

## **WARWICK VOLUNTEERS**

### **SAFEGUARDING POLICY and GUIDELINES**

#### **Contents**

<b>SECTION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>SECTION 1: SAFEGUARDING POLICY</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Roles in Warwick Volunteers	3
1.3 Your responsibilities as a Volunteer	3
1.4 Responsibilities NOT in the Volunteer's Role	3
1.5 Responsibilities of Warwick Volunteers	3
<b>SECTION 2: CHILDREN</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Definitions	4
2.2 Types of Abuse	4
2.3 The Internet and Child Abuse	5
<b>SECTION 3: VULNERABLE ADULTS</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1 Definitions	5
3.2 Types of Abuse	6
<b>SECTION 4: WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A SAFEGUARDING ISSUE</b>	<b>6</b>
4.1 Responding to Allegations, Reports or Admissions about Abuse	
4.2 Giving Advice	7
4.3 Communicating Safeguarding Issues or Concerns	7
4.4 Dealing with potentially URGENT or EMERGENCY situations	7
<b>SECTION 5: BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>SECTION 6: CONTACT DETAILS</b>	<b>9</b>

## SECTION 1: SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility; everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. This document provides guidelines on what you should do to keep children and vulnerable adults safe from abuse and neglect. As a volunteer you might observe signs of abuse or neglect, or changes in behaviour which may indicate they are being abused or neglected. It is important that you are aware of what to look for and what to do if you are concerned that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk.

If your volunteering role involves working with children or vulnerable adults, Warwick Volunteers (WV) will provide basic training via the online Safeguarding Essentials course which complements the guidelines in this Policy. The charity or organisation with whom you volunteer may also provide training if appropriate. You should make yourself aware of the name and contact details for the charity/organisations safeguarding lead and familiarise yourself with their safeguarding policy at the start of your volunteer placement. WV staff are trained to offer you any support you need to recognise and act upon any safeguarding issues that may happen whilst you are volunteering. This Safeguarding Policy is a set of guidelines which apply to all WV staff, volunteers and link organisations. Volunteers are also advised to read the WV Volunteering Policy.

Although there is different legislation for safeguarding children and safeguarding vulnerable adults, when responding to safeguarding needs most of the principles and procedures are the same. Section 2 of this policy refers to legislation and guidelines for safeguarding children and Section 3 to legislation and guidelines for safeguarding vulnerable adults. However, the procedures to be followed if you are worried about a safeguarding issue are the same for both groups of people and are set out in Section 4.

The safety of the child or vulnerable adult and other volunteers is vitally important to WV and the procedures we follow to protect them are:

- a) We assess the role requirements of all volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults and ensure that volunteers receive safeguarding and project specific training.
- b) We undertake a Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure for all roles where a check is permitted under DBS legislation. The DBS check is free to the volunteer and is administered by WV. If the DBS check contains Disclosure information, a process to assess the volunteer's suitability to volunteer with children or vulnerable adults is followed. **The volunteer is not allowed to begin their placement until the suitability assessment has been completed.**
- c) If a volunteer has lived abroad for six months or more in the last five years, they will be asked to provide WV with a Certificate of Good Conduct (CoGC) from the country(ies) where they have lived. Reasonable expenses relating to obtaining the CoGC or translating it into English will be reimbursed by WV. **If a CoGC is required, the volunteer is not allowed to begin their placement until both the DBS check and the COGC have been received.**
- d) For activities delivered through an external partner organisation, WV will ask the partner organisation to determine the requirement for a DBS Enhanced Disclosure and Certificate of Good Conduct based on their risk assessment of the role and the eligibility of the role under DBS legislation.
- e) WV will uphold the WV Safeguarding Policy at all times and ensure that all volunteers abide by it whilst on their placement.

## **1.2 Roles in Warwick Volunteers**

- a) VOLUNTEER – as defined by the WV Volunteering Policy, the person who undertakes the voluntary placement.
- b) VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR – employed member of WV staff. Provides support for the Project Leaders and Executive Committee Members.
- c) WV MANAGER – employed member of WV staff and manager of the whole project.
- d) WV STEERING COMMITTEE – a joint committee of University of Warwick staff, student representatives and community partners, responsible for oversight and strategic development of Warwick Volunteers' activities.
- e) DESIGNATED PERSON FOR SAFEGUARDING – the person responsible at the University of Warwick for safeguarding.

