



Phab Nottingham
Charity No 1153383

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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CONTEXT

The Charity Commission states that Charity trustees, staff and volunteers (hereon in “staff”) are responsible for ensuring that those benefiting from, or working with, their charity are not harmed in any way through their contact with it. They have a legal duty to act prudently and this means that they must take all reasonable steps within their power to ensure that this does not happen. It is particularly important where beneficiaries are vulnerable persons or children in the community. Trustees are expected to find out what the relevant law is, how it applies to their organisation, and to comply with it where appropriate. They should also adopt best practice as far as possible. Children are an especially vulnerable demographic and therefore the Charity Commission is concerned to stress the importance of charities having proper safeguards in place for their protection.

This policy applies to all those involved in Phab Nottingham, be they trustees, Management Committee staff or volunteers.

The term “child protection” has been changed to “safeguarding” as it reflects the wider responsibility for health and safety and prevention as well as protection from abuse. It may be defined as: doing everything possible to minimise the risk of harm to children, young people and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is about being proactive and putting measures in place in advance of any contact with children to ensure that children are going to be kept safe.

OUR APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING

Phab Nottingham endeavours to put safety at the heart of everything we do. As such, we adopt a holistic approach to safeguarding in that it is woven into every aspect of our governance and activities. This document sets out the key elements of our approach to safeguarding, but much is also contained within our other policies and procedures. As such, this document should be considered in conjunction with the policies and procedures detailed below:

Recruitment: DBS policy.

Training: Management Committee and volunteer training materials.

Policies & Procedures: Key Documents: Member Safety Policy, Emergency Contact Procedure, Administration of Medication Policy, Social Media Policy, Data Protection Policy.

Culture: We aim to create an environment where members feel they can talk to us.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS

Child: Anyone under the age of 18.

Vulnerable Adult/Adult at Risk: A person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because they have a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, are old and frail, or have some form of illness.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

Emotional Abuse: Persistent lack of love and affection where a child/vulnerable adult may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted, may make the individual nervous or withdrawn. Emotional abuse may also occur if there is constant overprotection, or there is neglect, physical or sexual abuse.

Psychological/Mental Abuse: This type of abuse is similar to emotional abuse and can be in the form of threats, intimidation, harassment, stopping a child/vulnerable adult from seeing friends and family or invasion of privacy.

Neglect: Occurs when the child/vulnerable adult's basic needs such as food, warmth, and adequate clothing are not provided, as well as a failure or refusal to give love, affection and attention. It can also occur when there is inadequate supervision or the child/vulnerable adult is left alone.

Physical Abuse: Where adults physically hurt or injure children/vulnerable adults by hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning, and biting or using excessive force when trying to restrain a child/vulnerable adult, or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs etc.

Sexual Abuse: Some adults - both male and female - may seek to satisfy their own sexual needs by abusing girls, boys and vulnerable adults. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children/vulnerable adults pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse.

Financial Abuse: This includes: fraud, stealing, pressuring a child/vulnerable adult to part with money, benefits, possessions or property.

CONSEQUENCES OF ABUSE

Abuse in all forms can affect a person at any age. The effects are so damaging that, if not tackled, they can affect an individual for the rest of their life. The effects on children with disabilities/vulnerable adults may have an increased impact on their lives, as these groups already suffer from many additional disadvantages.

There have been a number of studies which have shown that children with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse through various factors, such as stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination, isolation and an inability to protect themselves. They may also have difficulty communicating the fact that abuse has occurred.

EVIDENCE OF ABUSE

Evidence that a child/vulnerable adult may be being abused could include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if sustained on part of a body not normally prone to such injuries.
- A situation in which the explanation for an injury seems inconsistent or unlikely.
- They describe what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her.
- Unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness.
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Not socialising with their peers.
- Displaying variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Loss of weight for no apparent reason.
- Becoming increasingly dirty or unkempt.

It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more indicators is not in itself proof that abuse is taking place.

HOW SHOULD YOU ACT ON SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS?

There are three primary 'types' of safeguarding concerns:

- **Disclosure:** Where a member voluntarily describes a scenario to you that may be considered a safeguarding concern.
- **Allegation:** Where an allegation is made about a potential safeguarding breach against a member by a member of staff.
- **Proactive concerns:** Where you identify a potential safeguarding concern based on your observations (e.g. eating habits, challenging behaviour)

For the first two types, you should follow the steps 2-5 below. For proactive concerns, you should follow step 1 (Recognise) and step 3 (Record) and discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) before proceeding further.

