

Exmouth Friends in Need
Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults
Policy
December 2021

SECTION 1

Workshop Location:

Exmouth Friends in Need, 9 Yew Tree Close, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 5NF
Safeguarding lead Claire Austin. Tel No: 07581 375855

About Exmouth Friends in Need

Exmouth Friends in Need
Currently A Not for Profit Voluntary Organisation

The Exmouth Friends in Need Voluntary Society:

Is predominantly a Facebook voluntary organisation. It exists to prevent or relieve poverty in Exmouth and surrounding area, in particular but not exclusively by providing emergency fresh food supplies and fuel top ups to individuals with assessed short-term need and/or to charities and other organisations working towards the same aims.

Type of Work & Activities for Members and Contributors:

The group has been running for over 3 years now. Facebook members contribute items in exchange for donations which fund essential food and fuel discreetly to the families on the at need list. This list changes with circumstantial change, demand is always high

Members also contribute as volunteers, their time and/or skills in helping families in need. For example, delivering food, collecting donated items, donating money as well as local businesses contributing for example painting plumbing electrical skills. There are over 8000 Facebook members and the group has become embedded in the local community

Children and Vulnerable Adults:

Families or individuals are assessed by Claire who makes a home visit if they are housed or meet at an agreed place if they are not. Some families or individuals are passed to Claire discreetly by the local CAB and the local council.

Any indications of abuse harm or neglect, are immediately reported to the appropriate body e.g., MASH

One to one work

If we are asked to work on a one-to-one basis for vulnerable adults. In these situations, we seek a chaperone either in the form of a support worker, advocate or additional group member. This is to safeguard both the student and member.

Our commitment

As a Group we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and vulnerable adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Group we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards adopted by Exmouth Friends in Need and prepared in consultation with the Safeguarding in Devon policies.

The Committee undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding guidance for all volunteers
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinator, Claire Austin in her work and in any action she may need to take in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.

SECTION 2

Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against a vulnerable adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution, a class or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or vulnerable adult.

In order to safeguard everyone in the group we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

1. Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while

in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

CHILDREN

Definitions of abuse: The NSPCC defines abuse as any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. There are four main types of child abuse: **physical abuse**, **sexual abuse**, **emotional abuse** and **neglect**. The abuser may be a family member, or they may be someone the child encounters in a residential setting or in the community, including during sports and leisure activities. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or may be responsible for abuse because they fail to prevent another person harming that child.

Physical abuse

- ← Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
- ← Examples of physical abuse in sport may be when a child is forced into training and competition that exceeds the capacity of his or her immature and growing body; or where the child is given drugs to enhance performance or delay puberty.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

In sport, coaching techniques which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. The power of the coach over young performers, if misused, may also lead to abusive situations developing.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Examples of emotional abuse in sport include subjecting children to constant criticism, name-calling, and sarcasm or bullying. Putting them under consistent pressure to perform to unrealistically high standards is also a form of emotional abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- ← provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- ← protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ← ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ← Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Examples of neglect in sport could include: not ensuring children are safe; exposing them to undue cold or heat, or exposing them to unnecessary risk of injury.

Abuse of children and young people with a disability

The available UK evidence on the extent of abuse among deaf and disabled children suggests that they are at increased risk of abuse and that the presence of multiple impairments appears to increase the risk of both abuse and neglect.

VULNERABLE ADULTS

The core definition of "vulnerable adult" from the 1997 Consultation "Who Decides?" issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department, is a person:

"Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care or unable to protect him or herself against

significant harm or exploitation”. This definition of an Adult covers all people over 18 years of age.

Definition of Abuse

“No Secrets” definition of abuse:

“Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be **physical, verbal or psychological**, it may be an **act of neglect or an omission** to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a **financial or sexual** transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it”.

Abuse can happen anywhere:

- in a person’s own home
- in a residential or nursing home
- in a hospital
- in the workplace
- at a day Centre or educational establishment
- in supported housing
- in the street.
- In the workshop

Who can abuse?

