

Safeguarding Policy

Version 2025 · Effective 7 April 2025

Keira's Kingdom is committed to maintaining support to all persons it meets, by providing a safe and caring environment for everyone.

It acknowledges that some people can be the victim of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. It will not tolerate abuse in any form and commits to ensuring that it does not take place.

Where any Keira's Kingdom support staff, subcontractors or volunteers come into contact with abuse they are committed to supporting victims and ensuring that abuse is reported and acted upon. This Policy adheres to our support work and events.

Keira's Kingdom are committed to:

- Ensuring that vulnerable persons of whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- Listening to and respecting people as well as promoting their welfare and protection.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all the members within the Group.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Supporting those affected by abuse.
- Maintaining good links with the statutory organisations and authorities and other organisations.

Definition

Vulnerable people are those who may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable people are those who are open to exploitation because they may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by others.

Abuse can include physical, financial, material, sexual, psychological, discriminatory, emotional abuse and neglect.

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone.

How to identify abuse

Abuse & neglect

Somebody may abuse or neglect a person, by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. It is common for vulnerable people to be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill-health to a child they are looking after. This situation is known as Fabricated and/or Induced Illness (previously referred to as Munchausen's Syndrome by proxy).

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person to cause severe and persistent effects on a child's emotional development. This may involve conveying to a vulnerable person that they are worthless or unloved and inadequate.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing someone to take part in inappropriate sexual activities whether or not the person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact or non-contact activities or encouraging children or a vulnerable person to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the health or development. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to basic emotional needs.

Organised abuse

This may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related and non-related persons. The abusers concerned may be acting together to abuse or may be using an institutional framework or a position of authority to recruit children for abuse.

Financial abuse

The misuse of a person's funds and assets; obtaining property and funds without his/her knowledge and full consent, or in the case of an elderly person who is not competent, not in his/her best interests.

This is also known as material abuse. Financial or material abuse can involve the theft or misuse of a person's money or property.

It includes behaviours such as:

- Misusing a power of attorney
- Persuading, tricking, or threatening the adult out of money, property, or possessions (and this includes attempts to do any of these)
- Cashing pension or other cheques without authorization
- Use of a person's money for purposes other than what was intended

What should you do if you believe you are a victim or you know of someone who is a victim of abuse?

Quite simply, report it.

The designated Safeguarding Officer for Keira's Kingdom is Michelle Conway.

Contact: [07720 549363](tel:07720549363) or [07940 556115](tel:07940556115)

Email: keiraskingdom@outlook.com

For adults over 18

If the adult is in immediate danger please contact the police on [999](tel:999) or [101](tel:101) if the adult has disclosed upcoming danger.

The contact number for adult safeguarding is [0161 217 6029](tel:01612176029) and out of hours [0161 718 2118](tel:01617182118). The lead safeguarding officer will report the safeguarding.

The designated Safeguarding Officer at Stockport Council can be located at: The Safeguarding Children Unit, Sanderling Building, Bird Hall Lane, Cheadle Heath, Stockport, SK3 0RF. Telephone: [0161 474 5657/8/9](tel:01614745657). Email: cpu@stockport.gov.uk

How to recognise signs of abuse

People who suffer abuse may behave in a variety of ways that can be a signal for help. The following may be signs of abuse:

Physical signs of abuse

Any injury that does not fit with the explanation given or within what would be considered normal for a person of that age, should be treated suspiciously. This includes any self-inflicted injuries.

Neglect

Not seeking medical attention should also give cause for concern. Lack of food, lack of appropriate clothing, lack of supervision or protection or being left alone.

Emotional abuse

Lack of confidence and self-esteem, being withdrawn and anxious, being demanding and attention seeking, poor communication skills.

Sexual abuse

Sexual knowledge inappropriate for the age of the child/young person, sexualized behaviour, play or drawings.

Responding to allegations of abuse

Under no circumstances should a support staff or volunteer at Keira's Kingdom carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse.

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- Make the lead safeguarding officer aware of their concerns
- Be prepared to share their concerns as part of subsequent investigations
- Make sure that the original allegations are actioned and have outcomes

Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than the lead safeguarding officer, who is experienced enough to deal with the allegations made.

A written record of the concerns should be made and kept in a safe place.

It is of course the right of any individual as a citizen to seek further advice or make a direct referral to the child protection agencies, although the group hope that its members will use this procedure.

