



VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Updated Sep 20

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The Newquay Foodbank is committed to safeguarding the rights, well-being and safety of vulnerable adults and children who come into contact with the Foodbank. This policy outlines the steps the Foodbank will take to ensure that vulnerable adults and children are protected. It will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Safeguarding Officer.

1. DEFINITIONS

1.1. Safeguarding – The Foodbank follows the Charity Commission definition of Safeguarding as:

1.1.1. Protecting from maltreatment

1.1.2. Preventing impairment of health or development

1.1.3. Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

1.2. Vulnerable adult – A person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. Vulnerable adults:

1.2.1. Are entitled to privacy and being treated with dignity.

1.2.2. Should be given the ability to lead an independent life and to be supported to do so;

1.2.3. Should be able to choose how they lead their lives;

1.2.4. Should have the protection of the law and have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.

1.3. Child – Describes a child aged 0-17 years old.

2. TYPES OF ABUSE

2.1. Physical abuse is an act of another party involving contact intended to cause feelings of physical pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm.

2.2. Sexual abuse is forcing undesired sexual behaviour by one person onto another.

2.3. Emotional abuse is any kind of abuse that is emotional rather than physical in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased.

2.4. Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a person's basic needs

2.5. Financial abuse is the misuse of a person's money, property or assets through theft or fraud.

- 2.6. Spiritual abuse takes place when leaders to whom people look for guidance and spiritual nurture use their positions of authority to manipulate, control, and dominate.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1. The Newquay Foodbank aims to restore dignity and revive hope to people from all walks of life. It is concerned with individuals and their circumstances and actively encourages an inclusive environment.
- 3.2. The Foodbank seeks to ensure that all its Volunteers are aware of what is required from them under the vulnerable adult and child protection policy and makes sure that it is practised at all times.
- 3.3. It is the responsibility of each Volunteer to play their part in preventing the physical, sexual, spiritual, financial or emotional abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children.
- 3.4. The Foodbank commits itself to co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting official investigation into the abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults or children.
- 3.5. This statement is to be brought to the attention of all Volunteers when they join, as part of their induction programme.
- 3.6. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all Volunteers.
- 3.7. The statement will be displayed at all locations in which the Foodbank operates and all Volunteers will be asked to sign to say that they have read it.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1. The Newquay Foodbank Will:
 - 4.1.1. Plan its work so as to minimise situations where the abuse of vulnerable adults and children might occur.
 - 4.1.2. Ensure that there is adequate supervision for all vulnerable adults and children.
 - 4.1.3. Ensure that any vulnerable adult working with the Foodbank project is aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns.
 - 4.1.4. Require a minimum age of 18 to Volunteer for the Foodbank.
 - 4.1.5. Ensure that all Volunteers know where the nearest telephone is in case of emergencies and that phones are clearly labelled with directions for how to make external calls.
 - 4.1.6. Ensure that an adult is not left alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the child.
 - 4.1.7. Make sure the Safeguarding Officers receives correct and up-to-date training.

4.1.8. Ensure that the Local Authority is informed of any safeguarding allegations, incidents or concerns.

4.1.9. Ensure that the Charity Commission is informed of any suspicions, allegations and incidents of abuse or mistreatment of vulnerable beneficiaries. The Charity Commission's 'Serious Incident' guidance will be followed.

4.1.10. Ensure the Disclosure and Barring Service is informed if the trustees have dismissed Volunteers because they think they have harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

4.1.11. Ensure Volunteers who may come into contact with a vulnerable adult or child at the Foodbank are suitably trained, including understanding what to do in the event that a disclosure of abuse is made.

4.1.12. Encourage a culture of transparency, ensuring that Volunteers feel able and empowered to report any suspicious or concerning behaviour.

4.2. Volunteers must –

4.2.1. Report any allegations or concerns of abuse to the Foodbank's Designated Safeguarding Officers.

5. SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

5.1. The Newquay Foodbank will elect a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of vulnerable adults or children.

5.2. In the event an allegation of abuse is made against the Safeguarding Officer the Chair will take over the duties until the complaint is complete.

5.3. The Safeguarding Officer will:

5.3.1. Be available for vulnerable adults and children, as well as Volunteers, to speak with should they feel the need to talk with someone about an incident which has happened either within or outside of the Foodbank.

5.3.2. The Safeguarding Officer will treat all concerns with the utmost importance.

6. RECORDING

6.1. The Safeguarding Officer will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they or another Volunteer has and seek advice from the relevant Social Services Department or the Police if appropriate.

6.2. Volunteers must ensure that their recording of disclosures, incidents, assessments, referrals and case discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to date, legible, dated, and factual.

6.3. When recording details it is important not to jump to conclusions or judge the situation and to remember that the role of the safeguarding officer is to refer to appropriate agencies, not to undertake an investigation.

6.4. Suspicions should be noted carefully and backed up with factual evidence.

- 6.5. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence.
- 6.6. These records must be stored in an individual file and held securely in a manner that safeguards the individual's right to privacy and security.
- 6.7. These records are available to authorised individuals only on request (not third party information) and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.
- 6.8. Once Volunteers have passed on their records, they have no right to know what happens next. They will only receive more information about the case if they are required to be part of civil or criminal proceedings e.g. as a witness.
- 6.9. Volunteers must refrain from talking to other team members or outside persons about the safeguarding concern (with the exception of the Safeguarding Officer, the Police or Social Services).

7. DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE

- 7.1. Where a member of a Foodbank team receives a disclosure of abuse from a child or vulnerable adult they must:
 - 7.1.1. Ensure they do not promise confidentiality to anyone wishing to share a secret. This is important in case information needs to be shared with the Safeguarding Officer, Police or Social Services.
 - 7.1.2. Listen-if the disclosure is particularly complicated this may mean asking permission to make notes as the disclosure is made to ensure nothing is missed.
 - 7.1.3. Not ask leading questions although the Volunteer hearing the disclosure can ask the child or vulnerable adult to repeat something if it has not been said clearly.
 - 7.1.4. Reassure the individual. Making a disclosure of abuse can be a frightening process and often the child or vulnerable adult is afraid that they won't be believed. Reassuring them that they have been brave and that the information will be passed on is vitally important.
 - 7.1.5. Take notes and officially record the conversation - notes should be made as soon after the disclosure as possible. The notes should reflect what the child or vulnerable adult has said in their own words. The record should be signed and dated.
 - 7.1.6. Report – the record must be passed on to a Safeguarding Officer at the earliest possible opportunity and the child or vulnerable adult told what will happen next.
 - 7.1.7. The Safeguarding Officer will ensure that the Committee are informed of any incident, concern or allegation of abuse. The Committee must also notify the Charity Commission, following the Commission's 'Serious Incident' guidelines in the event of an incident, or suspected incident, during or resulting from a Foodbank activity.

7.1.8. Where a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of the Foodbank team that team member must never

7.1.8.1. Trivialise, play down or ignore allegations of abuse'

7.1.8.2. Assume that somebody else will take responsibility for reporting/addressing concerns and making referrals'

8. WHISTLE BLOWING

8.1. Volunteers are encouraged to take action when suspicious that abuse is occurring—no matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is.

8.2. The Foodbank will respect and not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused.

8.3. Volunteers have a responsibility to report any occurrences or suspicions of adult abuse.

8.4. Volunteers who report abuse are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

9. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

9.1. Incidences where Foodbank clients report an incident of domestic violence which has taken place whilst a child or vulnerable adult is in the home, this must be treated as a disclosure of abuse and should be passed on to a Safeguarding Officer with immediate effect.

9.2. Where an incident of domestic violence is reported and there is no child or vulnerable adult present, Foodbank Volunteers should signpost the client to an appropriate agency but must not attempt to coerce them to contact the police unless the client feels ready to do so.

9.3. Where Foodbank Volunteers witness an act of domestic violence, they must contact the police immediately.

9.4. For advice or information about anything relating to domestic violence the Foodbank team should contact the National Domestic Violence Helpline on: 0808 2000 247

10. USE OF IMAGES

10.1. The Newquay Foodbank recognises that protecting and upholding the rights of children and vulnerable adults is of paramount importance and this includes on the internet and other promotional materials.

10.2. The Foodbank endeavours to present children and vulnerable adults in a positive, empowering and dignified manner.

10.3. Images will only be used where the child or vulnerable adult and their parents/guardians give their informed consent.

10.4. The following principles will be adhered to:

- 10.4.1.** Images will not be taken without consent from the subject and their parent/guardian.
- 10.4.2.** The Foodbank will explain to the subject and their parent/guardian how and where the images will be used and will adhere to this.
- 10.4.3.** Images used on the Foodbank website and social media pages will not be used on personal social media pages. NB: External media, television crews and journalists are usually responsible for obtaining their own informed consent from clients.

11. DISPLAYING INFORMATION

- 11.1.** The Foodbank will ensure that this policy is displayed in all locations in which the Foodbank operates and that any changes to the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Officers are updated.

12. ADDITIONAL POINTS

- 12.1.** It is important that everyone in the Foodbank is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional vulnerable adult and child protection agencies following a referral to them.
- 12.2.** If a vulnerable adult or child begins making a disclosure of abuse to a team member who feels unable to cope with what they are hearing, they should gently halt the conversation and contact the Safeguarding Officer immediately. If the Safeguarding Officer is unavailable, the team leader should take over the conversation.
- 12.3.** The wellbeing of Volunteers is of great importance. If a disclosure has been made which has caused upset to the person hearing it, the Foodbank will endeavour to offer or facilitate counselling or support if requested.
- 12.4.** It is possible to be lulled into a false sense of security, believing that those who work alongside vulnerable adults and children in the Foodbank will never be guilty of abuse. It is not safe to assume that anyone is automatically safe to be with vulnerable adults or children. For this reason all procedures set in place to protect vulnerable adults and children apply to all those in contact with them. This is not the same as treating each person who relates to vulnerable adults and children as being under suspicion, but a matter of taking sensible measures to protect vulnerable adults and children as well as those who support them.
- 12.5.** If any Volunteer has concerns, they should raise them with the Safeguarding Officer. If it is brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Officer and not adequately dealt with the next step is to talk to the Chair of the Foodbank for advice or contact Social Services/the Police as a private citizen to discuss the concerns.

13. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

- 13.1.** There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All personal and delicate information disclosed to the Foodbank is confidential, but may not always be secret.

13.2. Personal and delicate information about Volunteers will be confidential to the Foodbank and can be shared with other Volunteers on a 'need to know basis' only and with other agencies when:

13.2.1.1. Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held

13.2.1.2. There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent.

13.2.1.3. The law requires it.

14. REVIEW

14.1. This policy and its implementation will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there are any legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies.

LAST REVIEWED : Sep 20 SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: Rev Clare Anderson