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Bolnhurst Stables Trust Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. Introduction

Bolnhurst Stables Trust is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use its services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse. Staff, Volunteers and Trustees of Bolnhurst Stables Trust have a duty to identify abuse and report it.

All people have a right to:

- live a life that is free from violence, fear and abuse
- be protected from harm and exploitation
- independence which may involve a degree of risk

Bolnhurst Stables Trust is committed to:

- Safeguarding and promoting the independence, wellbeing and safety of people with care and support needs
- Raising public awareness of safeguarding
- Promoting work on the prevention of abuse
- Tackling abuse in all settings
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
- Involving people who access services and carers in continual service improvements
- Applying learning from serious case reviews
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training in safeguarding

Bolnhurst Stables Trust will:

- Ensure people accessing services receive information about how to raise concerns if they suspect or experience abuse in all its forms including neglect
- Empower individuals with knowledge and understanding so that they will be aware of what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour towards them
- Enable staff and volunteers to recognise poor practice, or abuse and respond appropriately
- Raise awareness of how staff and volunteers can enable people to acknowledge they may be at risk of abuse, and signpost them to effective support
- Recognise that children may also be at risk when working with families and adults with care and support needs.
- Ensure rigorous recruitment and selection practice, and adhere to pre appointment checking requirements e.g. references will always be taken up and the Disclosure and Barring process followed where appropriate

- Ensure clear service standards are maintained and where relevant staff and volunteers receive clear operational guidance and appropriate training

2. Link with other policies

The other policies that are linked to this policy are the Whistleblowing, Policy.

3. Definitions

This policy relates to adults who may have care and support needs, whose independence and well-being would be at risk, permanently or periodically, if they did not receive appropriate support and who may be at risk of abuse, maltreatment or neglect. This includes adults with physical, sensory and mental impairments and learning disabilities however those impairments have arisen e.g. whether present from birth or due to advancing age, chronic illness or injury, and those who may or may not be eligible for community care services whose needs in relation to Safeguarding is for access to mainstream services and the police, or who are unable to protect themselves. This policy also includes any individual who may be at risk as a consequence of their role as a carer in relation to any of the above.

The duty to identify abuse and report it applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Bolnhurst Stables Trust.

4. Nominated safeguarding lead person

All Trustees of Bolnhurst Stables Trust take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements. This includes ensuring that staff have sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

The nominated person, *Sean Watkiss*, should be notified immediately by any staff or volunteers who have concerns about a vulnerable adult if:

- abuse, maltreatment or neglect are occurring or suspected
- someone has behaved towards a vulnerable adult in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

The nominated person will provide advice and support to staff unsure about how to proceed with a particular case, and take line management responsibility for the safe delivery, quality and effectiveness of Bolnhurst Stables Trust services. The nominated person is responsible for ensuring Bolnhurst Stables Trust is aware of developments in safeguarding best practice, advising on changes to policy and practice (in line with Local Safeguarding Board policies) and coordinating safeguarding audits and reporting.

5. How to raise concerns

- If someone is at immediate risk of harm, dial 999 for the police
- Contact *Sean Watkiss* by phone or email as soon as possible. A decision will be made which includes whether to make a referral, who will make the referral, and how information about the concern will be securely recorded, stored and, if appropriate shared.

- To report a concern or to get advice:
 - Bedford Borough Council: 01234 276222
 - Central Bedfordshire Council: 0300 300 8122
 - Luton Borough Council: 01582 547730
 - Out of office hours: 0300 300 8123

6. How to report an allegation made against staff or volunteers

An allegation may relate to a person who works with vulnerable adults who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a vulnerable adult;
- behaved towards a vulnerable adult in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

Any such allegation should be reported immediately to *Sean Watkiss*. The relevant local authority should be informed within one working day of all allegations (by contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer LADO).

The local authority will provide advice and guidance on how to deal with allegations against people who work with vulnerable adults and will also ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to effectively liaise with the police and other agencies to monitor the progress of cases and ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process. Support and advice will be available to individuals against whom allegations have been made.

If the Bolnhurst Stables Trust removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

7. Support for those who report abuse

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they are staff, volunteers, service users, or members of the general public should be reassured that:

- They will be taken seriously
- Their comments will usually be treated confidentially, but their concerns may be with the with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk.

8. Information sharing

Bolnhurst Stables Trust will co-operate in the sharing of appropriate information based on the principles defined below:

- Information will be shared on a need to know basis when it is in the best interest of the individual and especially to protect people with care and support needs.
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy
- Informed consent must be obtained, but if this is not possible and other adults are at risk, it may be necessary to override the requirement
- It is inappropriate to give absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse, particularly when other people may be at risk or there is a legal duty to report criminal activity.
- Any exchange of information must be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Human Rights Act 1998, and Caldicott Principles

Bolnhurst Stables Trust will keep secure records of any work undertaken under this policy including all concerns received and all referrals made, and the responses made to these concerns and referrals. We will keep a record of the decision – whether it is to share information or not - and the reasons for it. If we decide to share, then we will record what we have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

9. Being alert to signs of abuse and neglect and taking action

All staff and volunteers should be alert to the signs and triggers of abuse, maltreatment, neglect and harm. The impact of harm on a person is what is important, not who did it or what the intent was. Our aim is to protect people from abuse and avoidable harm, whether deliberate or not.

Abuse is behaviour towards a person that either deliberately or unknowingly, causes him or her harm or endangers their life or their human or civil rights. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can

be perpetuated by anyone. Abuse includes physical, sexual, psychological, financial, discriminatory abuse, organisational, modern slavery, domestic abuse, self-neglect and acts of neglect and omission.

Bolnhurst Stables Trust will ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of;

- the signs of abuse and neglect,
- how to handle a disclosure
- through induction, training and supervision.

The seriousness or extent of abuse is often not clear when anxiety is first expressed. If a member of staff or volunteer is in any way concerned, they should raise their concerns with the nominated safeguarding lead person.

Signed,



John Wood
Chair of Trustees

Reviewed in May 2024 and to be reviewed annually