## **1.3 Your responsibilities as a volunteer:**

- a) Complete the WV Safeguarding Essentials online training session course if required for your project.
- b) On arrival at your volunteering location e.g. school, find out about their local safeguarding policies and who is responsible in their organisation for Safeguarding.
- c) Recognise, identify and report signs of abuse, neglect, disclosures and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and vulnerable adults.
- d) Respond appropriately to any allegations or disclosures by following the procedure set out in section 4 of this policy.
- e) Give highest priority to the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
- f) Recognise your individual responsibility for your own safety and that of others with whom you work.
- g) Complete a Childcare Disqualification check if requested by the school where you are volunteering.
- h) Respect appropriate methods of dealing with private and confidential information<sup>1</sup>.

## **1.4 Responsibilities NOT in the volunteer's role:**

- a) Assessing the accuracy of an allegation.
- b) Contacting Social Services in the case of an allegation.
- c) Personal responsibility for the physical and/or emotional welfare of any child or vulnerable adult with whom they work.

## **1.5 Responsibilities of Warwick Volunteers:**

- a) Providing training to volunteers which equips them with the appropriate knowledge and skills for their volunteering role.
- b) Ensuring that the Volunteer Development Co-ordinators are appropriately trained in safeguarding issues.
- c) Providing private and confidential support and advice for Project Leaders and volunteers, through the Volunteer Development Co-ordinators.
- d) Addressing safeguarding issues swiftly and efficiently, in accordance with the University of Warwick's Safeguarding Policy.
- e) Ensuring all stakeholders are aware of this policy and the robustness of safeguarding procedures in place at the University of Warwick.

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<sup>1</sup> See WV Volunteering Policy.

## SECTION 2: CHILDREN

### 2.1 Definitions

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.

### 2.2 Types of abuse

The legislation which covers safeguarding children is The Children Act 2004.

Guidelines issued by the Department for Education *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)*<sup>2</sup> identifies four main categories of abuse and neglect: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Each category has its own specific warning signs and the information given below briefly describes what to look for. The guidance is reproduced from HM Government guidance '*What to do if...*' (2015)<sup>3</sup>

**Physical Abuse** is deliberately physically hurting a child. It might take a variety of different forms, including hitting, pinching, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating a child.

Some indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained: bruises or cuts; burns or scalds; or bite marks.

**Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child. It is also sometimes called psychological abuse and it can have severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. Emotional abuse may involve serious bullying, including online bullying through social networks, online games or mobile phones – by a child's peers.

Some indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, giving the child the 'cold shoulder'
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons

**Sexual Abuse** is any sexual activity with a child. You should be aware that many children and young people who are victims of sexual abuse do not recognise themselves as such. A child may not understand what is happening and may not even understand that it is wrong. Sexual abuse can have a long-term impact on mental health. It may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside clothing. It may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in the production of sexual images, forcing children to look at sexual images or watch sexual activities, encouraging children to

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<sup>2</sup> Working together to safeguard children, DfE; [www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children)

<sup>3</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What\\_to\\_do\\_if\\_you\\_re\\_worried\\_a\\_child\\_is\\_being\\_abused.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Some indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games

**Neglect** is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, supervision or shelter. It is likely to result in the serious impairment of a child's health or development. Children who are neglected often also suffer from other types of abuse and while you may be concerned about a child, neglect is not always straightforward to identify.

Some indicators of neglect:

- Children who are hungry or dirty
- Children who do not have adequate clothing e.g. not having a winter coat
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care

## **2.3 The Internet, Social Media and Child Abuse**

Volunteers should be aware that child abuse occurs over the Internet and through social media. They can be used in such a way that is emotionally abusive and can even, in some circumstances, lead to being physically or sexually abusive. Below is a general, but not comprehensive, list of ways in which the Internet and social media can be used for child abuse.

- a) The distribution of child pornography.
- b) Some adults pose as children in 'chat rooms'. This sometimes leads to a development of trust and the sharing of personal information and of contact details. This can then be used to arrange meetings that are potentially abusive.
- c) Pornographic materials can be sent to and shared with children.
- d) Computer technology has a wide production and communication capability.

Volunteers should be aware of these issues posed by technology since a Disclosure may be in reference to these methods of abuse. All forms of abuse are damaging to children and should be treated with the utmost care and attention.

## **SECTION 3: VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **3.1 Definitions**

A vulnerable adult is someone over the age of 18 who receives a health, personal or social care service from a professional. Personal services would include, for example help with financial matters, feeding, washing or dressing. Following amendments to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, adults are no longer deemed vulnerable because of their personal attributes, characteristics or abilities. Volunteer roles with this group may not be eligible for a DBS check, but volunteers nevertheless should be responsible for identifying and reporting signs of abuse (see section 4).

