



Playback Studio Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

Policy Statement

Playback Studio provides training, IAG and mentoring services to support people of all ages to learn new skills, gain confidence and maximise their potential. Playback Studio is committed to providing a learning environment where service users have the right to be safe, secure, and free from threat and protected from abuse.

Promoting safe working practices and an understanding of rights and responsibilities at work are key components of all our service activities.

The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility. Playback does not investigate individual child protection or vulnerable adult cases or referrals. Playback Studios' employees are expected to follow the procedures in this policy to ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to a child or vulnerable adult are reported to the relevant statutory agency. We will share all relevant information with the respective statutory agencies (Social Care Teams, Police and / or Channel).

At Playback we have undertaken Prevent training within our company and have carried out a Prevent risk assessment. We confirm that none of the funding received through JGA is used in funding radicalization or terrorism.

Definition of Safeguarding

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Prevent

Prevent is part of CONTEST, the Government's Counter Terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The Prevent strategy has three main objectives:

1 to respond to the ideological challenge faced from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat faced from those who promote these views

2 to provide practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support

3 to work with a wide range of sectors where there are risks of radicalization that needs to be dealt with

As part of the Prevent Strategy, Playback Studio has a duty to have "due regard to the need to prevent

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people from being drawn into terrorism”. The Prevent Duty relates to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and learners.

The Prevent Duty: Guidance for further education institutions in England and Wales (2015) defines our role as helping prevent people being drawn into terrorism (violent and non-violent extremism), which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorist exploit.

Extremism is defined in the Prevent Strategy as: “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.” This also includes calls for the death of members of the British armed forces.

Prevent also encourages promotion of the nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex; sexual orientation).

If an individual is identified as vulnerable to extremism, they would be referred to through the Channel process. This process is a multi-agency approach to identify and provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

Playback Studio understands there are two main aspects to Safeguarding, and promoting welfare of learners in the context of their work:

1. Minimising risks, and
2. Having arrangements in place to address concerns.

The aim of this policy is to define actions and behaviours expected by Playback Studio employees and volunteers to ensure all learners are safeguarded against harm and abuse. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following, all of which are accessible electronically or in hardcopy.

- E-Safety Acceptable Usage Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Health, Safety and Environment
- Whistleblowing policy
- Recruitment policy

Playback Studio recognises its duty to work with other agencies to protect vulnerable young people from harm and to respond to safeguarding concerns.

In the management of our services, the discharge of its functions, and in implementing this Policy and Procedure, Playback Studio will remain mindful of its duty of care and other legal obligations such as

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those it owes under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the Equality Act 2010, the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

If any Playback Studio employee feels someone, they have been in contact with through Playback is at risk; they are urged to escalate their concerns through;

-Contacting your local police force, this can be done by dialing 101

- Alternatively concerns can be raised through the department for education's dedicated helpline 02073407264 or through email to counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk Please note this helpline is not intended for emergency use. Should you feel an individual is in imminent danger you must contact emergency services.

In the case of learners under 18, the Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015), legislation and guidance is also relevant:

To outline the policy on responding to concerns regarding and the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults we will:

- Define roles and responsibilities with regards to Safeguarding
- Ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, contractors and volunteers who have access to children or vulnerable adults by means of an enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check
- Raise employee awareness of Safeguarding and Prevent issues such as; minimising risk, recognising abuse, treating all learners with respect and understanding the factors that make people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas which are used by terrorist groups
- Equip learners with the skills needed to keep themselves safe in the workplace
- Provide clear, comprehensive, easily understood procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse and requests for help and support on a confidential basis
- Establish a safe environment for all employees and learners
- Work in partnership with Local Safeguarding Boards and other Child Protection Agencies, where applicable

Playback has zero tolerance of abuse and other harmful behaviours and recognises that safeguarding and the promotion of safe behaviour is part of our core business. We aim to do this by:

- Ensuring all staff and volunteers are DBS checked, receive appropriate training and abide by our codes of conduct

- Providing clear, comprehensive, easily understood procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse or requests for confidential help

- Responding swiftly and appropriately to suspicions or allegations of abuse, including following standard reporting processes

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- Providing opportunities for learners and carers to voice any concerns they may have
- Promoting the concept of the Safe Learner
- Annually reviewing policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and prevent
- Reviewing the effectiveness of policy and procedures where there has been a safeguarding or prevent concern.