If however the individual with the concern feels that they have not been dealt with fairly appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with Keira's Kingdom and the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct.

The role of the appointed safeguarding officer is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the Social Services Department.

It is Social Services task to investigate the matter.

Allegations of physical injury or neglect

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, the group will:

- Contact Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury, or if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- After having contacted Social Services, will not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting) encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of injury.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Social Services direct for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Officer will:

Contact the Social Services department's Duty Social Worker for Children and Families or the Police Child Protection team direct. They will not speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

Appointment, support, supervision and training of leaders and volunteers

The group will ensure all volunteers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in government guidelines. All volunteers with substantial access to vulnerable people (for example supervising sessions or having the potential to work one-one with young people) will be DBS checked.

Keira's Kingdom will ensure that any outside workers have had an adequate DBS check.

Supervision of group activities

Keira's Kingdom will provide details of the supervision for each specific activity, requesting parental consent for any day trip activities where appropriate. The group will run activities with a ratio of at least one adult to every six children for children's activities.

When working with the under 7s, sessions will last for less than two hours unless the child is accompanied by a parent/other relative/carer who is responsible for supervising that child. Session leaders will make it clear to adults accompanying children under 7 that they are responsible for the welfare of the child who they are accompanying. The Trustees will also make sure that appropriate insurance is in place for the planned activities.

The group's good practice procedures

Adult-child ratios

The organisation will ensure that the minimum number of active adults to children by age is as follows:

- 0-2: 1 adult to 3 children
- 2-3: 1 adult to 4 children

- 3-8: 1 adult to 8 children
- Over 8s: 1 leader to first 8 followed by 1 adult to 2 children

Number of active adults

The organisation will ensure that there will be more than one “active” adult with any group. By “active” we mean someone who voluntarily opts into and accepts the leadership of the member in charge. For a mixed group there should be at least 1 adult male and 1 adult female.

For “adult” we mean anyone assigned to or volunteering for the work who is over 18. 16 to 18 year olds can form part of the supervisory staff but will themselves be supervised by an adult over 18. All activities will have a nominated lead adult.

Time alone

Adults will not be left alone with individual children for long periods. Where possible, adults requiring seeing children on a 1:1 basis should remain in view of colleagues or do so in a room with the door open. Children should be encouraged to leave activities in pairs or groups or have an adult to collect them.

It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or are disabled. These tasks will only be carried out with the full understanding and written consent of parents and the children involved. There is a need to be responsive to a person's reactions. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.

Sporting events

If any of the following occur, you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a player
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner

- If a player appears to be sexually aroused by your actions
- If a player misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done

Guidelines for use of photographic filming equipment at sporting events

There is evidence that some people have used sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled sportspeople in vulnerable positions.

Keira's Kingdom does not allow the photographing of vulnerable adults and children at their events. Please report to the safeguarding lead if you feel an adult or child is breaking this rule.

Videoing as a coaching aid: Videoing is not permitted at any of Keira's Kingdom events or activities without prior consent from the persons involved.

Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers

Keira's Kingdom recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children in some way and that all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

When undertaking pre-selection checks the following should be included:

- All volunteers/staff that have access to vulnerable people will complete an application form. The application form will elect information about an applicants' past and a self-disclosure about any criminal record. Consent will be obtained from the applicant to seek information from the DBS.
- Two confidential references will be obtained including one regarding previous work with children. These references will be taken up and confirmed by telephone contact and evidence of identity (Passport or driving license with photo) must also be provided.

Related documents

Stockport Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Policies and Procedures Handbook: <http://www.safeguardingchildreninstockport.org.uk/handbook.html> (section 2.24).

Further national guidance on safeguarding and 'duty of care' obligations is contained within:

- The Education Act (2002) Section 175
- The Children Act (1989 and amendments)
- The Children Act 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) Scheme
- The Cabinet Office guidance on DBS checks for volunteers
- DCSF guidance
- CSCI guidance

Available via: www.gov.uk

Review history

- Checked and amended on 14 April 2021 — M. Conway, CEO
- Checked and amended on 14 April 2022 — M. Conway, CEO
- Checked and updated on 14 April 2023 — M. Conway, CEO
- Checked and updated on 7 April 2024 — M. Conway, CEO
- Checked and updated on 7 April 2025 — M. Conway, CEO