### 3.2 Types of Abuse

Abuse may consist of a single or repeated act. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or 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.

The following examples of the type of form abuse can take are contained in the Government guidance *No Secrets*, (para 2.5)<sup>4</sup> Abuse can take the form of:

**Physical abuse**, including hitting, pushing, kicking, misuse of restraint or inappropriate sanctions

**Sexual abuse**, including sexual assault or acts to which the adult did not, or could not, consent

**Psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats, deprivation of contact, humiliation, intimidation, coercion, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services.

**Financial or material abuse**, including exploitation and pressure in connection to wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions

**Neglect or acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, withholding of medication or adequate nutrition and failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services.

**Discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist and other forms of harassment.

### SECTION 4: WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT A SAFEGUARDING ISSUE

Having read the information in Sections 2 and 3, if you have ANY cause for concern that a person on your volunteering project is being abused, it is essential that the issue is addressed immediately and any allegation is dealt with by a professional.

It is NOT your responsibility to assess the accuracy of an allegation, but you must gather and pass on any information.

There are several ways in which you, as a volunteer, may become aware of abuse and you should be alert to them. They are as follows:

- a) An allegation made by the child or vulnerable adult directly to you (a Disclosure)
- b) By reports or allegations made by another person
- c) By observing signs or indications of abuse
- d) By an admission from an abuser

Observing signs or indicators of abuse is covered in Sections 2 and 3 of this policy.

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<sup>4</sup> *No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care*, Department of Health, 2010

## 4.1 Responding to Allegations, Reports or Admissions about Abuse

Definition of Terms:

LEADING QUESTIONS: questions that lead someone to respond in a particular way or focus on a certain set of answers. e.g. "Is someone at home hurting you?"<sup>5</sup>

CLOSED QUESTIONS: questions that allow or require only a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

OPEN QUESTIONS: questions that cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' and lead more into full answers. e.g. "What do you like to do in your free time?"

- a) Stay calm, objective and be non-judgemental, it is your role to listen and ask questions which will provide information for professionals.
- b) Talk to the person privately and sensitively to find out if there is anything that is worrying them. DO NOT ask LEADING QUESTIONS or suggest to them that you are suspicious of abuse.
- c) Keep questions to a minimum and allow the person to talk. If asking any questions avoid using CLOSED QUESTIONS.
- d) To avoid asking questions, repeat what they say back to them. Allow them to confirm what they have said or correct anything they want to change.
- e) Be sure that you are absolutely clear what they have told you (regardless of whether or not it is a full Disclosure).
- f) DO NOT promise to keep any secrets. If you have a concern, explain that you would like to get some confidential advice yourself. If appropriate, explain who it is you may want to get advice from. Listen to their concerns about this if they have any, but remember that you MUST report any concerns you have.
- g) Make a written note of your concerns and be prepared to share this with the appropriate parties. The written note needs to list the date and facts and avoid any speculation or opinion.

## 4.2 Giving advice

There are free professional advice services available by telephone which a child or vulnerable adult may call if they wish to discuss abuse:

- a) Childline: 0800 1111  
Childline is a free advice service for children. You should emphasise to child that the calls are free and that no call will appear on any telephone bill. However, you should remind the child that calls from mobile phones are NOT free, even to these numbers.
- b) Action on Elder Abuse: 0808 808 8141  
Action on Elder Abuse offers a free and in confidence helpline for older people who have experienced abuse.

Any volunteer who feels a need to recommend a person to use these advice lines should communicate their concerns to the Project Leader or Volunteer Development Coordinator as well.

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<sup>5</sup> This implies three things: 1) that there is a serious problem, 2) That the problem is at home, 3) That the problem is that the child is being hurt (abused). It leads the conversation down a narrow field of investigation. The question is also a CLOSED QUESTION.

### 4.3 Communicating Safeguarding Issues or Concerns

WV provides a support structure for all Project Leaders and their volunteers, through the WV staff. These people are well trained in child protection and there to provide private and confidential advice and support.

At the start of your volunteering project, you should familiarise yourself with the local volunteering contact (e.g. at the school) and the local policies. If you are concerned about a safeguarding issue, you should report it directly to this person.

#### 4.3.1 Action that the volunteer should NOT take

You are not personally responsible for providing any form of protection or respite from an abusive or potentially abusive situation. THE VOLUNTEER MUST NOT PUT HIMSELF INTO A POSITION OF UNNECESSARY RISK.