Children and Vulnerable Adults

As a IAG and training provider Playback Studio is legally required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

A child is legally defined as any person who is under the age of 18 years. A vulnerable adult is a person who is 18 years or over, and who is or may need community care services.

The main categories of adults covered by this definition are:

- Adults with a learning disability
- Adults who have physical or sensory impairments
- Adults who have mental illness including dementia
- Adults who are old and frail
- Adults detained in custody or under a probation order
- Adults who are considered vulnerable and who may experience abuse due to problems with alcohol or drugs (or be vulnerable due to other circumstances such as being an asylum seeker).

Playback Studio learners

As a provider of IAG and training programmes for young people, Playback Studio employees and learners will meet vulnerable adults and young children.

All employees should be aware that a proportion of our learners may be recent immigrants and therefore vulnerable because of language difficulties, potential discrimination and racial abuse, or have a poor understanding of their rights and responsibilities at work.

Specific roles and responsibilities concerning Safeguarding

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Marcia Raymond, , Marcia@playbackstudio.co.uk, Mobile Number: 020 8100 2817

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The Designated Safeguarding Lead will;

- Report recommendations for changes to the Company Safeguarding Policy and Procedures considering legislative changes to the Board of Directors
- Undertake regular and appropriate training for this role
- Make the decision to investigate any allegations or concerns about abuse
- Address any immediate protection issues
- Carry out any internal investigations regarding Safeguarding
- Make the decision to refer to an appropriate statutory agency (Police, Social Care Teams and / or Channel)
- Liaise with Local Safeguarding Board & Prevent leads
- Ensure employees are trained on Company Safeguarding procedures
- Source appropriate external training for Safeguarding, Social Care Teams and /or Channel)
- Liaise with Local Safeguarding Board

Managers

Managers will:

- Ensure that this Policy is brought to the attention of all their employees.
- Ensure that the Policy and associated procedures are implemented effectively.
- Ensure that risks are assessed and that appropriate risk reduction measures are developed for all work tasks and activities.
- Ensure their employees have appropriate instruction, training and development to enable them to fulfil their Safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities and to work safely
- Monitor the performance of their own employees to ensure Policy requirements and Company standards are being met.
 - Ensure that all incidents of suspected or alleged abuse are reported.
 - Set a good example and promote responsible attitudes among employees and learners.

All employees, contractors and volunteers

All employees, contractors and volunteers will;

- Be alert to signs of abuse and extremism and take responsibility for referring concerns to the Local Safeguarding Representative
 - Be prepared to listen to and take seriously the concerns of learners and carers
- Abide by the codes of conduct for CT Skills employees and volunteers
- Promote the health, safety and welfare of learners
- Maintain records as necessary
- Set a good example to learners by their own behaviour

2. Recruitment Statement

2.1 Playback Studio is committed to providing the best possible engagement and training alongside safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its service users. Playback is also committed to providing a supportive and flexible working environment for all members of staff. Playback recognises that, to achieve these aims, it is of fundamental importance to attract, recruit and retain staff of the highest calibre that share this commitment.

Playback Studio aims to:

- Ensure that the best possible staff are recruited based on their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- Ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
 - Ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- Ensure that the organisation meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks.
 - All employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with this policy.
- Playback Studio adheres to the company Recruitment Policy which is designed with the aim of safer selection and recruitment of employees to provide a safe environment for children/young people and vulnerable adults to learn in.

Training

All Employees must go on Safeguarding Essentials Training and the Prevent Strategy will be provided so that, as a minimum, all employees have knowledge and understanding of the following:

- Definitions of abuse
- Main forms of abuse
- Recognising abuse
- Responding to allegations of abuse
- Exemplifying British values
- Encouraging students to respect other people regarding the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010

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- Recognising factors that make people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism
- To challenge extremist ideas and be aware of what action to take in response
- Understanding of when to make referrals to the Channel programme and where to get additional advice and support
- Codes of conduct expected by employees Safeguarding Representatives

In addition, Safeguarding Representatives will;

- Attend L3 Working together everybody's business training provided by the Local
- Safeguarding Boards and refresher training as appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Designated Safeguarding Officer.

In addition, the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Safeguarding Officer will.

- Attend training provided by the Local Safeguarding Boards and refresher training as appropriate (but as a minimum every 2 years) to cover as a minimum.
- Complete training, and subsequent refresher training on the Prevent Strategy
- Update Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- Level 3 staff will attend the Everybody's Business course within three months of undertaking their role and repeat every 2 years thereafter.

