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Safeguarding Policy

This Policy will enable Foresight to demonstrate its commitment to keeping safe the children and vulnerable adults with whom it works alongside. Foresight acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

It is important to have the policy and procedures in place so that staff, volunteers, children and vulnerable adults and carers, and management committee can work to prevent abuse and know what to do in the event of abuse.

The Policy Statement and Procedures have been drawn up in order to enable Foresight to:

- promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm, abuse and coercion occurring.
- to ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse is supported.
- and to stop that abuse occurring.

The Policy and Procedures relate to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Children are defined as:

- People aged 17 and under

Vulnerable adults are defined as:

- People aged 18 or over
- Who are receiving or may need community care services because of learning, physical or mental disability, age, or illness
- Who are or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

The policy applies to all staff, including senior managers, management committee members, trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students and anyone working on behalf of Foresight.

The protection of children and vulnerable adults is the concern of everyone in a position to help. Staff and volunteers who are in direct contact with the child/vulnerable adult and their families should have an awareness of the local child and vulnerable adult's protection procedures and know how to make a referral. Any information that Foresight becomes aware of that indicates a child and vulnerable

adult is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, will be shared with the appropriate agency. All staff and volunteers who are in direct contact with the children/vulnerable adults and their families must submit to an enhanced DBS disclosure. All staff/volunteer will receive training on these issues as well as the basic recognition of harm or possible harm to children and vulnerable adults.

It is essential that whenever an individual working with Foresight becomes concerned that a child and vulnerable adult may be suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm they discuss their concerns with the nominated member of the committee responsible for child and vulnerable adult protection, immediately. Following this, a decision will be made about making a referral to one of the investigate agencies, i.e. Police, Protection Team or the local Social Services Care Team.

Referrals will only be made to the Police or Social Services by making a referral: -

When making a referral, you will need to have clear information of the concern:

- Factual information about the child/vulnerable adult and his/her family.
- Be clear about what your involvement is with the child/vulnerable adult and their family
- What is the source of your concern? Is it something you have seen, something the child/vulnerable adult has said? Is it based on the concern of others and if so, whom?
- Why are you concerned? Is it based on the child/vulnerable adult behaviour, an injury, what the child/vulnerable adult said? Has the concern developed over time or just today?
- What evidence, if any, have you to support your concern? This may include what the child/vulnerable adult has said to you directly. If so – are you aware of anyone else the child/vulnerable adult have spoken to?
- Whom do you believe to be the source of harm/potential harm to the child/vulnerable adult?
- Are there other children/vulnerable adults in the family or other children/vulnerable adults about whom you have concerns?
- In your opinion does this child/vulnerable adult need protection and, if so why?

Always record the reason for your concern and any action taken prior to your referral.
Always ensure your referral is followed up in writing.

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Referrals

If it is decided that it is necessary to make a referral to the Police or Social Services there are key points to remember:

- Record all details as soon as possible
- Refer promptly and in line with your policy
- Give all relevant information as detailed on the “Safeguarding Policy” but do not delay making your referral if you do not have all these details.
- Record date and time of referral
- Send a referral to Social Services within 24 hours
- Social Services recommend that you do not contact the parents at the time of referral
- Comfort the child and vulnerable adult but do not make any attempt to interrogate

Good Practice in Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedures

- Ensure that all staff/volunteers know the responsible member of the committee to whom they should report their concerns, and who can be available to discuss these
- Keep records of all incidents giving dates, times and details
- Review all records at least 3 monthly
- Ensure all records are securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR

- Ensure that all volunteers/staff receive some basic training in child and vulnerable adult protection
- Remind volunteers/staff regularly to be vigilant, report suspicions and concerns promptly, or volunteer information
- Include child and vulnerable adult protection issues at all team meetings
- Encourage staff/volunteers to report the child and vulnerable adult's actual words in the case of a disclosure but never to interrogate him/her
- Ensure that you have a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and that it is regularly reviewed and updated
- Emphasise the need for confidentiality in all child and vulnerable adult protection cases
- Remember that there are many professionals around you who will be willing to give advice and assistance
- You have a duty to ensure the safety of all child and vulnerable adult in your care

Recognising Abuse

Some general indicators that MAY cause concern

Emotional Abuse

All abuse involves emotional abuse:

- Slow development in relation to child and vulnerable adult of the same age
- Over reaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation and/or self-mutilation
- Fear of project/home contact
- Extremes of passivity or aggression
- Neurotic behaviour

It is important to remember that many of these indicators, taken individually, can often have explanations, which are not linked to abuse.