- a) You must NOT contact the friends or family of the child or disclose any information to them.
- b) You are NOT responsible for contacting Social Services.
- c) You must NOT communicate with, nor confront any individual(s) accused of abuse.

#### 4.3.2 If you suspects a colleague of abuse

- a) Communicate your concerns to the Project Leader immediately.
- b) If the concern is with regards to the Project Leader then you should report directly to the Volunteer Development Co-ordinator, who will deal with the issue.
- c) In the event that this is not possible, you must direct you concerns to the WV Manager.

### 4.4 Dealing with potentially URGENT OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

If you suspect that the child or vulnerable adult is IN IMMEDIATE DANGER OF HARM the situation should be treated as an EMERGENCY.

- a) Do not, under any circumstances, confront or contact the accused, or talk to friends and/or family of the abused
- b) If possible, speak to the safeguarding contact in the organisation where you are volunteering and follow their instructions.
- c) Contact the Volunteer Development Coordinator or the Manager of Warwick Volunteers during office hours and tell them what has happened.
- d) If it is not possible to contact the people listed above, and the child or vulnerable adult is in IMMEDIATE DANGER, email [safeguarding@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@warwick.ac.uk) as soon as you can, but note that a report sent to this email account **is not** an alternative to calling the Emergency Services; if a child or vulnerable adult is in **immediate** danger, call the Emergency Services first.

If the EMERGENCY SERVICES are required **on campus**, contact the University's security team on 024 76 52222. This telephone number is manned at all times. You can also dial 999 from a University **landline** telephone, but please do not use your mobile to call 999 as the security team will not be alerted to the situation.

If the EMERGENCY SERVICES are required to attend **off campus**, dial 999.



## SECTION 5: BEHAVIOUR GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers who work with children and vulnerable adults have a responsibility to ensure their safety in any Warwick Volunteers activity. Project-specific guidelines will be provided as part of the project training. All training will be reviewed annually.

### 5.1 Volunteers should:

- a) Set examples of appropriate behaviour and should avoid using sarcasm, discrimination, negative criticism, labelling, and so on.
- b) Positively encourage good behaviour and discourage inappropriate behaviour.
- c) Show respect for people at all times and be sensitive to the feelings of individuals.
- d) Should treat all children and vulnerable adults fairly at all times.
- e) Abide by the University's Equal Opportunities policy at all times.

### 5.2 Volunteers should NOT:

- a) Physically punish any child or vulnerable adult that they are working with.
- b) Humiliate or belittle any child or vulnerable adult
- c) Use inappropriate language and humour or act in any way that could be considered offensive or inappropriate.
- d) Deprive any child or vulnerable adult of food or other necessities, nor unreasonably deny them access to basic facilities for health and hygiene.
- e) Put themselves or any child or vulnerable adult into a position of risk. This includes being left alone with children or vulnerable adults unnecessarily or making any contact with a child or vulnerable adult outside the project. Additional project-specific training will be provided for any projects that are likely to include one-to-one contact.
- f) Attempt to make any contact with a child or vulnerable adult outside of the project structure, including taking or sharing contact details including social media links.
- g) Take photographs of children.

### 5.3 Disciplinary Procedures:

All WV volunteers are subject to the University's Regulation 23 at all times whilst on a voluntary placement and it is their responsibility to familiarise themselves with these.

In addition to this, you will need to familiarise yourself with the disciplinary procedures of any link organisations and ensure that you work within them.

## SECTION 6: CONTACT DETAILS

Below are the main contact details that a volunteer will need in the case of any queries or problems that may arise with regards to child protection. Contact details for each individual Project Leader will depend on the project.

Position	Name	Telephone	Email
Volunteer Development Co-ordinator	Kim Waite	024 7657 3066	Kim.Waite@warwick.ac.uk
Volunteer Development Co-ordinator	Sarah Newell	024 7657 5744	Sarah.L.Newell@warwick.ac.uk
WV Manager	Helen Blunt	024 7657 2821	H.E.Blunt@warwick.ac.uk
Designated Person for Safeguarding at the University of Warwick	Director of the People Group		<a href="mailto:safeguarding@warwick.ac.uk">safeguarding@warwick.ac.uk</a>
Emergency Services required on campus contact	University of Warwick	024 76 522222	

	Security		
Emergency Services required off campus	Emergency Services	999	

Address for all enquiries: Warwick Volunteers, c/o SUHQ, University of Warwick,  
Coventry, CV4 7AL

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