Subcontracted provision

All organisations delivering training on behalf of Playback Studio (subcontractors) will be made aware of this policy. If the organisation has its own safeguarding & Prevent procedures these will be reviewed by the Partnerships Manager for appropriateness and audited for effectiveness. If they do not meet the required standard, subcontractors will need to abide by Playback Studio policies and procedures for Safeguarding & Prevent.

Safeguarding in the Learning Centre

Each Centre has a nominated employee to whom Safeguarding concerns are initially reported. This will normally be the 'on site' Safeguarding officer, who should seek additional help when required

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from the Safeguarding Officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead. A safeguarding policy statement should be displayed in all Centres along with a notice from the Designated Safeguarding Representatives and the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Playback Studio staff should be aware of and adhere to the Health & Safety Management Standards in place for their area of work, including the following;

- risk assessments should be in place for all activities taking part in Centres
- Centres should be kept tidy and free from hazards
- fire exits should be always kept clear and never locked when the building is occupied
- learners should be trained to use all equipment safely
- a written record of any violent incidents should be kept using the Disclosure Form found in the safeguarding and reporting file. These must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
 - adequate supervision must be always provided – including break times and lunch times. The recommended ratio is one tutor per 15 learners
 - tutors should avoid being alone with an under-18. However, there are times when this is not possible, so your line manager must be informed in these cases as soon as possible after the meeting has occurred, but always within 24 hours. If a confidential conversation is necessary, it should occur out of hearing of others, but preferably within sight
 - conduct meetings with the learner either with another staff member present or in an open environment (e.g. leave the office door open and do not hold meetings when lone working)
 - if physical contact is necessary, e.g. for demonstration purposes, ensure it takes place only with the full consent of the learner and that its purpose is clear
 - do not use touch as a form of communication, even to comfort a student who is distressed
 - do not transport students in your own vehicle
 - consider your expected behaviour in certain situations and what might be considered unacceptable, e.g. sexually suggestive comments, inappropriate language
 - it is illegal for learners who are under 18 to buy alcohol, and it would not be appropriate to offer them alcohol. As such, planning and organisation of events involving learners should take this into account
 - employees, contractors, and volunteers at Playback Studio should not engage in social events with students except those organised by Playback Studio

Safeguarding out of Centre activities

In addition to the Health and Safety Management standards detailed above for Safeguarding in our Learning Centres, the following should also be adhered to;

- Dedicated Safeguarding representatives are responsible for the initial reporting of a disclosure for all off site and Apprenticeship provision.
 - A person must be nominated to hold all information relevant to the activity, including the risk assessment, consent forms and health forms for the learners taking part

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- Adequate supervision must be provided as outlined above but with thought given in the risk assessment to the need for additional adult help

Relationships with Young People Aged 16-17

It should be noted that, whilst a young person can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2003 makes it a criminal offence for a person to engage in any kind of sexual activity with a person under 18 where the adult is in a position of trust. This applies to employees and learners even if they do not work together directly.

Internet Safety

When using the internet for learning activities tutors should:

- Ensure all learners have read and understand the E Safety & Acceptable Use

Agreement policy

- Restrict access to illegal, harmful or inappropriate images and other content
- Agree a usage policy with the group, e.g. use of Facebook, discussion groups etc.
- Educate learners in e-safety practice, e.g. not sharing personal information or inappropriate communication with strangers
- Ensure that learners know how and to whom e-safety incidents should be reported
- Undertake only professional related communication directly with learners
- **Playback staff should not use personal mobile phones or email accounts to communicate with learners?** Staff should not 'follow' or 'friend' learners on social media sites other than through the CT Skills Facebook page and Twitter account.

Safeguarding concerns

Playback Studio employees may become aware of possible abuse in several ways. A learner may tell an employee directly about abuse that has taken place. This is known as a disclosure. Concerns may be reported by a third party, or the employee themselves may notice something relating to the safety of a learner which is causing concern.

Playback Studio employees may encounter Safeguarding concerns for children or vulnerable adults on Playback Studio premises, whilst undertaking their duties on employers' premises or on the premises of an organisation subcontracted by Playback studio to deliver services on their behalf.

The concern may relate to what is (or may be) happening within the organisation or what is (or may be) happening outside that organisation (for instance in their own home). The concern may be brought to our attention by the learner themselves, alleged by others or through direct observation.

