



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

INTRODUCTION

Mind The Gap is a voluntary organisation which promotes wellbeing for adults with mental health issues through music.

Mind The Gap is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults who engage in our activities. We acknowledge our duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse. This policy is in place so that tutors, volunteers, participants and trustees can work to prevent abuse and know what to do in the event of abuse.

The key objectives of this policy are:

- To explain the responsibilities Mind The Gap and its tutors, volunteers and trustees have in respect of vulnerable adult protection.
- To provide staff with an overview of vulnerable adult protection.
- To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where vulnerable adult protection issues arise.

Vulnerable adults are defined as:

People aged 18 or over

- Who are experiencing learning, physical or mental disability, age, or illness
- Who are or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

(No Secrets, Department of Health, 2000)

This guidance reflects the principles contained within the Human Rights Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Mind The Gap

- will ensure that tutors, volunteers, trustees and participants are familiar with this policy and procedures
- will usually gain permission from participants before sharing information about them with another agency
- will inform participants that where a person is in danger, a child is at risk or a crime has been committed then a decision may be taken to pass information to another agency without the participant's consent
- will make a referral to the Adult Social Services team as appropriate

- will endeavor to keep up to date with national developments relating to preventing abuse and welfare of adults
- will ensure that the Director understands his/her responsibility to refer incidents of adult abuse to the relevant statutory agencies (Police/Adult Services)

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RECOGNISING SYMPTOMS OF ABUSE

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons”
(No Secrets: Department of Health, 2000)

Abuse includes:

- physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint
- sexual abuse: including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material
- psychological or emotional abuse: including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation
- financial or material abuse: including stealing, selling assets, fraud, misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- neglect and acts of omission: including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs
- discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- institutional or organisational: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment

HOW TO RESPOND IF YOU RECEIVE ALLEGATION

- Reassure the person concerned
- Listen to what they are saying
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously
- Don’t start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions
- Don’t promise to keep it a secret

If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place the priorities will be:

- To call an ambulance if required
- To call the police if a crime has been committed
- To preserve evidence
- To keep yourself, tutors, volunteers and participants safe
- To inform the Director

- To record what happened

PROCEDURE IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Director.

The Director shall telephone 0344 800 8020 and report the matter to the appropriate local adult social services duty social worker. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority adult social services department within 24 hours.

Norfolk County Council Adult Social Services

Phone: 0344 800 8020 (available 24 hours a day)

Text: 07767 647670

Email: SCCE@norfolk.gov.uk

Online form: online.norfolk.gov.uk/socialcareenquiry

In an emergency call the police on 999

MANAGING AN ALLEGATION AGAINST A TUTOR OR VOLUNTEER

Mind The Gap will ensure that any allegations made against volunteers or tutors will be dealt with swiftly. Where a tutor or volunteer is thought to have committed a criminal offence the police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all participants posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the service whilst the investigation is undertaken.

The Director will liaise with Adult Social Care Direct to discuss the best course of action and to ensure that the name of organisation's disciplinary procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation.

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