Other pointers to possible abuse:

- Reluctance to join in with activities that the child and vulnerable adult previously enjoyed
- Unprovoked aggression towards other children and vulnerable adults
- Change in language used e.g. swearing when the child and vulnerable adult has not done so before
- Becoming secretive
- Becoming unreasonably attached to a particular member of staff/volunteer
- Bullying
- Being bullied

It is vital that you remain alert to all issues of child and vulnerable adult protection, but remember that the presence of one indicator alone is no evidence of child and vulnerable adult abuse.

Recognising Abuse

Some general indicators that MAY cause concern

Physical Abuse:

- Any physical injury which is not clearly related to the child and vulnerable adult's explanation should be viewed with concern
- A collection of bruises that form a line or circle, fingertip bruising, stick or strap marks

- Difficulty in moving or reluctance to move an arm or leg may indicate a fracture or dislocation
- Recurrent injuries such as new bruises over old
- Failure of the parent or carer to seek medical assistance for the child and vulnerable adult following an injury
- Refusal to discuss the cause of an injury or inconsistent/conflicting explanations of injury
- Unwillingness to go home or arriving very early
- Unwillingness to remove sweater/cardigan
- Withdrawal or inappropriate fear when approached by an adult

Sexual Abuse:

- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child and vulnerable adult's age
- Sudden and inappropriate modesty
- Discipline/behaviour problems
- Not reaching their potential
- Soiling/wetting the bed
- Recurrent abdominal pain
- Tiredness

Neglect:

- Low self esteem
- Destructive tendencies
- Change of personal hygiene
- Dressed in unclean clothing
- Tiredness
- Change of finances
- Hunger
- Frequently late or absent from school/community centre
- Has untreated medical problems

Exploitation:

- Being secretive about who they are talking to and where they are going
- Often returning home late or staying out all night
- Sudden changes in their appearance
- Becoming emotionally volatile
- Using sexual language that you wouldn't expect them to know
- Engaging less with their usual friends
- Appearing controlled by their phone
- Switching to new screens when using technology

Radicalisation:

- Isolating themselves from family and friends
- Talking as if from a scripted speech
- Unwillingness or inability to discuss their views
- A sudden disrespect attitude towards others
- Increased levels of anger
- Increased secretiveness, especially around internet use

Child and Vulnerable Adult Assessment Order

Either the local authority or the NSPCC can apply for a child and vulnerable adult assessment order. This gives 7 days during which the child and vulnerable adult can be assessed. This might be important in a situation where the parents do not co-operate but where there is an emergency situation.

Protection Conference

When it has been established that there is evidence suggesting abuse or neglect, a protection conference is arranged. Professionals involved with the child and vulnerable adult or family join together in a multi-professional discussion of written evidence. The chairperson decides whether it is further appropriate to invite the parents to attend: and, in any case, the parents must be informed that the conference is taking place. It is a requirement that local authorities work towards parents attending at least part of, if not the whole conference.

The Child Protection Plan

Assessment

This will involve setting in motion procedures through which to assess the child and the family situation to see how things are.

Protection of the Child

This should involve either:

- A care order – the child will then be taken into the care of the local authority's social services department (in a foster home or community child's home); or
- A supervisors order – the local authority will support and supervise the family and the child in the home setting for one year.

Regular Review

The child protection plan is reviewed in a review conference attended by the multi-professional team involved with the family, and perhaps also by the parents. This will take place every 6 months or more often. The child is de-registered if the situation changes and the child no longer requires support or supervised protection.

Child Protection and Schools

When young children start or are already attending a nursery school, nursery class or primary school social services are required to notify the head teacher if a child's name is put on the child protection register. This should state:

- Whether the child is subject to a care order.
- The name of the key worker on the case
- What information may be known to the parents

Prevent Strategy

Foresight embeds the Prevent strategy throughout our organisation to prevent counter-terrorism. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as the need to "prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

This strategy is based on four areas of work:

- Pursue to stop terrorist attacks
- Prevent to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- Protect to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

Our Aims of Prevent

At Foresight we:

- Raise awareness within the centre of the threat from violent extremist groups and the risks for people.
- Provide information about what can cause violent extremism, about preventative actions taking place locally and nationally and where we can get additional information and advice.
- Help children and vulnerable adults, learners, volunteers and staff members to understand the positive contribution they can make to empower people to create communities that are more resilient to extremism, and protecting the wellbeing of particular individuals or groups who may be vulnerable to being drawn into violent extremist activity.
- Provide advice on managing risks and responding to incidents locally, nationally or internationally that might have an impact on the community.
- Will follow the channel process and refer any concerns to the local Channel panel that will be completed by our Safeguarding Officer/Prevent Lead.

Our designated Safeguarding Officer is Paul Silvester and can be contacted on 01472 269666.

This information is also available in other formats, languages and picture format upon request.

Authorisation of Policy

Name: Paul Silvester

Role: Chief Officer

Signature: 

Date: 20/01/2022