The person responsible for the abuse is often well known to the person being abused, and could be:

- a paid carer in a residential establishment or from a home care service
- a social care worker, health worker, nurse, doctor or therapist
- a relative, friend, or Neighbour
- another resident or person using a service in a shared care setting
- someone providing a support service
- a person employed directly by someone in their own home as a carer or a personal assistant.

Others are strangers who:

- befriend vulnerable people with the intention of exploiting them
- deceive people into believing they are from legitimate businesses, services or utility providers
- intimidate vulnerable people into financial transactions they do not want or cannot understand

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses abuse. Workers will make sure they and the child/person are not in danger. They will listen carefully. They will not question or probe for more information. They will report immediately to the safeguarding coordinator who will manage the situation and refer to the appropriate agencies. They will write an accurate report of what has happened including conversations, dates and times.

How to respond to anyone wishing to disclose abuse:

Do not start your own investigation. Speak with the safeguarding lead first.

Children

If you are concerned about a child or young person in Devon and want to speak to someone contact the **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on **0345 155 1071** or email mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk and give as much information as you can. After this write everything down and hand to the safeguarding lead.

Alternatively the Emergency Duty Service provide an emergency social care crisis response outside of normal office hours, and you can contact them on **0845 6000 388**.

Vulnerable adults

If you see, hear or suspect a vulnerable adult is being abused in any way, you must tell someone about it. Contact Care Direct on Free phone **0845 155 1007**. Alternatively use the following contacts;

Care Direct: First point of contact for all social care calls. Information and advice.

Tel: 0845 155 1007

E-mail: csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk

Care Direct is open to take calls between 8.00 am to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday and from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays. Outside these hours and on Sundays and Bank Holidays, **in emergency only**, please contact our Emergency Duty Service (see below).

Emergency Duty Service: Tel: 0845 6000 388

After this write everything down and hand the report to the safeguarding lead. Make sure you include conversations, dates, times and what has been done by whom.

Safeguarding awareness

The Group is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all Members, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

The Group will also ensure that children and vulnerable adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Those working with vulnerable adults will either attend in house training.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a member carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Following procedures as below:

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Claire Austin- hereafter Safeguarding Lead " tel no: 07581 375855

who is nominated by the Committee to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to the **MASH** (Details below) or the police.

Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services (MASH TEAM). Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection contact Adult Safeguarding team

After this write everything down and hand the report to the safeguarding lead. Make sure you include conversations, dates, times and what has been done by whom.

For Children or young person in Devon contact our **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on **0345 155 1071** or email mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk and give as much information as you can.

Alternatively, the Emergency Duty Service provide an emergency social care crisis response outside of normal office hours, and you can contact them on **0845 6000 388**.

For vulnerable adults -Contact Care Direct on Free phone **0845 155 1007**. Alternatively use the following contacts;

Emergency Duty Service: Tel: 0845 6000 388

The above agencies will contact the police safeguarding teams.

Where required the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should then immediately inform the insurance company and other strategic personnel within the safeguarding teams and chairperson.

Suspicious must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.

Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Coordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should not delay referral to Devon Safeguarding Team, MASH and if appropriate the Police

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from the voluntary committee, although the committee hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Coordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Committee demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

**Remember: Write everything down and hand the report to the safeguarding lead.
Make sure you include conversations, dates, times and what has been done by whom.**

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY, NEGLECT OR EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:
- Contact MASH for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g., poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact MASH direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by the safeguarding lead whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services MASH.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact MASH or out of hours social worker. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by the above or the safeguarding lead. If, for any reason they are unsure contact MASH.

The following procedure will be followed where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

- If a vulnerable adult has a physical injury or symptom of sexual abuse the Safeguarding Coordinator/ Deputy will:
- Discuss any concerns with the individual themselves giving due regard to their autonomy, privacy and rights to lead an independent life.
- If the vulnerable adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.
- For advice contact the Adult Social Care Vulnerable Adults Team (Details above) who have responsibility under Section 47 of the NHS and Community Care Act 1990 and government guidance, 'No Secrets', to investigate allegations of abuse.

ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST A PERSON WHO WORKS WITH CHILDREN

If an accusation is made against a volunteer whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Devon Safeguarding Team procedures and will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a Safeguarding Adviser **(SA)** / Local Authority Designated Officer **(LADO)**.

Sections 6.20 – 6.30 [Allegations of abuse made against a person who works with children] in Working Together 2006 states that local authorities should have a designated officer to manage cases where an accusation is made against someone working with children (whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity). These individuals are often known as Safeguarding Advisers (SA) or Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO). Where accusations involve a worker then speak to social services and the police and ask whether the individual needs to be referred.

In addition to this, whether or not there are such mechanisms in operation, consideration should be given to whether a referral should be made to the Vetting and Barring Scheme/Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) lists of those people deemed unsuitable for

working with children or vulnerable adults. Where you are liaising with a SA / LADO discuss with them about the need to refer to the DBS.

SECTION 3

Prevention

The Committee will ensure all volunteers are trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safeguarding This includes ensuring that:

For volunteers:

- Safeguarding has been discussed
- A criminal records disclosure has been completed (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- A suitable training programme is provided
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

SECTION 4

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Group is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the organisation.

Working with offenders

When someone attending the organisation is known to have abused children, or is known to be a risk to vulnerable adults the Committee will supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults, set boundaries for that person which they will be expected to keep.

MASH or Devon safeguarding board will be contacted for advice should this arise.

SECTION 5

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and vulnerable adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice.
We will review the activities the organisation is involved in and add the practice guidelines accordingly, adapting them to our circumstances.

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and vulnerable adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

Signed by:

Chairman and safeguarding lead

Treasurer and Secretary

Volunteers

APPENDIX 1

Committee Safeguarding Statement

The Group recognise the importance of its work with children and young people and adults in need of protection and its responsibility to protect everyone entrusted to our care.

The following statement was agreed by the Committee/organisation on: AGM January 2020

This organisation is committed to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and ensuring their well-being.

Specifically:

- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of children and young people (those under 18 years of age) and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect, to be listened to and to be protected from all forms of abuse.
- We recognise that we all have a responsibility to help prevent the physical, sexual, psychological, financial and discriminatory abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and to report any such abuse that we discover or suspect.
- We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults and will ensure all our policies and procedures reflect this.
- We believe all adults should enjoy and have access to every aspect of the life of the organisation unless they pose a risk to the safety of those we serve.
- We undertake to exercise proper care in the appointment and selection of all those who will work with children and vulnerable adults.

We are committed to:

- Following the requirements for UK legislation in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and good practice recommendations.
- Respecting the rights of children as described in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Implementing the requirements of legislation in regard to people with disabilities.
- Ensuring that volunteers adhere to the agreed procedures of our safeguarding policy.
- Keeping up to date with national and local developments relating to safeguarding.
- Following any organisational guidelines in relation to safeguarding children and adults in need of protection.
- Supporting the safeguarding co-ordinator/s in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children/vulnerable adults.

- Ensuring that everyone agrees to abide by these recommendations and the guidelines established by this organisation.
- Supporting parents and families
- Nurturing, protecting and safeguarding of children and young people
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work.
- Supporting all in the organisation affected by abuse.

We recognise:

- MASH (Children’s Social Services) (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a child. Adult Social Care (or equivalent) has lead responsibility for investigating all allegations or suspicions of abuse where there are concerns about a vulnerable adult.
- Where an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed then the police should be contacted as a matter of urgency.
- Where working outside of the UK, concerns will be reported to the appropriate agencies in the country in which we operate, and their procedures followed, and in addition we will report concerns to our agency’s headquarters.
- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility.

We will review this statement and our policy and procedures annually.

If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult then speak to one of the following who have been approved as safeguarding co-ordinators for this organisation.

A copy of the full policy and procedures is available from the chairperson.

A copy of our safeguarding policy has been stored

Signed Chairperson and Safeguarding lead

Signed _____ Claire Austin _____

Signed Tresasurer/Secretary

Signed _____ Annie Devereux _____

Date _____ 01st December 2021 _____