



Canalside Community Food

a community supported agriculture scheme

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

Safeguarding Policy

In an emergency:

Please refer to Emergency Information on Safeguarding on website and in the office file.

This policy applies to all staff, including directors and steering group members, paid staff, volunteers and seasonal workers, students or anyone working on behalf of Canalside Community Food.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Canalside Community Food's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

Canalside Community Food believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 2018 and United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Modern Slavery Act 2015 and National Referral Mechanism (NRM) May 2022
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent revised April 2021
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children (e.g. Working Together to Safeguard Children – statutory guidance 2018)

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

The safeguarding lead at Canalside Community Food is: General Administrator.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed: March 2023 To be reviewed: March 2024

Signed:

Name and position: Ali Jeffery, General Administrator, Safeguarding Lead



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Safeguarding Procedures

For the purpose of this document (irrespective of the age of consent for consensual sexual contact), the terms 'child/children' and 'young person/people' means any child or young person under the age of 18 and is inclusive of those staff under the age of 18.

For the purpose of this document a vulnerable adult is defined as

“anyone over the age of 18 who: is or may be in need of Community Care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself or is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation” No Secrets, DOH (2000).

People who may be included in a definition of a Vulnerable Person:

- People with learning disability/ies
- People with physical disability/ies
- People with sensory impairment/s
- People with mental health needs including dementia
- People who misuse substances or alcohol
- People who are physically ill or mentally frail

Service users outside these definitions may also be vulnerable due to low self-esteem, social exclusion, offending history, homelessness, domestic abuse, ethnicity, immigration status etc. (Definition of vulnerable adult from 'Gingerbread charity')

1. Procedures to follow regarding photographing children and young people for staff and volunteers

It is against safeguarding good practice to photograph children and young people without parental consent. This is especially important where these photographs are likely to be published.

For children of members and friends of members attending social events and work mornings: It is Canalside Community Food's policy to contact the child's parents before publication of photos where the child is clearly identifiable.

For children attending education project events, work experience etc: The school/other organising body is asked to obtain permission for all children to be photographed. Those children whose parents don't give permission will be clearly identified with different colour lettering on their name badge. Alternatively, the school is asked to send photos that only contain children whose parents have given permission for photos of their child to be used for publication.

2. Behaviour guidelines for staff and volunteers working with children/ young people

The aim of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and well being of all children and young people and to support the staff and volunteers in providing a safe, caring environment.

- Staff and volunteers should set examples of appropriate behaviour that respect the child/young person. As children and young people learn by example, staff and volunteers should avoid using sarcasm or discrimination, direct criticism, labelling and unnecessary competition or comparison.
- Positive behaviours should be encouraged and acknowledged.
- Staff and volunteers should offer respect to the child/young person at all times and strive to be sensitive to their feelings.
- Staff and volunteers should avoid situations in which they risk putting themselves or the child/young person at risk. This includes being alone with a child/young person unnecessarily. Staff are strongly encouraged to avoid situations where they will be alone with a child/young person with the door closed. (Staff/volunteers who are not DBS checked for their occasional role are asked to avoid this altogether.)

Adult to child/young person ratios should reflect best practice (1:10 max for 10 years and over, 1:8 max under 10)

The same guidelines should be followed for working with vulnerable adults, with the addition of these listed below:

- Staff and volunteers should treat vulnerable adults as adults, not as children.
- Staff and volunteers should avoid reinforcing negative emotions and behaviours.

3. Our approach to safeguarding children/young people whilst volunteering

The minimum age of volunteering with Canalside Community Food independently of parents/guardians is 14 years old. Due to Health and Safety implications some volunteering roles are suitable only for young people 16 years or older.

A risk assessment will be completed for every new volunteer under the age of 16 to ensure that any potential hazards of volunteering associated with their age have been identified and that any risks are reduced to an acceptable level.

We will endeavour to safeguard children who volunteer with us by taking the following approach:

- Young people under 18 will not be left unattended.
- Any potentially dangerous activity will have constant adult supervision (Canalside Community Food staff supervisor is responsible for managing and monitoring this).
- Written parental/guardian consent will be obtained for any volunteers under the age of 16. If the young person wishes to volunteer independently of their parents, they will come at least twice with a parent/guardian to ensure that they will have an appropriate attitude towards their volunteering.
- Although parental/guardian consent will not be obtained for volunteers aged 16-18 the General Administrator will strongly encourage volunteers in this age group to discuss their activities with their parents/guardians.

Children/young people who wish to volunteer at Canalside Community Food with their family will remain the responsibility of their responsible adult for the duration of their time on site. The responsible adult should ensure appropriate supervision of children/young people during volunteer work mornings and other time on site.

4. Child Protection

Canalside Community Food considers safeguarding to be very important and undertakes to ensure that all staff who work with children have been checked under recognised procedures and have received information that will enable them to recognise the signs of a child/young person in distress and to follow the referral procedure.