The concerns may be about the behaviour of a:

- Member of staff of another organisation
- Peer
- Person from the community (for instance relative or friend)
- Member of Playback Studio

The concern may be about a current situation or past events and may be about allegations or disclosures of physical abuse, sexual abuse, radicalisation, emotional abuse or neglect, or a combination of any of these.

Any Playback Studio employees, volunteers or contractors could receive such information. In all circumstances they must respond in accordance with the procedures laid out below.

If the learner requires medical attention or police presence is needed staff must contact emergency services before continuing this process.

Protection of Vulnerable People

Playback recognises that protecting vulnerable people is everybody's business. Alleged perpetrators could be anybody and could therefore include partner organisations or Local Authority staff, parents, siblings, friends of the family, project coordinators or volunteers. Whoever you are, you must act when you suspect or are informed of possible abuse, and you have a responsibility to report it.

What is abuse? Abuse is "the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons". It can result from the "action or inaction by a carer or any other person". Abuse includes physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, financial or material abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and discriminatory abuse. Different types of abuse may happen at the same time. It can happen in any setting.

Most people cannot imagine that anyone they know could transgress in such a harmful way towards a vulnerable person. This may make them feel uncomfortable if they have suspicions. It is worth remembering that in the case of sexual abuse, the vulnerable person may be targeted by the abuser through a deliberate grooming process involving secrecy testing to ensure that the abuser can trust the vulnerable people "not to tell" and to gain their confidence.

3. Definitions of Child Abuse

Children and young people can be at risk of one, or several, of the following categories of abuse. The following list is not exhaustive.

3.1. Physical Abuse: Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or

scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a patient or carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described using terms such as factitious illness by proxy, induced or fabricated illness or Munchausen syndrome by proxy.

3.2. Emotional Abuse: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

3.3. Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

3.4. Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter, and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or irresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

4. Definitions Of Vulnerable Adult Abuse

Vulnerable adults can be at risk of one, or several, of the following categories of abuse. The following list is not exhaustive.

4.1. Physical

- hitting
- kicking
- inappropriate physical restraint
- force feeding
- inappropriate sanctions

4.2. Emotional/Psychological/Social

- threat of harm or abandonment
- intimidation by word or deed
- humiliation
- harassment
- enforced social isolation or withdrawal from support networks
- verbal or racial abuse

4.3. Financial

Misuse and/or misappropriation of monies, benefits and/or property including:

- theft

- fraud
- pressure in connection with wills
- property or inheritance or financial transfer

4.4. Neglect/Deprivation

- deprivation of food, warmth, clothing, medical attention, or aids
- neglect of physical and emotional needs

4.5. Misuse of Medication

- the withholding of appropriate medication
- over sedation

4.6. Sexual Abuse: This occurs when vulnerable adults are involved in sexual relationships or activities which they have not consented to, or they cannot understand and are in a situation where they are being exploited or pressured into consenting. Such activities could include,

- unwanted physical and sexual contact
- indecent exposure
- sexual harassment (verbal or physical)
- displaying pornographic literature or videos

4.7. Dietary Misuse: e.g. too little or too much appropriate dietary input to sustain an appropriate nutritional status and good health

5. Signs That Could Alert You to the fact that a Child Is being abused

- Unexplained bruising or injury particularly in unusual places
- An injury for which the explanation seems to be inconsistent
- Unexplained sudden changes in behaviour (i.e. withdrawing, very quiet, sudden outbursts of temper or emotion)
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or language or engaging in sexually explicit behaviour
- Is prevented from socialising with other children or has difficulty making friends
- Is distrustful of adults particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected, (i.e. parents, teacher, family friend)
- Displays variations in eating patterns (i.e. overeating or loss of appetite)

- Loses weight for no apparent reason (the Child may be trying to make himself/herself less sexually attractive)
- The Child becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt
- Something another Child has said which suggests a Child is being abused
- The Child describes an act or behaviour that appears to be abusive and would not normally be in the child's apprehension

This list is not exhaustive and the presence of one or more of these symptoms is not proof that abuse has taken place, but it should raise concerns.

6. Recognising That a Vulnerable Adult Is Being Abused

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6.1. Unexplained skin bruising, cuts or abrasions, unexplained burns or unexplained fractures etc. However, please remember some physiological processes/medical conditions can cause changes which are hard to distinguish from some aspects of physical abuse.

6.2. Indication of neglect would be poor hygiene, malnutrition, inappropriate clothing and broken skin.

6.3. Some possible psychological and emotional indicators may be withdrawal, depression, cowering and fearfulness, sudden changes in behaviour, deliberate self-harm.

