers and volunteers to know which children have written consent, and once they have sent the images/ video to Flamingo Chicks they must confirm deletion and never use on their own channels.
- On rare occasions and where a professional photographer is not possible, individual teachers or volunteers may be authorised by a member of Flamingo Chicks' core team to take photographs/ video using their own device – this will be for a specific session only and will only happen if the setting has also authorised this.

If a teacher or volunteer has been authorised to use their own device for photos/ videos they must follow these procedures:

- Vulnerable adults who do not have written consent must never be photographed/ filmed.
- Photos and videos must be sent to Flamingo Chicks' core team on the same day as the session - immediately after if possible.
- All media must then be deleted from their device (including trash) immediately after sending and confirmed with the core team.
- If teachers/ volunteers have been given our consent forms in the session, they must send a scan/ photo of the forms along with the photos/ videos and then destroy the forms via cross shredding, or post to Flamingo Chicks' office.

Recognising Abuse

Recognising abuse is one of the first steps in protecting vulnerable adults. There could be signs or behaviour that make you feel concerned. All staff should be alert to the following types of behaviour:

- Becoming excessively aggressive, withdrawn or clingy.
- Seeming to be keeping a secret.
- Significant changes in the person's behaviour.
- Deterioration in their well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
- Unreasonable fear of certain people or places.
- Acting out in an inappropriate way perhaps with other people or objects.
- Comments which give cause for concern, e.g.: inconsistent explanations of bruising, injuries or burns.
- Sexually explicit language or actions.

Not all concerns about vulnerable adults 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 their circumstances

It is not the role of trustees, staff or volunteers to investigate an allegation of abuse.

Any member of staff, volunteer or trustee who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to Flamingo Chicks' designated person for vulnerable adults: CEO Katherine Sparkes, katie@flamingochicks.org

This reporting process must include completion of the Vulnerable Adults Incident Report Form (APPENDIX 1).

All those making an allegation or expressing concern, whether they are staff, volunteers, trustees, service users, carers or members of the general public should be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously
- Their comments will usually be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be shared with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk.

Flamingo Chicks' designated person when notified of a concern or allegation should consider whether the concern is a safeguarding issue or not. This may involve some 'checking out' of information provided but being careful at all times not to stray into the realm of investigation.

If it is not considered a safeguarding issue and it is decided that there should be no referral made to the Local Authority Designated Officer, a written record, alongside the Vulnerable Adults Abuse Incident Report Form should be made of the response, including reasons for not referring the concern. This should be kept on file and monitored. The designated person should seek advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer if there is any doubt whatsoever about whether or not to refer the concern to them and record that this action was taken in a written note of their response to the concern.

Where the designated person decides to refer the concern or allegation formally to the Local Authority Designated Officer they should make a full written record to be kept on file.

This should set out relevant details in full, including information as recorded in the Vulnerable Adults Incident Report Form, any advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer prior to referral, the rationale for referral and a clear timeline for the steps that taken so far.

The designated person should ensure that the safety of the vulnerable adult is paramount throughout this process and the person is in no immediate danger; in emergencies this might include accessing medical or police assistance.

Confidentiality must be maintained throughout this process and information relating to vulnerable adults shared with staff and volunteers on a strictly need to know basis.

5. Alleged Abuse by Staff, Volunteers or Trustees

Flamingo Chicks is committed to maintaining the highest standards of honesty, openness and accountability and recognises that employees and volunteers have an important role to play in achieving this goal.

They may be the first to know when someone inside or connected with an organisation is doing something illegal or improper, but may feel apprehensive about voicing their concerns. This may be because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or the organisation itself. Or it may be because they do not think that their concerns will be taken seriously or they are afraid that they will be bullied or dismissed.

Flamingo Chicks does not believe that it is in anyone's interests for staff or volunteers with knowledge of wrongdoing to remain silent. It will take all malpractice very seriously, whether it is committed by staff, volunteers, trustees, consultants or contractors.

An allegation or concern against a member of staff or volunteer, must be passed - using the Vulnerable Adults Abuse Incident Report Form - to Flamingo Chicks' designated person for vulnerable adults, or their deputy or, if the allegation concerns them both, direct to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

6. Record Keeping

Any member of staff or volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse, or noticing possible abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event into context, and giving the date, time and location. All records must be dated and signed.

All hand-written records will be retained, even if they are subsequently typed up in a more formal report. Written records of concerns about vulnerable adults should be kept, even where there is no need to make a referral immediately.

All records relating to concerns will be kept in a secure place and will remain confidential.

7. Review

The policy will be reviewed by the Board a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances: e.g. changes in legislation and/or government guidance, as a result of any other significant change or event.

Flamingo Chicks' designated person for adult protection should provide an annual report for the Board of Trustees on the vulnerable adult policy and procedures including:

- its implementation
- any training undertaken by the designated person, other staff, volunteers and governors
- any incidents/cases (without detail or name)
- and the place of vulnerable adult issues in the organisation's planning.

Last reviewed: 29 January 2023

Reviewed by: Katherine Sparkes CEO

APPENDIX 1

Vulnerable Adults Abuse Incident Report Form

For use by staff, volunteers and trustees within Lightyear Foundation. Please answer all relevant questions as fully as you can.

Please complete those sections below that are relevant as fully as possible.

If you need more space for any answer please use the continuation sheet provided at the end of the form.

Name of Vulnerable Adult: Age/Date of Birth:

Gender:

Names of carer/s (if known): Home address (if known):

1. Nature of your concern - *please complete the appropriate section.*

a. Disclosure to you by a vulnerable adult (please include the following) When and where the disclosure was made (date/s and time/s)?

Who did the vulnerable adult make the disclosure to?

What did the vulnerable adult actually say?

b. Where concerns were expressed to you by another person about a vulnerable adult. Please record the concerns that were passed to you (with date and times) and if possible ask the person who expressed the concerns to confirm that the details as written are correct.

c. Where you have concerns because of incident/s you have witnessed or indicators you have observed (please give any dates and times – NB Q. 3. below gives more space for information on indicators).

3. Where there are indicators of abuse

a. Please describe any signs or indicators of abuse (with times and dates).

b. Has the vulnerable adult alleged that any particular person is the abuser (if so, please record details and the relationship, if any, to the vulnerable adult below)

4. Details of any immediate action taken, e.g. first aid, etc

5. Has the vulnerable adult expressed any reservations about you talking to Flamingo Chicks' Designated Person about the matter?

6. Does the vulnerable adult have any particular needs, e.g. communication, etc?

Signatures

To be signed by the person recording the concern

Name:

Job title or role:

Signed:

Date:

To be signed by designated person

Signed

Date received:

Action taken:

Vulnerable Adults Abuse Incident Report Form**Continuation Sheet (please use as many copies of this sheet as needed)****Question no:**

To be signed by the person recording the concern

Name:

Job title or role: Signed:

Date: