

Connect Us Academy CIC
Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

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1 Introduction

This Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy sets out the approach of Connect Us Academy CIC to preventing and reducing harm to children and vulnerable adults when they are in contact with staff and volunteers working in the name of Connect Us Academy CIC.

1.1 This policy aims to

- Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults;
- Provide assurance to parents, carers and other parties that Connect Us Academy CIC takes reasonable steps to manage risks and keep children and vulnerable adults safe;
- Ensure that staff and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with the necessary information, training and support on safeguarding matters;
- Ensure that appropriate action is taken in the event of any allegations or suspicions regarding harm to children or vulnerable adults arising from contact with staff or volunteers.

1.2 Key facts

Staff and volunteers working directly for Connect Us Academy CIC will be submitted to the UK government's enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks if their roles include working with children or vulnerable adults without supervision of another responsible person who can monitor our activity.

1.2.1 Methods

This Policy seeks to manage effectively the risks associated with activities and events involving children and vulnerable adults by:

- Ensuring that members of staff and volunteers who have not been submitted to an enhanced DBS check must never work with children or vulnerable adults except in the presence of a responsible person who can monitor our activity.
- Completing a risk assessment for regular sessions and one off events which involves identifying risks and means of reducing or eliminating these;
- Implementing the required actions identified by the risk assessment process and reviewing the effectiveness of these on a regular basis;
- Requiring new staff or volunteers to familiarise themselves with the content of this policy.
- Requiring staff or volunteers to report any allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour either to the designated safeguarding officer who will consider the information available and decide on the appropriate course of action

1.3 Responsibilities

1.3.1 Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

Safeguarding is the responsibility of every Connect Us Academy CIC staff and volunteers. They ALL, regardless of their role, have a responsibility to:

1. **Read** and implement parts 1 Introduction, 2 Recognising Abuse and 3 Procedures of this policy.
2. Send an email confirming that you have done so to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at khumanconnects@hotmail.co.uk.
3. Be **Alert** to the signs of abuse and neglect. See 2 Recognising Abuse.
4. If you see something you are not happy about, **question** the behaviour of children and their parents/carers, young people or vulnerable adults and don't necessarily take what they say at face value.
5. Know where to turn to if you need to **ask for help**. See part 3 Procedures.
6. If you suspect that someone is at risk of harm you should **refer** the case to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to the police if you suspect that someone is in immediate danger. See part 4 Referrals.

1.3.2 Connect Us Academy CIC Management Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the management committee to:

- Ensure that safeguarding arrangements are in place, to monitor and action them.
- Deal with complaints in the first instance.
- Appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure the policy is reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on an annual basis.

1.3.3 Designated Safeguard Lead responsibilities

Connect Us Academy CIC has appointed Bhaltinder Khuman as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The email address of the Designated Safeguarding Lead is:
khumanconnects@hotmail.co.uk

Their role is to:

- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of child and adult abuse and ensure that he/she keeps up to date with training on safeguarding.
- Refer appropriate cases to the appropriate body.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are briefed on what to do if they have concerns about a child.
- Know how to report Safeguarding concerns to the appropriate agencies and take responsibility to do so when concerns about a child arise.
- Provide advice and guidance to staff and be prepared to seek advice and guidance from agencies and others if they themselves are unsure of what to do.
- Attend any meetings in respect of Safeguarding matters relating to Connect Us Academy CIC.
- Ensure that all newly-appointed staff and volunteers are immediately informed about the Connects Us Academy CIC Safeguarding policy and their duties within it.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers read sections 1, 2 and 3 of this document and sign or send an email to say they have done so.
- Keep a record of these signatures or emails in a secure location.
- Provide a briefing for all staff at least annually to update them on the importance of Safeguarding and any new issues, and remind them of procedures.
- Support the development of good safeguarding practices.
- Be aware of how allegations of abuse are investigated by Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Police.
- Review this policy on an annual basis.

2 Recognising Abuse

Abuse of vulnerable children, young people and adults is not new and it happens to any one irrespective of background, ethnicity or religion. Connect Us Academy CIC will be giving a clear message of disapproval to those who harm children

2.1 Physical

Physical abuse is the term used when a parent, carer or a person working with children/adults causes injuries to a child/adult and hurts the child/adult physically:

- This may be by hitting, beating, throwing or shaking, pinching a child/adult, or by causing other injuries through scalding, burning or poisoning.
- It can involve fabricating the symptoms or deliberately causing illness in a child/adult

2.2 Emotional

Emotional abuse is the term used when the main harm comes not from neglecting, physically hurting or sexually harming a child/adult, but from persistent or severe emotional ill treatment:

- This may include repeated threats, verbal abuse, criticism, humiliation and ridicule e.g. telling a child/adult he or she is worthless or useless.

2.3 Sexual

Sexual abuse is the exploitation of a child, young person and vulnerable adult for sexual purposes:

- It includes not only direct sexual contact with the child but also exposing the child to sexual material or encouraging the child to behave in a sexually inappropriate way, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- Sexual abuse often starts with minor acts e.g. inappropriate touching and use of language of a sexual nature and progresses to more serious acts over time or by grooming (this is where a child or young person would be prepared for abuse)

3 Procedures

3.1 Be Alert

There are a number of ways in which committee members or volunteers may become worried about possible abuse of a child, young person or adult who attends an event. It may be:

- A physical mark you observe
- An observation about their behaviour
- Something the person tells you
- Something someone else tells you.

There could be a single incident, or a member may have general and growing concerns that do not lessen over time. Any committee member who begins to suspect abuse or neglect should discuss this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility to refer suspicions linked to abuse to the appropriate body.

3.2 Ask Questions

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult tells any volunteer something which he or she thinks must be reported, there are a number of things that should be done to support the child:

- Stay calm and make time to listen.
- Listen with the utmost care to what the person is saying and take them seriously.
- At the beginning state that you may have to take further action and tell somebody else
- Only ask questions to be clear you have understood. It is the job of the social worker and Police officer to investigate and you may make this more difficult if you question a person in depth.
- Only ask questions beginning Who What Where When to gain facts
- Don't put words into the person's mouth but note the main points carefully.
- Reassure the person and let them know they were right to tell you.
- Tell the person that this information will now have to be passed on.

3.2.1 Recording an individual's disclosure

Any discussions with the child, young person or adult should, so far as possible, adhere to the following basic principles:

- Listen to the person rather than directly question them except to clarify what is being said.
- Never stop a person who is freely recalling significant incidents.
- Make notes of the discussion (writing accurately what was seen and heard, not a summary or interpretation of it) taking care to note the timing, setting and persons present. It is important to note facts. If it is felt relevant to note feelings or perceptions they must be clearly identified as such together with the rationale.
- No alternative explanations/wording should be offered.
- Where a person says that he/she does not want the matter to be taken further, consideration needs to be given to the age and understanding of the person and whether the person or others may be at risk of significant harm in which case action must be taken.
- Do not promise not to disclose the incident to others.
- If a mark or injury which raises suspicion is seen on an individual it should be noted down. Do not take any photos of any injuries
- Keep a record of what was said and ALL actions or correspondence taken i.e. letters, emails and telephone calls.
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of a substantive interview completed by the Police, usually including Social Services.
- Store these records in a secure, confidential file, which is separate to any other records. If appropriate, records can be kept confidential from parents.

3.2.2 Involving Parents

Being open with parents is important, but whether it is safe to inform them about the concern depends on what kind of concern is being raised. Concerns about the changed behaviour or signs of unhappiness could and should be raised with parents.

If there is suspicion of any kind of abuse of the young person, the parents/family should not be informed unless and until this is agreed by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

If there are concerns about the immediate physical safety of a child you should contact the police.

3.2.3 Recording Form

See Appendices for a suggested form for recording information.

3.3 Ask for Help

3.3.1 Emergency Procedure

In an emergency anyone can follow these steps.

If you think a child is in immediate danger always call the emergency services on 999.

3.3.2 Seven golden rules for information sharing

1. Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
5. Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

3.3.3 Advice about Children and Young People issues

If you

- are concerned that a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of harm, but there is no immediate danger or
- are not sure whether this is a safeguarding concern which should be reported to the agencies or
- need advice or information or
- would like more information about issues like confidentiality or
- would like to know what happens next (after you have reported your concerns)

Then please do one of the following:

- Get in touch with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (unless the issue involves them). Their email address is khumanconnects@hotmail.co.uk. It is normally their responsibility to report suspicions linked to abuse.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion or allegation, contact one of the following.
- Call Childline on 0800 1111.
- Call the NSPCC Helpline on 0808 800 5000.
- Call Coventry Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 024 7678 8555.
- Out of hours contact the Emergency Duty Social Worker on 024 7683 2222.
- Discuss a non-emergency matter with the Police: call 101.

3.3.4 Advice about Issues with Adult with Care and Support Needs

If you are concerned that an adult with care and support needs is being harmed or is at risk of harm, please contact Adult Social Care on 024 7683 3003 or email them directly on ascdirect@coventry.gov.uk.

4 Referrals

Note that suspicions of abuse or neglect should be reported without delay. In an emergency contact the police by calling 999.

A referral is when you pass information about a suspicion of abuse or neglect to a responsible body designated with child or adult safeguarding.

It is normally the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility to decide whether to contact a responsible body regarding suspicions linked to abuse.

However if there is an allegation against the Designated Safeguarding Lead then a staff member or volunteer might want to make a referral themselves.

Concerns are often not clear-cut. Some may be about poor practice or bullying rather than abuse.

4.1 Procedure for Designated Safeguarding Lead

Contact details of all local and national agencies can be found at the end of this policy.

If you are concerned that a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of harm, but there is no immediate danger, or you need advice or information, the normal procedure is to call the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 024 7678 8555 or email mash@coventry.gov.uk. You can also visit them at Coventry City Council Customer Service Centre, 3 Upper Precinct, Broadgate, Coventry, CV1 1FS.

They will usually consult with the Police about the issues raised.

Out of office hours please call the Emergency Duty Social Worker on 024 7683 2222

To speak with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) call 024 7697 5483

When you contact MASH, ideally you should pass on as much information as possible about the following:

- Name and date of birth and address of the child/Young person/Vulnerable Adult.
- Names, dates of births and addresses of other children in the family.
- The form of abuse i.e. physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse etc.
- How does the abuse manifest itself, i.e. visible physical injuries, child failing to thrive or below weight, emotional disturbance which could include aggressive or withdrawn behaviour or rejection by parents?
- What has the person said to you?
- What made you make the referral?
- What have you directly observed and over what period of time. Is this information first or second hand?
- Do the family know you are making the referral? Does the child know?
- Do you believe the person is at immediate risk now? If so why?
- Where is the person now?

- Where are the parents or carers now?
- If the person is not with you, when did you last see them?
- Give the name and telephone numbers of the following if known:

Social Worker
General Practitioner
Health Visitor
School Nurse
School or nursery

What are your expectations now that you have made the referral? Check that they match those of the worker you are speaking to and if not find out why.

All this information may not be available when making a referral; however, if the person is at immediate risk then a referral should not be delayed by finding the above information. If the person is not at immediate risk this information should be gathered.

4.2 Allegations or suspicions linked to a committee member

If the allegation or suspicion is linked to a staff or volunteer of Connect Us Academy CIC and the Police and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) agree to investigate due to there being sufficient concerns, then Connect Us Academy CIC will need to decide whether the individual concerned can continue to be deliver activities as a Connect Us Academy CIC staff or volunteer pending the outcome of the enquiries or if there is an investigation.

The investigations by the Police and by MASH look at whether there is a criminal offence which can be prosecuted and whether there is reason to be concerned about the protection of the suspect's own children and/or their suitability to work with children.

The outcome of the investigations may be that the Police and MASH reach the view that concerns about the behaviour of a volunteer are substantiated. This may lead to a criminal prosecution. However, there may not be a criminal prosecution even though there may be concerns about the suitability of the volunteer to work with children. The Connect us Academy CIC representative at the Outcome Meeting will be made fully aware of the reasons for any remaining concerns.

4.3 Digital Safety Statement:

The purpose of digital safety statement is to:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety
- ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

We believe that:

- children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind

- children should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

We recognise that:

- the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however it can also present risks and challenges
- we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online
- we have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using [name of organisation]'s network and devices
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

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

- appointing an online safety coordinator [this will be the appointed Safeguarding Lead]
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our behaviour code for adults
- supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others
- supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online
- developing an online safety agreement for use with young people and their parents or carers
- developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child or young person
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly
- ensuring that user names, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively
- ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given

- providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
- examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

- following our safeguarding procedures and processes we have in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse)
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying or cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.

5 Appendixes

5.1 Local and National Contacts

5.1.1 Police

In case of emergency always dial 999.

5.1.2 Coventry Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

If you are concerned that a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of harm, but there is no immediate danger, or you need advice or information, please call Coventry Children's Social Care at the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 024 7678 8555.

024 7678 8555.
Email: mash@coventry.gov.uk
Tel: 024 7678 8555
Coventry City Council Customer Service Centre
3 Upper Precinct
Broadgate
Coventry
CV1 1FS

5.1.3 NSPCC

Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are worried about a child.

5.1.4 Emergency Duty Social Worker

024 7683 2222

5.1.5 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

024 7697 5483

5.1.6 Child-line

0800 1111 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are a child or young person and are worried about anything.

5.1.7 National Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247 (lines free and open 24 hours). Phone if you are experiencing domestic abuse.

5.1.8 Samaritans Helpline

08457 90 90 90 (open 24 hours). Phone if you feel you are struggling to cope and need someone to talk to.

5.1.9 Adult Social Care

024 7683 3003 or email ascdirect@coventry.gov.uk

5.1.10 Action on Elder Abuse Helpline

080 8808 8141 (free phone Monday to Friday 9-5pm)

5.1.11 Coventry Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP)

This group, made up of Coventry Local Authority, Coventry and Rugby CCG and West Midlands Police, work in partnership to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm and neglect and that their welfare is promoted.

<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/cscp>

Email: CoventryCSCP@coventry.gov.uk

Tel: 024 7697 5477

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/coventrycscp>

Contacts: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/cscpcontacts>

Floor 4

Broadgate House

Broadgate

Coventry

CV1 1FS

5.2 Relevant Documents

5.2.1 Guidance documents

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners 2015

<http://bit.ly/30cETyh>

5.2.2 Relevant Legislation

This policy takes note of the following legislation:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002
- Adoption and Children Act 2002

- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Children and Adoption Act 2006
- Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009
- Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- Education Act 2011
- Counter Terrorism Act 2015

5.3 Important Guidance Documents

- Working together To Safeguard Children 2018 and updated 2019
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018

5.4 Suggested Recording Form

Logging a concern about a child, young person or adult's safety and welfare

For use by any committee member or volunteer.

Child/Young Person/Adult Name:	Date of Birth:
Date and Time of Incident:	Date and Time (of writing):
Name: Signature Job Title:	
Note the reason(s) for recording the incident.	
Record the following factually: Who? What (if recording a verbal disclosure by a child/young person/adult use their words)? Where? When (date and time of incident)? Any witnesses?	
Professional opinion where relevant (how and why might this have happened)	
Note actions, including names of anyone to whom your information was passed.	
Any other relevant information (distinguish between fact and opinion).	

- Check to make sure your report is clear to someone else reading it.
- ALL verbal conversations should be recorded in writing and state which language it occurred in
- Please pass this form to your Designated Safeguarding Lead

6 Document Information

Name	Connect Us Academy CIC safeguarding children and vulnerable adults policy
Document Owner	Director
Document Authors	Bhaltinder S Khuman
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