

## **Mint House Safeguarding Policy**

The Mint House is committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk, ensuring their well-being. We believe every child, young person and adult at risk has the right to live in an environment free from abuse and neglect. We also recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and that we need to work together to prevent and minimise abuse. We also recognise that we need to act where we know or suspect that a child or adult is being abused: doing nothing is not an option.

This policy aims to ensure that everyone acting on behalf of the Mint House understands the steps they need to take to prevent and minimise abuse and act on any concerns.

### **Definitions**

#### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**

Consistent with *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)* safeguarding means

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

A child is anyone up to the age of 18 irrespective of their situation.

#### **Who are adults at risk?**

An adult at risk is:

*Any adult aged 18 or over who due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of significant harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mistreatment or exploitation.*

Some adults might be more at risk than others, and there are some times in life where risks may increase. Some of these circumstances may include:

- Learning, sensory or physical disability
- Old age and frailty (especially if it creates a dependency on or needing help from others)
- Mental health problems
- Dementia or confusion
- Illness
- Addiction or dependence on alcohol, drugs or medication
- Bereavement
- Past abuse or trauma
- English is not their first language

NB. This list is not prescriptive, so other variations should be considered.

## **What is abuse?**

Abuse is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons. It comes from the misuse of power and control that someone has over another. Harm is the result of this mistreatment or abuse.

Abuse may consist of one single act or many repeated acts, and it can occur in any relationship at any time of life. It can take many forms, not just physical or violent acts, but it may also be verbal, sexual, psychological, spiritual or financial. Abuse does not have to fit solely into any one of the categories, and often more than one type of abuse may be taking place. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act.

Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent, negligence or ignorance.

Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetrated by anyone. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Abuse may also be committed by one adult at risk towards another: this is still abuse and should be handled appropriately.

More information about different types of abuse can be found here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>

## **Respecting the safety, needs and interests of adults at risk**

To respect the safety, needs and interests of children and adults at risk, the Mint House will:

- make sure that everyone associated with our work, including service users and partners, know how to voice concerns about any safeguarding situations (See **Procedure 1: What to do if you suspect abuse**)
- practice safe recruitment, support and supervision. All staff and volunteers working for the Mint House will go through a structured selection process to ensure their suitability. They will also be asked to provide references and be subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS check where appropriate.
- work to provide an environment, and adopt working practices, that promote the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk
- ensure that everyone acting on behalf of the Mint House receives regular mandatory training and updating in safeguarding and understands their duty to report concerns and the role and responsibility of the Designated Person for Safeguarding. This includes, as a minimum, completing introductory e-training provided by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) or Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB)

- regularly update our policies, procedures and guidelines to take account of UK safeguarding legislation and good practice.

### **Designated Person for Safeguarding**

The Mint House Designated Person for Safeguarding is Rev Jon Keyworth (jon.keyworth@bonnsquare.uk).

The Designated Person is responsible for:

- Advocating for safeguarding within the Mint House.
- Maintaining the Mint House safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Ensuring Mint House staff and volunteers are safely recruited
- Ensuring staff and volunteers adhere to training requirements
- Responding appropriately to any concerns, including escalating to the appropriate authority where needed.
- Ensuring accurate records are kept
- Co-operating with the relevant statutory authorities.
- Attending specialist training

The Deputy Designated Person is Sue Ellis. (sueellis54@icloud.com) The Deputy should be contacted where an incident arises, and where the Designated Person is unavailable.

## Procedure 1: What to do if you suspect abuse

Mint House staff or volunteers may become aware of, or suspect, abuse because:

- Someone tells them that something has happened or is happening to them, or to an adult at risk, which could be abusive.
  - They see or hear something which could be abusive
  - The behaviour of a child or adult causes them to have concerns about that person's wellbeing.

Anyone acting on behalf of the Mint House who suspects abuse must pass on their concerns to the Mint House Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours.

If the Designated Person is not available or is implicated in the concern, they should speak to the Deputy Designated Person for Safeguarding.

