

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN/VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Who We Are

DR KIM WHITAKER LTD is an incorporated company. Our company number is 06688117 and our registered address is:

C/O Ppi Accountancy Limited Horley Green House, Horley Green Road,
Claremount, Halifax, HX3 6AS

Application of this Policy

We have adopted this safeguarding child and vulnerable adult policy, and we expect every adult working with us or helping us support us to comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all staff, managers, trustees, directors, volunteers, students or anyone working for us.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy is intended to protect children /vulnerable adults, who receive any service from us, including those who are the /vulnerable adults of adults who may receive services from us. Under this policy, the term child shall mean any person who is under eighteen years of age.

We believe that no child or young person or vulnerable adult should experience abuse or harm, and we are committed to the protection of children and young people and vulnerable adults. This policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child/adult protection and safeguarding.

The Risks to children /vulnerable adults

Children/vulnerable adults can be vulnerable to different forms of abuse and harm. It is important to recognise that abuse and harm to children/vulnerable adults can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviours. Examples of risks to children/vulnerable adults include:

- physical or emotional abuse

- neglect
- sexual abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)
- grooming and exploitation
- trafficking and modern slavery
- exposure to or infliction of domestic abuse
- bullying or cyberbullying
- exposure to other inappropriate content or behaviour, such as violence or criminal behaviour
- self-harm
- physical harm when engaging in activities without adequate supervision

The causal factors of any such harm and/or abuse can also be wide-ranging. For example, children /vulnerable adults can be placed at risk by family members or by members of the community.

Safeguarding Principles

Safeguarding children/vulnerable adults from harm and abuse is an important responsibility. We are committed to ensuring that any child/vulnerable adult who comes into contact with our services is properly safeguarded. Every person under this policy must ensure that they play an active role in ensuring that children/vulnerable adults are properly safeguarded.

Every person under this policy holds responsibility for:

- remaining alert and aware of possible safeguarding risks to children/vulnerable adults
- guarding children/vulnerable adults against harmful environments with appropriate actions (for example, adequate supervision or ensuring safe environments)
- taking positive steps to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children/vulnerable adults engaging with us
- reporting concerns expeditiously and appropriately, in line with child protection procedures
- understanding the duty to report specific concerns (and understanding how this interplays with confidentiality)

- challenging any inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adult and reporting this accordingly
- acting appropriately in the presence of children/vulnerable adults
- not taking any inappropriate risks
- not smoking, drinking or taking any form of illicit substances in the presence of children/vulnerable adults.

Safeguarding Officer

Any question, report or concern about the welfare of children/vulnerable adults should be shared with our Safeguarding Officer:

Name: DR KIM WHITAKER

Email: admin@drkimwhitaker.com

Telephone: 0161 5490866

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All personal information we may process relating to children/vulnerable adults shall be processed and stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy.

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

Where a child/vulnerable adult is at immediate risk of serious harm, any adult present should call 999. Thereafter, the Safeguarding Officer should be contacted as soon as reasonably practicable.

Where there is a safeguarding concern but no immediate risk of serious harm, the adult who has heard or witnessed this concern should consult with the Safeguarding Officer as soon as practicable and by no later than the end of that same day.

Where any child/vulnerable adult makes a disclosure relating to harm or abuse to an adult, it is important for that adult to:

- listen calmly and carefully, to show that their views are taken seriously
- provide an appropriate and honest level of reassurance
- avoid interrogating children/vulnerable adults and asking probing, intrusive and/or leading questions
- avoid making false promises regarding secrets and confidentiality with the child/vulnerable adult (because any concern of abuse/harm must be shared with the Safeguarding Officer and any subsequent safeguarding referral)

- make a confidential *written* record of the discussion either during the discussion or immediately afterwards. The record should include the key details of the disclosure together with any relevant times, dates, places and people concerned. Audio and video recordings of children/vulnerable adults making disclosures should be avoided

- refer all relevant information to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as practicable afterwards, and by no later than the end of the day

Upon receipt of any safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding Officer shall consult with any other relevant persons and will make any appropriate referrals to the relevant authorities, such as the applicable Local Authority children/vulnerable adults' Services department.

Reporting Concerns About Other Adults

If there is a concern that another adult staff is or may be:

- harming a child either physically or emotionally
- exposing a child to behaviour which may cause physical or emotional harm
- engaging in criminal activity concerning a child

this must be raised in the first instance with the Safeguarding Officer (or where this is not appropriate, a different senior member of the organisation) so that the next appropriate steps may be agreed and actioned. We recognise that there could be circumstances where a person may need to report a matter that has taken place in a setting outside of the person's engagement with us.