5 'R'S APPROACH

1. Recognise (for proactive concerns)

The ability to recognise behaviour that may indicate abuse is of fundamental importance. Those in a position to identify concerns include Phab Nottingham staff. In the event of any proactively identified concern, before commencing any action, unless the child/vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of further abuse, as the observer you should:

- Consult the President of the Management Committee/other Committee members as appropriate;
- Contact the Safeguarding Officer (details below);
- If no one is immediately available and you believe the event requires immediate action, do not delay in taking this action (see steps 4-5 below). If immediate action is not required, await advice from the Safeguarding Officer before proceeding;
- If there is immediate risk or danger to the child/vulnerable adult, contact Police or Social Services as appropriate.

2. Respond

- Signs and symptoms of abuse of young people and/or vulnerable adults may include direct disclosure/allegations. Appropriate response is vital. No report of or concern about possible abuse should ever be ignored. In order to determine the most appropriate response, it is necessary to understand the nature of the identified risk/allegation.
- In responding to a disclosure/allegation, the recipient of the information should remain calm, ensure the child is safe and if required seek medical attention.
- Do not lead or probe with questions. Remain calm and demonstrate interest and concern whilst listening carefully. Inform the person sharing a concern with you that you cannot promise confidentiality. Explain that the concerns they have raised must be recorded and passed on so that possible abuse can be dealt with, and that this will be done on a limited “need to know” basis, with as few others as possible knowing the identity of the complainant.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in reporting their concerns and that you will do everything you possibly can to help. Do not make unrealistic promises.
- It may occur that a child/vulnerable adult wishes to have a third party friend or parent/guardian/carer present before they will offer any information. This is perfectly acceptable and should be encouraged. However, great care must be taken not to let the third party speak for the child/vulnerable adult especially where that person is the child's/vulnerable adult's parent/guardian or carer.

3. Record

- Using the form in Appendix 1, you should record precisely the details of the concern, using the words of the complainant where possible. Your record should use accurate quotations. It should also, if appropriate, include factual observations about the physical and emotional state of the individual sharing their concerns with you.
- You may be unable to record details whilst dealing with the situation; however, you should record details of the incident as soon as possible afterwards in order to ensure the details are fresh in your mind.
- The form should be stored securely in the designated folder on OneDrive and access should be restricted by password such that only those involved in investigating or dealing with the situation can view the document. All information should be treated as confidential in line with The Data Protection Act (1998).

4. Report

Note: It is not the responsibility of anyone working at Phab Nottingham in a voluntary or paid capacity to decide whether or not abuse is taking place. However, there is a responsibility to protect children to the extent that the appropriate agencies can make inquiries and take any necessary action to protect the child/vulnerable adult. The Social Services Department has a statutory duty under The Children's Act 1989 to ensure the welfare of a child/vulnerable adult. When a child protection referral is made, its staff has a legal duty to investigate. This may involve talking to the child/vulnerable adult and family/guardian or carer and gathering information from other people who know the child/vulnerable adult. Enquiries may be carried out jointly with the police.

- Once the form has been completed, this should be shared with the DSL as soon as possible (via the President of the Management Committee for volunteers/staff). In the absence of the DSL, this should be reported to another member of the Board of Trustees.
- The DSL will make a decision within 24 hours as to the action to take and will refer the concern to the appropriate agency as required. The responsibility for taking any further decisions and/or actions then resides with the agency. The DSL should ensure they receive an acknowledgment of a referral to any agency in order to make certain that the allegation will be dealt with by them.
- In most situations, the DSL will advise talking to parents/guardians or carers to help clarify any initial concerns. For example, if a child/vulnerable adult seems withdrawn he/she may have experienced bereavement in a family. However, there are circumstances in which a child/vulnerable adult may be placed at a greater risk if such concerns were shared (e.g. where a parent/guardian or carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately). In these circumstances, or where concerns still exist, the DSL will likely report any concerns of abuse to the appropriate agency.
- You may at any time seek advice from the DSL but should keep to an absolute minimum discussion of any concerns with colleagues.

