



## **Safeguarding Policy for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults**

### **Statement of Intent**

All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm in all elements of their lives. Butser Education CIC is committed to working with and involving children, young people and vulnerable adults. Directors, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is always paramount when involved in activities or attending events run or supported by Butser Education CIC.

A **child** is defined as, under 18 years of age, by the Children Act 1989.

A **vulnerable adult** is defined (by the Law Commission) as a person over 18 years, who is or maybe in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is unable to take care of or protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

The aim of this policy is to

- Provide children and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of Butser Education CIC staff and volunteers; and
- Enable all staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child or vulnerable adult protection issues.

**Appendix A** provides a code of guidance for staff and volunteers.

- Butser Education CIC will strive towards best practice at all times. We will adopt and adapt our code of guidance in line with recommendations and best practice adopted by our local authority and other statutory partners.
- All Directors, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to report any concerns to their peers or line manager. Such concerns will be responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- A copy of this policy is made available to all individuals working with, for or on behalf of Butser Education CIC. Training will be offered where appropriate.

## **Policy and Procedure**

### **Recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers**

Butser Education CIC recognises that anyone may have the potential to cause harm in some way and it is therefore important and appropriate that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with Children or vulnerable adults. Butser Education CIC's recruitment process will therefore include the following:

- All volunteers and staff will complete an application form with personal details.
- Where appropriate and relevant to the role consent will be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Disclosure and Barring Service and the appropriate check will be carried out – usually an enhanced disclosure. Checks will be carried out on all front line staff and volunteers who regularly and/or frequently work alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults,

### **Records**

Individual staff and volunteers have the right to see their own records.

### **Unsolicited information from third parties**

Information will be received on a confidential basis and records kept by the Directors. The individual concerned will be informed that it has been received. Any actions taken will be after discussion at a Directors' meeting. The individual concerned would be able to appeal to the Directors in the event of any action being taken.

### **Equal Opportunities**

It is important to realise that some groups in society may be more likely to have a criminal record that will not be relevant to their ability to carry out our work, eg non payment of fines. Therefore the results of disclosure must be read carefully and sensitively considered.

### **Relevance of Criminal records**

We shall not assume that any criminal record makes someone unsuitable to work at Butser Education CIC. However given the nature and extent of our work with children and vulnerable adults it will not be appropriate to take on any staff or volunteers who are listed on the sex offenders register or where their disclosure is not clear in this area. If other offences are revealed, a judgement will be made based on an assessment of risk to the organisation as a whole.

Butser Education CIC therefore undertakes to treat all applicants for positions within the organisation fairly and undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against volunteers or paid staff who voluntarily reveal that they have a criminal conviction. Equally, it undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DSB disclosure on the basis of a criminal conviction or other information revealed.

### **Responding to suspicions or allegations**

If a member of staff or volunteer has any concerns about possible abuse or inappropriate behaviour, they have a responsibility to report it. They do not have to decide whether or not abuse or inappropriate behaviour has actually taken place.

## **Remember an individual may be at risk of further harm if suspicions or allegations go unreported**

The steps to be taken are:

1. Concerns reported to line manager and a Director
2. Record made of what has been said or seen. Include the location, time and date. (See Appendix B)
3. The Director will refer the allegation to Adult or Children's Services or other appropriate body with a copy of record (a copy to be kept by the individual reporting the concerns,) who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
4. The Director will report the matter at a meeting of the Directors.
5. The parents or carers of the client will be contacted as soon as possible, following advice from Adult or Children's Services department or other appropriate body.

Where neither the line manager nor a Director is available, contact should be made direct to Adult Services Dept or Children's services on 02392 498200 if out of office hours 0845 600 4555.

### **Concerns about conduct of member of staff or volunteer**

Where the concern relates to a member of staff or volunteer it should be reported to a Director, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the client in question, and any other client who may be at risk. If a Director is the subject of the concern, the report must be made direct to a second Director who will refer the allegation to HCC Adult or Children's services.

There may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation;
- A child protection investigation;
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily. If, following investigation and consideration, the concerns have arisen as a result of poor practice; the Directors may deal with it as a misconduct issue.

Butser Education CIC will fully support and protect any member of staff or volunteer who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adult.

### **Allegations of Previous Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member of staff who is still currently working with children or vulnerable adults). Where such an allegation is made, staff and volunteers should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the HCC Adult or Children's Services or the police.

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for **all** concerned. Information should be handled securely and sensitively and will only be disclosed following advice of Adult or Children's Services or the police. Depending on the circumstances information may need to be disclosed and shared with the following people:

- The Directors
- The parents or carer of the person who is alleged to have been abused;
- The person making the allegation;
- Adult or Children's Services and the Police;
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).

Any Butser Education CIC records of the concerns will be kept secure in accordance with data protection policy.

## **Guidelines for use of photographic or other imaging equipment**

The taking of photographs, film or other images of children or vulnerable adults is not appropriate without consent from parents or nominated guardians or carers. Staff must ensure that such consent is in place before making any such image.

When such images are properly obtained then they must be used only for the purpose consented to. Special care must be taken, when using any image in general publicity or in publications such as annual reports, press promotions or on websites. If there is doubt about the appropriate use of an image then staff **must not be tempted to use it**.

**Appendix A:** Code of guidance for staff and volunteers on protection of children and vulnerable adults

**Appendix B:** How to record concerns .

**APPENDIX A**  
**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

**Introduction**

Abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the caring support environment. There is a risk that some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people or vulnerable adults in order to harm them.

A paid worker or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and vulnerable adults and be an important link in identifying cases where they need protection.

*All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.*

**Good Practice Guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

**Good practice means:**

- always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).
- treating all children and vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- always putting the welfare of each person first, e.g. before partners or ourselves.
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with customers.
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers individuals to share in the decision-making process;
- giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults.
- securing carer consent in writing to *act in loco parentis*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- requesting written parental/carer consent if Butser Education CIC staff or volunteers are required to transport children or vulnerable adults in their cars.
- never allowing allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **HOW TO RECORD CONCERNS**

Information passed to the Adult or Children's Services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should include the following:

- The name of the child or vulnerable adult.
- Age of individual and date of birth
- Home address and telephone number
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else?
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Are behavioural signs or indirect signs evident?
- Witnesses to the incidents.
- The child's or vulnerable adults account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents/carer been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If it is not the child or vulnerable adult making the report has the individual concerned been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If yes, record details of the allegation made, including the identity of the alleged abuser, the person making the allegation and the time and date.

**Adopted: 5th August 2013**

**Reviewed: January 2018**