6.4. Some possible indicators of sexual abuse may be unexplained marked fluctuation of mood changes, pain, bruising or bleeding in genital or anal areas, inappropriate sexually related activities/behaviour.

6.5. Some general indicators which may suggest abuse are seeking shelter or protection, unexplained reactions towards settings, frequent or regular visits to the GP, or hospital casualty department, or hospital admissions, frequent or irrational refusal to accept investigations or treatments for routine difficulties, inconsistency of explanation

Disclosures

If a learner or employee discloses to you that they (or indeed another child/young person or vulnerable adult) have been or are being abused/radicalised you should take the following action immediately.

You should;

- Be supportive
- Take what the child or vulnerable adult says seriously
- Remain calm • Reassure them that it was right to tell someone and acknowledge it was brave of them to do so
- Use language they understand
- Explain what will happen next, i.e. that disclosure of relevant information may need to be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Write down verbatim immediately afterwards what was said, including the time, place and any other observations
- This information must be submitted via the Safeguarding Disclosure Form within 24 hours to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. You must also sign and date the form
- Keep all records confidential

You should not;

- Panic
- Delay
- Promise to keep secrets
- Ask leading questions
- Ask them to repeat the story unnecessarily
- Express any opinions about what you are told

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- Discuss the disclosure with anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding, Representative or Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Start to investigate
- Contact the alleged abuser

Record Keeping

A confidential record will be kept of all cases referred to the Designated Safeguarding Team, including details of cases referred to the Local Authority or the police. These written records will be kept securely for a period of six years via a restricted site on Playback Studio Staff Portal system, with any paper information held securely by the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Information Sharing

Personal information about learners is treated with respect and confidentiality. Consent will be sought to share personal information. However, information can be shared without consent when:

- Asking for consent will increase the risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult or;
- A delay in sharing information may increase the risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult

More information can be found at:

HM Government (2015) Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents, and carers.

1. Policy – Confidentiality

1.1. At Playback Studio we recognise that all users of our services have the right to confidentiality and the protection of their privacy. In order to help our service users effectively, it is often necessary to ask them to disclose sensitive and personal details and it is vital that they should know that they can trust individual staff to treat such disclosures with respect and also that Playback Studio has proper procedures in place to ensure that all records of a personal nature are held under secure conditions.

1.2. There may be circumstances when confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. All staff have a legal responsibility to report immediately to their manager all instances of abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, whether physical, sexual, emotional or neglect even if this information is given in confidence. It is important that the member of staff tells the person sensitively that he or she has this responsibility and explains the reason for what may be perceived as a breach of trust.

1.3. Staff have the responsibility to disclose information without consent where they judge that there is a real risk of physical danger to the service user or others. If in doubt about the seriousness of the risk, staff should always seek advice from their line manager.

1.4 All staff that have direct unsupervised contact with vulnerable people are required to complete a DBS check. Playback studio carries out risk assessments to ensure that staff working with young people have been vetted and assessed against current legislation.

2.2 Good Practices

2.3. Staff/Volunteers have a considerable amount of contact with service users and so will be aware of

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confidential information. These guidelines are not exclusive but provide a checklist of some of the situations where confidentiality could be put at risk. Any breach of confidentiality will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

2.4. It is important for staff/volunteers, where possible, to be clear about their limits with service users, so that they are not placed in a position where they are hearing information they would prefer not to hear or feel that they are not able to keep within the boundaries of confidentiality.

2.5. Information about another person, even if presented in a way to protect the individual's confidentiality, can be both misinterpreted and identifiable. Informal chatting with colleagues from other agencies or organisations can lead to confidentiality being broken, since the client may be common to both parties and both parties are bound by confidentiality.

2.6. Often staff and volunteers may feel that a close friend can be trusted and may be a form of support. It is a habit to be discouraged, and volunteers should refer to 'definition'. Remember that no matter how close or concerned, friends do not have the right to confidential information about the organisation.

2.7. It is likely that it will be the natural progression to discuss any event that takes place while volunteering with a partner. It must be remembered that your partner is the same as any other person in terms of confidentiality. If a volunteer is struggling with either of the above, they must seek the support of staff immediately.

2.8. Relaxing in a social environment and drinking can lead to disclosure of information. Staff/Volunteers must be aware that they do not know who may be within earshot.