Induction

This document will form part of the induction process for all new staff whose role involves working with children and young people. Volunteers will be briefed in relation to their level of responsibility and duration/frequency of contact with children and young people. As they are not DBS checked for this occasional voluntary work, they will be advised to stay with members of staff/parents of the children at all times when dealing with children/young people.

Responsibilities of staff and volunteers:

- Staff and volunteers have a responsibility to protect children and young people from abuse.
- Staff and volunteers must be able to respond appropriately to a child or young person's 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.

Forms of child abuse

The main forms of abuse are:

Physical abuse

Where adults physically hurt or injure children, hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting are all forms of physical abuse. Female genital mutilation, giving children alcohol,

inappropriate drugs or poison and attempted suffocation or drowning are also physical abuse.

Sexual abuse

Children are abused by adults or other children who use children to meet their own sexual needs. Sexual abuse might involve full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse or fondling. Showing children pornographic magazines or videos and/or involving them in making such material is also included. Sexual abuse is likely to involve secrecy, intimidation, distorted thinking, grooming or abuse of power. Sexual abuse can be perpetrated by individuals and groups/gangs.

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.

Neglect

This involves omissions of care where an adult may fail to meet a child's basic needs. This could include lack of food or warm clothing. Children might be constantly left alone unsupervised.

Radicalisation

This is when children/young people are encouraged to become involved in terrorism or extremist activity, and is part of the 'Prevent' duties [updated April 2021] under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Human trafficking

This is where children/vulnerable adults are moved/traded illegally by threat or with the use of force for various purposes, including but not limited to sexual abuse, forced marriage, modern slavery, criminal activity (including gang membership/drug trafficking).

Abuse in any form can affect a child/young person of any age. Identifying signs of possible abuse

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

- A child/young person may tell you what has happened to them
- From a third party (e.g. another child/young person)
- Through the child/young person's behaviour
- A suspicious, unexplained injury to the child/young person

Recognising abuse is not easy. Most children will sustain 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/young person, 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/young person 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/young person who may also be dirty
- Sexually explicit behaviour, for example playing games and showing an awareness inappropriate for the child's age
- 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/young person
- 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/young person if you suspect abuse

1. Talk with the child/young person sensitively to find out if there is anything worrying them
2. Do not ask leading questions or interrogate the child. You need to be clear what the child/young person has said, and it is permissible to repeat back to them what they have said to you (reflexive listening) or to ask very open questions such as "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"
3. If the suspicions arise when you are conducting an activity for another organisation discuss your concerns in private with the person responsible for arranging your activity, and also report the matter to your line manager or the education project co-ordinator at Canalside Community Food
4. Contact with parents should be delayed until advice has been sought from Social Services. The designated staff member will seek this advice.

5. The steps to take in cases of suspected child abuse are shown in Safeguarding: Emergency Information. **Emergency telephone numbers below.**

Procedures to follow when a child/young person discloses abuse

1. Never promise to keep a secret. If you do so and the child/young person is being hurt you will not be able to help them: you have a duty to share this information and refer the issue to Children's Social Care Services. Tell the child/young person 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/young person to decide if they want to open up. Do not push them to do so.
3. Do not ask questions or interrogate the child: leading questions may invalidate later proceedings and the disclosure must be in the child/young person's control.
4. You need to be clear what the child/young person has said, and it is permissible to repeat back to them what they have said to you (reflexive listening) or to ask very open questions such as "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"
5. Do not be judgemental – listen without showing shock or disbelief, and accept what is said.
6. Allow the child/young person to talk at their own pace; do not pressure them to disclose anything they do not want to.
7. Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, e.g. "You've done the right thing to tell someone." Alleviate guilt if the child refers to it, e.g. "You're not to blame."
8. Don't make promises that you may not be able to keep, e.g. "You never have to see that person again." or "Everything will be alright now."
9. Explain what you will need to do next and who you will have to talk to.
10. Do not leave the child/young person until they are ready, and then talk to the designated safeguarding lead/your line manager as soon as possible, ideally the same day. Even if the child/young person has decided not to disclose, you should still inform the staff member.
11. Either write notes if possible, or write up your conversation as soon as you can while your memory is sharp. The volunteer or employee and their direct supervisor from Canalside Community Food (i.e. education project co-ordinator or line manager) must compile a written report which gives details all the factual information:
 - Record the time, date, place, any non-verbal behaviours and the words of the child (do not paraphrase).
 - Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.
 - Sign and date the report.
12. Anyone dealing with a child/young person that has disclosed information can be referred for professional help to enable them to deal with the experience.
13. Take care of yourself. Discuss with a supervisor how you are feeling.

Emergency numbers

Contact Warwickshire Children and Families Front Door (Front Door)
immediately 01926 414144

Out of hours contact the Emergency Duty Team 01926 886922

If you think a child is at immediate risk contact the police immediately by calling 999

Procedures drawn up by Ali Jeffery, Safeguarding Lead, General administrator, Education Project Coordinator and Director for Canalside

Reviewed March 2023

To be reviewed March 2024