

BOLD VISION SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

March 2020



POLICY STATEMENT

This policy is made in accordance with Bold Vision's vision and mission. Bold Vision works directly with children and vulnerable adults on a range of its projects and programmes and has a responsibility to promote the wellbeing and safety of all people it comes into contact with. Bold Vision believes that it is always unacceptable for a person to experience abuse or neglect of any kind. Bold Vision is committed to practice that protects children and vulnerable adults from harm and recognises its duty to ensure that appropriate action is taken where a child or vulnerable adult is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm.

PURPOSE

To safeguard and promote the wellbeing of the children and vulnerable adults with whom Bold Vision works

To ensure that all volunteers and others covered by this policy understand the policy

To provide all volunteers with guidance on how they should behave if they suspect that a child or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk from abuse or harm.

To guide volunteers on how to respond to and report concerns

DEFINITIONS

As per the definitions set out in the Children Act 1989, a 'child' is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. It also includes unborn children.

Adults aged 18 and over have the potential to be vulnerable (either temporarily or permanently) for a variety of reasons and in different situations. An adult may be vulnerable if he/she:

- Has a learning or physical disability
- Has a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Has a reduction in physical or mental capacity
- Is in the receipt of any form of healthcare
- Is detained in custody
- Is receiving community services because of age, health or disability
- Is living in sheltered or residential care home
- Is unable, for any other reason, to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Everyone has a right to be safeguarded from abuse or neglect. There is a legislative framework in place in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults through The Children Act 1989 (as amended by section 53 of the Children Act 2004) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and to protect them from harm. All volunteers should have a basic awareness of safeguarding issues. This includes:

- Being alert to the possibility of abuse and neglect
- Having enough knowledge to recognise an abusive or potentially abusive event or set of circumstances
- Knowing who in the organisation to raise concerns with
- Being competent to take the appropriate immediate or emergency action.

If any volunteer has any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult they must alert the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) immediately. If the DSO agrees there is grounds for concern, they must take appropriate action to safeguard the child or vulnerable adult. This may include contacting the relevant local authority social care service or the local police child abuse investigation team. If a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger the member of staff who first becomes aware of the danger should dial 999 for the police. The above may include a suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult is being abused or neglected, or a suspicion that an activity is taking place that could place a person at risk. If the concern relates to a member of Bold Vision, Bold Vision's DSO should contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) responsible for providing advice and liaison in such cases. This is a general guide as soon local authorities including Lewisham will have new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. In any situation where there is a suspicion of abuse, the welfare needs of the child or vulnerable adult must come first even where there may be a conflict of interest.

WHAT CONSTITUTES ABUSE?

Abuse is a deliberate act of ill-treatment that can harm or is likely to harm a person's safety, wellbeing and development. Abuse can be physical, sexual or emotional. Abuse may not, however, fall easily into these categories and staff/associates are not expected to be experts in the field. Neglect also constitutes abuse but can be defined as failing to provide or secure a child or vulnerable adult with the basic needs required for physical safety and wellbeing.

Bold Vision recognises that a person's welfare is paramount and that all children and vulnerable adults - regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief and sexual orientation or identity - have the right to protection from all types of harm and abuse. 1. Categories of abuse Children and vulnerable adults can experience abuse in a number of ways. Forms of abuse that may affect children and vulnerable adults include:

- Abuse of trust
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child Trafficking
- Discriminatory abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Financial or material abuse
- Grooming
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Modern slavery
- Neglect
- Online abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Radicalisation of children or vulnerable adults
- Self-neglect
- Sexual Abuse

These categories can overlap and an abused child or adult often suffers more than one type of abuse.

PROCEDURES FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Organisation duties and responsibilities

- Raise awareness of the need to protect children and vulnerable adults and reduce risks to them
- Ensure that staff in contact with children and vulnerable adults have the requisite knowledge, skill and qualifications to carry out their jobs safely and effectively
- Ensure safe practice when working in partnership with other organisations, in particular that they have in place adequate safeguarding arrangements, including appropriate policies and mechanisms to provide assurance on compliance
- Maintain an organisation that is safe for all staff, children and vulnerable adults and an environment where poor practice is challenged
- Ensure that all staff, associates, volunteers, young people and Board members who will be working with children and vulnerable adults consent to vetting through the Disclosure and Barring Scheme where applicable
- Ensure that when abuse is suspected or disclosed, it is clear what action must be taken

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officer

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is given high priority within Bold Vision. Specific responsibilities include:

- Providing support and advice on safeguarding matters related to children and vulnerable adults
- Ensuring that all volunteers receive training on safeguarding as part of their induction, and on an ongoing basis where required
- Managing referrals/cases reported and working with Senior Management to ensure resolutions
- Carrying out referrals to the relevant local authority social care team where abuse of a child or vulnerable adult is reported or suspected
- Maintaining an overview of safeguarding issues and monitoring the implementation of this policy, in conjunction with the HR manager.

The DSO has responsibility for deciding whether to refer any reported matters onto the police or to the local authority social care service. Where possible, referrals should be made on the same working day and certainly within 24 hours.

VOLUNTEER BEHAVIOUR

Bold Vision volunteers working with children and/or vulnerable adults may be required to undergo awareness training. Staff should not:

- meet with the a child or vulnerable adult on their own
- ask overly personal questions, including those about age or appearance (unless specifically related to a work project, in which case it must be documented)
- send/give out material that could be considered offensive, which includes material on social media sites
- suggest or imply a personal relationship could develop
- take an aggressive or bullying tone
- have physical contact
- offer or accept personal gifts

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SHARING INFORMATION

Confidentiality and the possible impact on the child or vulnerable adult In any work with children and/or vulnerable adults it is important to be clear about confidentiality. Confidentiality and safeguarding should be discussed with children and/or vulnerable adults at the beginning of any piece of work and reminders and information given from time to time, to ensure that they understand the processes and what responsibilities members of staff have. It is absolutely essential to be clear about the limits of confidentiality well before any such matter arises. While personal information held by professionals and agencies is subject to a legal duty of confidence and should not normally be disclosed without the subject's consent, it is essential that staff respond quickly where they have concerns or suspicions of abuse. Any concerns about confidentiality should not override the rights of children and/or vulnerable adults at risk of, or suffering, harm. Information sharing must be done in a way that is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the common law duty of confidentiality. However, a concern for confidentiality must never be used as a justification for withholding information when it would be in the child or vulnerable adult's best interests to share information.

COMPLYING WITH THIS POLICY

It is important that volunteers work to a high standard of conduct and act with integrity at all times, in order to minimise the risk of abuse from within Bold Vision. It is important to create an environment where the risk of abuse is minimised and children and vulnerable adults feel comfortable and safe. Volunteers should make sure they have read our safeguarding procedures in full. They should highlight and discuss any issues requiring clarification and any training issues with their line manager. Volunteers should make sure that they have a working knowledge of the different forms of abuse and possible indicators.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you suspect that a child or vulnerable adult needs protection or is at risk of abuse, please contact Bold Vision's Designated Safeguarding Officer, David Richards, 07808 294054.

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be annually reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and internal change.