



INFORMING - ADVISING - SUPPORTING - EMPOWERING
Parents & Carers of Children & Young People with Additional Needs & Disabilities

Protection of Vulnerable People Policy

VERSION CONTROL

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POINT has a legal and moral responsibility to provide a duty of care to all vulnerable persons through implementing procedures to safeguard their well-being and protect them from harm.

AIM

To define the practice and procedures for team members, in order to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable people. It is aimed at protecting both the individual and the team member.

OBJECTIVES

- i. To ensure that all team members working with vulnerable people are carefully selected, understand and accept responsibility for the safety of those individuals in their care.
- ii. To ensure that the welfare of the vulnerable person is of paramount importance when undertaking any activities.
- iii. To respond swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- iv. To ensure confidential information is restricted to the appropriate individuals within POINT and appropriate external agencies.

WHO DO WE MEAN BY VULNERABLE PERSONS?

"Children" up to the age of 16 or young people aged 16-18 who have a physical, mental or chronic illness/disability.

"Vulnerable adult", generally means a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type: i) a learning or physical disability; ii) a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or iii) a reduction in physical or mental capacity.

LEVEL OF CHECKS:

There are various levels of checks which can be undertaken with the Disclosure and Barring Service procedures. To determine the type of check required, POINT will consult direct with DBS guidelines.

RECRUITMENT:

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with POINT.

SELECTION:

- All new team members who work with vulnerable people shall complete an application form.
- Before commencing employment or voluntary work, team members will be asked to attend an interview with the project leaders. The level and formality of the interview will depend on the role and work involved.
- All new team members will be required to provide two references.
- Recruitment procedures will include a Disclosure and Barring Service Disclosure, at the appropriate level, for all personnel with access to vulnerable people. This should always include self-declaration and the use of references. All prospective team members should be interviewed.
- We will ensure that all team members have appropriate qualifications and training.

DISCLOSURES:

Any Disclosure that causes concern will be assessed to establish the level of risk the subject poses to service users, colleagues, the general public and/or our organisation. A number of questions will be asked:

- Does the offence relate directly to work with vulnerable people?
- What is the seriousness of the offence[s] and the circumstances surrounding it?
- How long it is since the offence was committed?
- Does the subject have a pattern of offending?
- Has the subject's situation changed since the offence occurred?
- What is the subject's explanation of the offence?
- Did the subject declare the offence prior to the Disclosure?
- If all these questions are not answered satisfactorily then the prospective employee/volunteer will not be allowed to join the organisation.

All new team members will go through a probation and induction process, including relevant training. On-going training and supervision will ensure all team members are adequately supported.

Any concerns about a team member should be passed on to the relevant line manager.

CREATING A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT:

- Risk Assessments should be undertaken prior to any offsite visits or new types of activities.
- Team members working with vulnerable people should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, use of equipment, activities undertaken, etc.
- Team members working with vulnerable people should carefully plan activity sessions with the care and safety of individuals as their main concern including the use of activities at an appropriate age/ability level.
- Wherever possible we will encourage an 'open environment' e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and discouraging the keeping of secrets. This especially includes team members being alone with vulnerable people at any time. When this is unavoidable, it should be done with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the organisation.
- Team members must treat all with respect.
- Team members must not make racist, sexist or any other remarks which upset or humiliate.
- Team members must take care to avoid showing any favouritism.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS:

Safety of participants and team members is of prime consideration at all times.

- All accidents involving anyone should be recorded in the organisation's accident book immediately or as soon as practicably possible.
- Team members are responsible for familiarising themselves with building/facility safety issues, such as, fire procedures, location of emergency exits, location of emergency telephones and first aid equipment.
- Team members are responsible for reporting suspected cases of abuse to the appropriate individuals and/or agencies.
- Team members will be expected to keep an attendance register for all organised sessions.
- Team members should ensure that their activities start and end on time.
- Team members are expected to promote, demonstrate and incorporate the values of fair play, trust and ethics throughout their activities.

- Team members should ensure that they are adequately insured, to protect against claims of negligence, through their organisation or their own personal insurance if acting as a self-employed agent.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES:

A register of names, addresses, next of kin and contact addresses and telephone numbers for emergencies will be kept.

Carers where appropriate will be given a copy of a written statement which specifies the action which will be taken in the event of a vulnerable person becoming ill or being injured and which indicates that any information which suggests that a vulnerable person has been abused will be passed on to the Social Services Department and/or the police.

DESIGNATED PERSON:

Parents, carers and /or family members will have a 'named person' to whom they may report any worries or concerns. This person will normally be the designated person or deputy.

RESPONDING TO SIGNS OF ABUSE:

It is not the responsibility of team members to deal with suspected abuse but it is their responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person. It is important that all team members should be aware of their responsibilities if abuse is suspected.

SUPERVISION:

Regular feedback and support will be given by POINT regarding new laws, policies and procedures relating to vulnerable persons.

POINT will endeavour to ensure that all those working with vulnerable people are aware of this policy and are able and willing to work to these guidelines.

POLICY ON THE SECURE HANDLING, STORAGE AND RETENTION OF DISCLOSURE INFORMATION:

- Disclosures will only be requested when necessary and relevant to a particular role and the information provided on a disclosure certificate will only be used for recruitment purposes.
- POINT will ensure that an individual's consent is given before seeking a disclosure.
- Disclosure information will only be shared with those authorised by the committee to see it.

- Where additional information is provided to POINT and not to the disclosure applicant, which may adversely affect their application. POINT reserves the right not to disclose the information but will inform the applicant of its existence.
- All information pertaining to the team members including disclosure information will be kept for the period of their employment/volunteering and then for a further 3 year period.
- No image or photocopy of the disclosure will be made however the following details will be retained:
 - Date of issue of disclosure.
 - Name of subject.
 - Disclosure type.
 - Role for which disclosure was requested.
 - Unique reference number of disclosure.
 - Decision as to whether or not employee/volunteer was suitable for the role.
- Disclosure information will be destroyed by either incineration or shredding.
- POINT will ensure that all those with access to disclosure information are aware of this policy and have received relevant training and support.
- POINT will undertake to make a copy of this policy available to all potential team members that wish to undertake a role that requires a disclosure.

PROTECTING TEAM MEMBERS FROM ABUSE:

Team members are openly discouraged from accepting gifts in whatever form from service users or well-wishers of the organisation. Should any team member receive any such item they must report it to their appropriate line manager.