

# Safeguarding Policy

Last Reviewed: 1 Sept 2023

Next Review: 1 Sept 2024

## Introduction

Community Foundation for Lancashire and Merseyside (CFLM) is committed to ensuring the rights and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

This policy details the rules and responsibilities of CFLM and CFLM employees, trustees and volunteers in matters relating to safeguarding. *(It is an exert from Employee Handbook issued Sept 2023)*

## Overview

The purpose of the policy is to set out responsibilities for the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults in relation to CFLM's work.

## Definition

In relation to this policy:

- A **child** or **young person** is anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18.
- A **vulnerable adult** is someone over 18 who by reason of disability, age or illness has needs for care and support which mean that they are or may be unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect, or the risk of it. Examples would include but are not limited to adults with learning difficulties or disabilities, or older people living in residential care.

CFLM does not work directly with children, young people, or vulnerable adults. But safeguarding issues could still occur indirectly in relation to individuals who are:

- beneficiaries or members of an organisation applying for or receiving a funding.
- applying for or receiving grants and members, donors or potential donors and their families

## Roles and Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with CFLM's Board of Trustees. The trustees have delegated operation responsibility to the Programmes Director, who acts as the point of contact for safeguarding matters. The responsibilities are to ensure:

- employees are made aware of this policy and related procedures.
- any concerns raised or reported are discussed, recorded and dealt with appropriately and where necessary referred to the appropriate statutory agencies.
- the procedures are reviewed, and the policy updated as agreed.

It is the responsibility of all employees, trustees, and volunteers to ensure that they are familiar with this policy and any related procedures.

## POLICY DETAILS AND PROCEDURE GUIDELINES

### 1. Principles

CFLM trustees, employees and volunteers do not work directly with children or vulnerable adults or undertake 'regulated activity' as part of their roles with us and so do not have Disclosure or Barring Service (DBS) checks.

In carrying out their role with us, CFLM trustees, employees and volunteers cannot be left in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults when travelling to or visiting an organisation or a donor, or when attending an event, and will refuse to do so if asked. When visiting organisations that work with children or vulnerable adults, CFLM will disclose that our trustees, employees, and volunteers are not DBS checked if requested.

Children and vulnerable adults may be present at certain CFLM events or meetings, but they must always be accompanied by an appropriate representative of an organisation, or by a family member or carer. CFLM will take reasonable steps to ensure it knows who is attending any event or meeting in advance.

CFLM requires all grant applicant organisations which intend to work directly with children or vulnerable adults to have an appropriate safeguarding policy in place. They will be expected to demonstrate that the policy is in the name of the applicant organisation, is regularly updated, has a named safeguarding lead, and contains details on definitions of abuse and their reporting procedure upon any disclosures made.

CFLM cannot itself provide advice on safeguarding policies or procedures, however, CFLM will communicate what it requires to be demonstrated if necessary. Those intending to work with children or vulnerable adults can be signposted to other sources of support and will advise by CFLM of what they are expected to demonstrate.

When dealing with funds that award grants to individual children and young people or vulnerable adults, CFLM will always require the involvement of appropriate adults, carers, or statutory bodies as intermediaries as referrers or advocates.

CFLM will ensure that steps are taken to amend or end communication with individuals we are made aware of any vulnerability under the meaning of this policy.

## **2. Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse**

CFLM will provide information to trustees, employees, and volunteers on recognising the signs of abuse. There are four types of abuse which can cause long term damage to a child or young person. These are defined as:

Physical abuse including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Sexual abuse including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Neglect or acts of omission including ignoring medical, emotional, or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.

Psychological abuse - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks. This also includes spiritual abuse, which is a form of emotional and psychological abuse, characterised by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour in a religious

context. Spiritual abuse can have a deeply damaging impact on those who experience it. This abuse may include manipulation and exploitation, enforced accountability, censorship of decision-making, the requirement of secrecy and silence, coercion to conform, control through the use of sacred texts or teaching, the requirement of obedience to the abuser, the suggestion that the abuser has a 'divine' position, isolation as a means of punishment, and superiority and elitism.

Discriminatory abuse including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

Financial (or material) abuse including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Domestic abuse: including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional, or so-called 'honour' based violence.

Modern slavery: encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Trafficking and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive, and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude, and inhumane treatment.

Possible signs of abuse include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries, such as bruising cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries, or if the explanation of the cause of the injury does not seem right.
- The child discloses abuse or describes what appears to be an abusive act.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child.
- Unexplained change in behaviour, such as withdrawal or sudden outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends; and/or
- Eating disorders, depression, self-harm, or suicide attempts

### **3. Reporting a Safeguarding Issue**

If CFLM have reason, in good faith, to believe children or vulnerable adults may be at risk, or we receive an allegation about possible abuse e.g. during a project visit or from a report received, or via a third-party raising concerns. CFLM has a duty to record and report the matter internally and notify the appropriate statutory authorities.

The appropriate authority that safeguarding issues are reported to would be the safeguarding board within the borough that the matter relates to.

If a CFLM employee becomes concerned about a child, young person or adult's safety, the following steps will be taken.

#### **Stage 1**

- Record what was said, noticed or written as soon as possible.
- Notify the organisation's Chief Executive
- Date and time of notification and respect confidentiality and file documents securely.

## **Stage 2**

The Chief Executive should take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has suffered, or is at risk of, significant harm. In this situation, the Chief Executive should consider whether it is appropriate to refer to the appropriate statutory body, who will contact the police if required. If a referral is made direct to the appropriate statutory body, this should be followed up in writing within 24 hrs.

## **4. Allegations Against Employees**

In the event an allegation is made against an employee, another member of the team or trustee must notify the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The criteria for a referral to be accepted by LADO are:

The person has behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child.

The person has possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or the person has behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Employees and trustees should contact the LADO for advice or a consultation if they're unsure.

Employees and trustees must ensure that the child or vulnerable adult is safe and away from the person whom the allegation is made.

After any allegation by employees, trustees or volunteers will be dealt with under CFLM's disciplinary procedure and could result in dismissal for gross misconduct or disqualification from the Board.

## **5. Breaches of Policy**

Concerns around abuse should be dealt with as above and statutory bodies notified.

Where the concern is not around abuse but around other aspects of compliance with this policy, employees and trustees must notify the Chief Executive as soon as possible. Volunteers should notify their normal point of contact within CFLM in the first instance. Where any concern relates to the Chief Executive the Chair of the Board should be notified.

Any alleged breach of this policy by employees will be dealt with under CFLM's disciplinary procedure and could result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

Any alleged breach by a Trustee will be investigated by the Chief Executive in the first instance and could result in disqualification from the Board.

Any alleged breach by volunteers or others associated with CFLM will be investigated by the Chief Executive and could result in individuals being removed from voluntary roles or contracts being terminated.