2.9. Staff/Volunteers should not leave notes of service users' information in view of any other person nor discuss them on the 'phone within earshot of another. Staff/Volunteers should never become involved in conversations with service users about other service users. Any information revealed to a volunteer about another client should be reported to the office. When visiting, driving or picking up a client, volunteers may see and speak with relatives, friends or others associated with service users. Volunteers should not discuss the service user with these people when information is being offered.

7. Guidelines for Promoting Good Practice

All participants have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. You must adhere to the guidelines below when working with vulnerable people:

- Always be publicly open when working with vulnerable people to avoid situations where a vulnerable person cannot be observed by others.
- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with vulnerable person away from others
- Treat all participants equally with respect and dignity.
- Always place the safety and welfare of the participants as the highest priority.
- Behave in an exemplary manner and provide a role model for excellent behaviour.
- Respect the needs and wishes of the participants and do not exert them against their will
- Create a safe and enjoyable situation.
- Maintain a written report of any incident or injury together with any subsequent treatment and immediately complete an incident report form
- If you accidentally hurt a vulnerable person and he/she becomes distressed in your presence or misunderstands/misinterprets something you have said or done, report the incident to your line manager and make a brief written note of it.

8. Practices to Be Avoided When Working with Vulnerable People

- Do not spend excessive amounts of time alone with vulnerable person away from others
 - Never take a child alone on car journeys, no matter how short without first consulting the parents/carers
- Where these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the parent/carer.
 - Never take a child to your home or other secluded place where they will be alone with you
- Do not engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Never share a room with a Child
- Never allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Do not make sexually suggestive remarks to a vulnerable person - even in fun
- Do not allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Do not allow allegations made by a vulnerable person to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Never do things of a personal nature for a Child they can do for themselves, unless you have been requested to do so by the parents or do so with the utmost discretion.
- Never depart from the premises until you have supervised the safe dispersal of the vulnerable person
- Do not abuse your privileged position of power or trust with children or adults
- Do not resort to bullying tactics, or verbal abuse
 - Never cause a child to lose self-esteem by embarrassing, humiliating or undermining the individual

9. Bullying

9.1. Bullying may be defined as deliberate hurtful behaviour in the form of physical, psychological or aggressive verbal conduct against another person. Bullying occurs where inadequate supervision is available. Bullies usually have low self-esteem, are aggressive and manipulative to gain power over others. Employees hold a position of power - they must not abuse this position to abuse or bully the children or vulnerable adults in their care.

9.2. Symptoms that may indicate that a person is being bullied might include:

- Physical signs such as bruising, scratching or damaged clothing
 - Behavioural changes such as a reluctance to attend activities previously enjoyed; tearfulness; depression; erratic emotions and loss of concentration Performance levels may also drop

9.3. Regardless of who the perpetrator might be, the signs of bullying should be reported to a person of responsibility.

10. Guidelines on The Immediate Action to Be Taken Following a Report of Abuse

Abuse may become apparent in several ways; through observation, a vulnerable person may tell you, a third party may have reported an incident, or you may have a strong suspicion. If an allegation brought to your attention:

10.1. STEP 1 - LISTEN & REASSURE

10.2. STEP 2 – RECORD

10.2.1. If the allegation is ABUSE, the following process should be followed:

- make a full report of any allegations or suspicions on paper
- give the report and incident record form to your manager who will contact the Local Authority Social Work Department or Police immediately if necessary and make a record of this
- confidentiality must be maintained

10.2.2. If the allegation relates to POOR PRACTICE, the following process should be followed:

- make a record of the allegations
- Senior Manager in your project should be informed so that an investigation can be carried out as necessary.

10.3. STEP 3 - INVOLVE THE APPROPRIATE PEOPLE

Once you have completed your report you must ensure that the manager has been informed so a decision can be made as to the most appropriate action. This person must forward the report to the Programme Director indicating whether further action is required, thus allowing the Director to take any disciplinary action.

12. Advice and Support

11.1. As a result of reporting your concerns, you may find the child, young person or vulnerable adult who gave you the information is upset or angry. Please discuss your concerns with your line manager.

12. Reporting Suspected Abuse

12.1. It is not your responsibility to prove that abuse is taking place or to raise your concerns with the suspected abuser. You should however report your concerns or suspicions to the following person (Marcia Raymond Designated Safeguarding officer)

I have read and understood the Code of Good Practice for Safeguarding Vulnerable People and agreed to abide by it.

Project: _____

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

REVIEW DATES AND APPROVAL

This policy is reviewed by the Directors and QA Manager

Last reviewed: January 2025

Next review: January 2026