Usually, any appropriate steps following a safeguarding referral in respect of an individual connected to us will include either:

- further initial enquiries
- escalation to the applicable Local Authority children/vulnerable adults' Services department for assessment and/or the police for investigation
- instigation of any appropriate disciplinary, formal investigation processes and suspension of the individual concerned
- a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service, or any other relevant regulatory bodies

Any person working for us who has allegations made against them shall be informed properly in a formal meeting of the particulars of the allegations and the relevant next steps which shall be taken. Such a meeting should ordinarily be held by the Safeguarding Officer. On certain occasions, such a meeting may not be convened until this has been approved by any authorities involved (such as the police or the relevant Local Authority).

Any person who has had allegations made against them shall be treated fairly. All enquiries, investigations and decisions taken shall be just and fair, with the safety of any child/vulnerable adult concerned at the heart of the process.

Any person who makes an allegation against another person shall be listened to, taken seriously and shall be treated fairly and justly throughout the process of enquiries, investigations and decision making.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks and Reporting

DBS checks under the appropriate legislation should be undertaken wherever required for any position of paid or unpaid work for us.

Wherever we deem it is necessary and appropriate to remove any individual from a position of work in an activity that is regulated under the relevant legislation, we shall also be obliged to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Safeguarding children/vulnerable adults

Responsibilities and Planning

Although the Safeguarding Officer will hold ultimate responsibility for overseeing the safety of children/vulnerable adults, all individuals under this policy must also play an active role in ensuring the safety of children/vulnerable adults at all times.

Where a certain type of event, activity or trip is taking place, we may issue an additional code of conduct, policy, or some specific other requirements which is specific to that occasion. Any such additional documentation will be made available to all those concerned (staff members, parents, guardians etc.) in advance. They should be read carefully and adhered to.

Appropriate background checks shall be undertaken in relation to any adult who is engaged by us, wherever we are legally required to do so (see the relevant section above).

Venues

We have carried out a health and safety risk assessment in relation to the premises, in reference to its safety and suitability for children/vulnerable adults. Where any events, activities or trips are to take place at other locations, we shall also carry out a further risk assessment.

The location for any events, activities and trips which are held by us shall always be risk-assessed properly in reference to the suitability and safety of children/vulnerable adults. Fire and safety procedures and precautions shall be made clear to all those involved.

First Aid

Any accident or injury concerning a child/vulnerable adult should:

- be dealt with in accordance with usual first aid procedures
- be brought to the attention of the nearest first aider and should thereafter be formally reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

Consent Forms

We will always obtain written consent from a parent or guardian where appropriate.

Consent forms will include emergency contact details and will set out any specific safety needs/requirements for children/vulnerable adults.

All consent forms will be kept secure and shall be stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy.

Supervision

Parents, guardians or responsible adults must attend all events and activities with their children/vulnerable adults. They should ensure that children/vulnerable adults are properly supervised at all times.

Managing the Behaviour of children/vulnerable adults Generally

Whenever any adult engaged by us is faced with challenging or inappropriate behaviour from a child/vulnerable adult or with conflict between children/vulnerable adults, they must:

- treat each child/vulnerable adult fairly and equally
- approach the situation in a calm and neutral manner
- only ever use physical restraint/intervention in order to protect the immediate safety of a person, for example, to prevent an injury or harm either to the child or others
- wherever it is justified to physically restrain a child/vulnerable adult or to physically intervene, the amount of force used should be kept to the absolute minimum taking into account the risk posed
- make a written record of the incident and ensure this is reported appropriately to the Safeguarding Officer

Managing Risks Posed by Other children/vulnerable adults

It is important for all adults engaged by us to recognise that children/vulnerable adults can face harm from their peers. This can commonly take the form of bullying. Bullying can be defined as any behaviour which is:

- repeated; and
- has the intention of hurting somebody either physically or emotionally.

Bullying can sometimes be motivated by prejudices based on certain groups, for example, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. Bullying can often include:

- physical harm perpetrated against another child/vulnerable adult
- name calling and threats
- cyberbullying (threats and abusive comments made via technology)

Any instance of bullying or concern relating to possible bullying between children/vulnerable adults at any event or activities arranged by us will usually be treated seriously.

We will conduct an investigation into the relevant facts before any conclusions or recommendations can be made.

All steps in relation to the prevention or management of bullying should be taken in consultation with the Safeguarding Officer.

Photography

We operate a strict no-photo policy. We will not take any photographs and ask that members of the public, parents or guardians and children/vulnerable adults do not take any photographs when attending our premises, activities and/or events.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with all relevant and applicable legislation and guidance available to us in the jurisdictions we operate within.

This Policy will be reviewed regularly and may be updated from time to time.