**If there is immediate concern, please contact the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on 0345 050 7666**

**If the child or adult is in imminent danger of harm, contact the police or emergency services on 999 without delay.**

- Never delay emergency action to protect someone from harm
- Always report your concerns
- Always record any decisions taken

### Remember these essentials:

- Trust your instincts, you are probably right to be worried
- Unless you're 100% sure that the child or adult at risk is safe you need to share your concerns: it's better to raise a concern and be wrong than not raise a concern and be right
- Record your concerns

If someone discloses abuse directly, staff and volunteers should at all times:

<b>Listen</b>	Take what is said seriously;
<b>Reassure</b>	Tell them that they have done the right thing by telling you, and that you believe them;
<b>Remain calm</b>	No matter how difficult it is to listen to what is being disclosed. You have been chosen because the person feels able to talk to you;
<b>Be honest</b>	Do not promise full confidentiality or offer false reassurance;
<b>Be open</b>	Do not ask leading or closed questions, such as "Did she hit you?" It is not your role to investigate. As soon as you have enough information to concern you, stop probing.
<b>Ask</b>	Request their consent to share information and seek help;

<b>Explain</b>	Tell them that you are going to tell the Designated Person for Safeguarding (or an appropriate alternative if necessary) and give them a timescale;
<b>Write</b>	Document everything the adult at risk has told you, in their own words. You will need to record the questions you asked as well as the answers or information given. This should be done as soon as possible after the disclosure and should include the time and date;
<b>Report</b>	Contact the Designated Person for Safeguarding within 24 hours (or appropriate alternative if necessary) and report the disclosure;
<b>Respect confidentiality</b>	The concerns you have should be kept confidential between you, the adult concerned, the Designated Person for Safeguarding). The Designated Person for Safeguarding may need to inform the statutory authorities.

**Under no circumstances** should the volunteer or staff member go and talk to the alleged abuser or try to investigate the allegations themselves.

The Designated Person will determine what action should follow. This may involve contacting the police, the Locality and Community Support Service, the MASH or Adult Social Care Services.

The Designated Person and the volunteer/staff member who has raised the concern are jointly responsible for completing a Safeguarding Incident Form (see Appendix 1). Safeguarding Incident Forms should be completed as accurately as possible, and within 24 hours after the disclosure or suspicions of abuse. Forms will be stored in the locked filing cabinet in the Mint House.

### **What if an adult at risk doesn't want help?**

All actions should be based on the assumption that the individual has the capacity and the right to make their own choices in relation to their personal safety and well-being. This includes upholding their right to follow a course of action which others may deem unwise or eccentric, including staying in a situation of abuse.

If an adult at risk doesn't want help it may still be necessary to inform the police or Adult Social Care Services, who can put a safeguarding plan in place so that, as far as possible, the adult continues to be protected. This is particularly important:

- When the person lacks the mental capacity to make such a choice
- When there is a risk of harm to others
- In order to prevent a crime

It is also important that the individual knows where to get appropriate help and support if they should change their mind.

## Appendix 1: Mint House Safeguarding Incident Form - To be completed with the Designated Person for Safeguarding

### 1. Contact details

Concerned person / person to whom disclosure was given

Name	
Address	
Phone no. / email	

Individual of concern

Name	
Date of birth	
Address	
Phone no. / email	

### 2. The incident

- What happened? (Nature of concern/disclosure made - use the person's own words if known)

- When did it happen? (date, time)

- Where did it happen? (specific location)

- Who was allegedly involved and in what way? (includes witnesses)

**3. Any action that has been taken**

- Have the carers or parents / guardians been informed? Y/N
- If so, when and by whom?
- Have the statutory authorities been informed? Y/N
- If so, please complete the table:

Authority		
Name of person informed		
Position of person informed		
Email contact		
Phone contact		
Contacted by		
Date & time of contact		

**FUTURE ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

- What action needs to be taken?
- Who is responsible for this?

Signature of Designated Safeguarding Person Date

Signature of concerned person Date