NOTES ON ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Complaints against a member of staff should be made directly to the DSL. If the complaint is against the DSL, another member of the Board should be contacted.

Phab Nottingham assures all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child/vulnerable adult.

Where there is a complaint of abuse against staff, there may be 3 types of investigation:

- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation
- A child/vulnerable adult protection investigation
- A criminal investigation

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF STAFF

Anyone may have the potential to abuse children/vulnerable adults in some way; it is therefore important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children/vulnerable adults. It is essential the same procedures be used consistently whether for staff or volunteers. Phab Nottingham is required by law to have all staff and volunteers checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service and opts to require the enhanced check.

As per the Member Safety policy, if Phab Nottingham becomes aware that an individual is no longer suitable to work with our members, it reserves the right to stop the individual from attending any future activities associated with the Charity.

BEST PRACTICE

Promoting good practice can reduce the possibility of potentially abusive situations and help to protect staff from allegations of abuse. The following are specific examples of good practice that Phab Nottingham encourages:

- Avoid situations where staff and an individual child/vulnerable adult are working completely unobserved. e.g. if assistance is required when toileting/providing personal care, 2 staff should be present (of the same sex where possible).
- If any form of physical manual support is required, two staff should always be present.
- Where a mixed group of male and female members are involved in an activity, male and female staff should be present

Phab Nottingham does not permit the following:

- Staff driving members in their own vehicle
- Staff meeting members outside of officially organised Phab activities
- Staff or members engaging in rough, physical, sexually provocative games or horseplay.
- Staff sharing a room with a member alone.
- Allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Use or allowing the use of inappropriate language.
- Making sexually suggestive comments to a member/staff, even in jest.
- Allowing allegations made by a member to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Doing things of a personal nature for children/vulnerable adults that they can reasonably do for themselves.

Phab Nottingham voluntarily publishes its safeguarding policy on its website for public consumption.

DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is [REDACTED]. His contact details are below:

Phone: [REDACTED]; **Email:** [REDACTED]

APPENDIX 1: INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Section 1. Details of the victim of the incident (member/volunteer) and their parent/carer:		
Name of victim:		
Sex:	Age:	Date of Birth:
Parent/Legal Guardian's Name(s):		
Home Address (including postcode):		
Section 2. Your Details		
Your Name:	Your Position:	Date and Time of Incident:
Section 3. Your Report:		
I am <i>(delete as appropriate)</i> :		
(a) Responding to my own concerns/an incident I witnessed (b) Responding to concerns raised by someone else/an incident witnessed by someone else	If responding on behalf of someone else, please provide their name, contact details and position within Phab Nottingham:	
Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates and other relevant information such as a description of any injuries, whether you are recording fact, opinion or hearsay: Date: Location: Time:		
The victim (member/volunteer)'s account, if it can be given, of what happened and how it happened:		
Please provide details of the person alleged to have caused the incident/injury including, where possible, their name, address and date of birth (or approximate age):		
Were any staff from Phab Nottingham required to use any physical force/restraint?	If yes, please provide an exact description of actions taken and explanation as to why you believe it to have been necessary and proportionate.	
Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident(s):		
Have you spoken to the parents/carers?	If yes, please provide details of what was said:	
Have you spoken to the victim?	If yes, please provide details of what was said:	
Have you spoken to the person the allegations are being made against: If no, please do not approach them	If yes, please provide details of what was said:	
Please provide details of further action taken to date:		
Have you informed the following? Children's / Adults social care: Police: Phab Nottingham Safeguarding Officer:	Please provide the name of those contacted and their contact details:	

Data Protection

The Charity and all the relevant authorities will each use the information in this form (together with other information it obtains) to investigate the alleged incident and to take whatever action is deemed appropriate. This may involve disclosing certain information to a number of organisations and individuals; these may include Government authorities such as the Police, Social Services, the Courts and/or Probation Service and potentially to legal and other advisers involved in an investigation.

As the person completing this form, you must notify each individual who has contributed to this form (directly/indirectly) about what will happen to their information and how it may be disclosed, except to the extent that in doing so this would prejudice either the prevention or detection of a crime or the apprehension or prosecution of an offender. To discuss how to approach this, please contact the DSL (details below).

Your Signature:

Date:

Time:

What to do next:

This report should be emailed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible: and followed-up with a phone call.