

Safeguarding Children & Adults at Risk Policy

Child Protection Policy Statement

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have a right to be safe and happy in the activities they, or their parents and carers, choose. Parents and carers have a right to believe that, in entrusting their children to Vauxhall City Farm, they will stay safe from harm.

Vauxhall City Farm is a charity helping people realise their potential. Our mission is born from our belief that all people have potential to be responsible members of society: that they should have equal access to quality youth work and education, and that participation, learning and achievement can have a positive impact on their self-worth. It is therefore the policy of Vauxhall City Farm to take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in our work.

The abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults – is a sad fact of life. Children and young people may be abused, neglected or exploited regardless of their age, gender, religious belief, sexuality, culture or ability. Abuse, neglect and exploitation are usually, but not always, carried out by someone they know and trust. Protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation is an integral part of Vauxhall City Farm's practice and safeguarding culture.

Purpose

Vauxhall City Farm has a moral and a legal duty of care to ensure that Young People/Vulnerable Adults we work with are safe from harm. This policy is rooted in legislation and aims to:

- ensure a safe and supportive environment for children, young people and adults at risk of harm (hereafter “vulnerable adults”) who receive Vauxhall City Farm's services, as well as for staff and volunteers; this includes the children of adult clients.
- provide all staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk from, some form of abuse.
- ensure that staff are experienced and equipped to make clear and consistent responses to disclosure/allegations or suspicions of abuse; and that volunteers are aware of the procedures for reporting any concerns
- put in place management responsibilities and structures to support the policy and the responsibilities of staff within their duty of care; and
- provide a code of conduct for staff and volunteers and identify areas of good practice in working professionally and safely with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

It should be noted that the policy may extend to young people outside the scope of Vauxhall City Farm's direct work where reasonable concerns are raised by a third party i.e. Vauxhall City Farm client friends, children, siblings etc.

Scope

A child is defined in law (Children Act 1989, 2004) as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. Child Protection legislation and guidance therefore only applies to those users of Vauxhall City Farm services up to that age.

Vauxhall City Farm also works with those over the age of 18 and recognises its duty of care to all the people with whom it works, including those that could be described as “vulnerable adults”. Under the Care Act 2014, an “vulnerable adult” can be at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation, and is defined as someone who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect and exploitation and as a result of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves.

This policy and procedures apply to all our Trustees, paid and volunteer staff and anyone else acting on behalf of, or with the permission of, Vauxhall City Farm in our name. A full copy will be given to all new staff (paid and unpaid) and appropriate training will be made available to them to ensure that there is adequate awareness of the content and the implications.

Vauxhall City Farm will ensure that this Policy is available to any young person or member of the public or our membership on request.

Policy and Protocols for Preventing Abuse

We are committed to planning our work to minimize, as far as is possible, situations in which abuse could occur. The clear guidelines, procedures and protocols set out within this policy are designed to achieve this. They are based on accepted good practice guidelines and are also designed to be practical and achievable. There is synergy between our Child Protection and Health & Safety policies.

The procedures are categorized as follows:

- 1) Recruitment and selection of staff
- 2) Disclosure and Barring procedures
- 3) Roles and relationships for staff
- 4) Training and Supervision
- 5) Activity/Session guidelines
- 6) Work with Disabled Young People and/or Young People with Additional Needs
- 7) Identifying and Avoiding Child Abuse
- 8) Identifying potential abusers and whistle blowing
- 9) Allegations of abuse against professional members of staff, leaders, instructors and volunteers
- 10) Signs and Indicators of abuse
- 11) Responding to Allegations, Concerns or Suspicions
- 12) Adult disclosures

All Trustees, paid and voluntary staff will receive a copy of this Policy and are expected to formally confirm understanding of the procedures and agreement to work to the procedures laid down.

1. Recruitment and Selection of Staff (Safer Recruitment)

1.1 We strive to follow good employment practice in the recruitment and selection of all staff – paid and voluntary. If at any time we remain uncertain about an applicant’s ability, credibility or identity, this will be a prime factor in the decision to appoint or not.

1.2 **Before releasing any post.** Before releasing a post an up-to-date job/role description and person specification will be agreed and written. Appropriate advertising will take place which contains all the necessary information about the role, timetable for recruitment, and our commitment to

safeguarding. Vauxhall City Farm will ensure a suitable recruitment pack is put together which includes information about the organisation, recruitment timetable, safeguarding policy and application form. Applicants will be asked for details of previous work with children and young people if any is required. At this point the candidate, as part of the application form, will be asked if there is anything they wish to inform us regarding any cautions, reprimands, convictions spent or unspent (Self-Declaration).

- 1.3 **Before interviewing.** Each application will be scrutinised in a systematic way by a short-listing panel in order to agree a shortlist for sending out invitations for interview. We will ensure that all shortlisted candidates receive the same letter of invitation to interview and that they receive all the necessary information.
- 1.4 **Before selecting the preferred candidate.** A face-to-face interview is to be carried out by at least two interviewers with ALL shortlisted candidates based on an objective assessment of the candidate's ability to meet the job description and person specification. Vauxhall City Farm will ensure that all interview questions are asked and designed to gain information about each candidate's suitability. This includes addressing any gaps in information supplied in the application. Candidates will be informed that, if selected, the post will be offered on a conditional basis dependent on a satisfactory DBS check (where appropriate) and references.
- 1.5 **Before formally appointing.** Vauxhall City Farm will ensure a confident decision on a preferred candidate is made based upon their suitability for the role. Preferred candidates will be informed that any offer of employment (including volunteering positions) is conditional, subject to receiving satisfactory information from all necessary checks (including DBS (where appropriate) and two references). Copies of any training and qualifications certificates will also be taken.
- 1.6 **References:** Applicants will be asked to supply two references, preferably one of whom can comment on their work with young people (for relevant positions) and the other who knows their character. These references will be followed up within two weeks of interviews. The references will be sought in writing and if the post is to work with young people, will also be followed up verbally. When writing to given referees, the letter will state explicitly that the applicant is seeking to work with young people and the referee will be asked to comment on their suitability. Until references and satisfactory DBS disclosure are received (where requested) the person will always be accompanied when working with young people.
- 1.7 **Induction and probation.** Regardless of role or previous experience of working with children and young people, there should be an induction programme and probation period for all new staff and volunteers.
- 1.8 **Supervision and Support.** Staff and volunteers will all receive regular support and supervision and have a nominated line manager.

2. Disclosure and Barring Procedures

- 2.1 The Disclosure and Barring Service provides a disclosure service to assist organisations to make more informed recruitment decisions when employing adults to work with young people and adults at risk. Applications to the Disclosure and Barring Service are routed through Registered Bodies or Umbrella Registered Bodies who have the authority to ask questions exempt under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1994
- 2.2 We regard appropriate requesting for Disclosure as essential to add strength to our recruitment

and selection processes. All paid and volunteer staff working directly with young people will be expected to complete the relevant DBS application (i.e. enhanced or enhanced with barring list) and receive a satisfactory Disclosure Certificate. Until a satisfactory DBS disclosure is received the person will always be accompanied when working with young people.

- 2.3 Any conviction which is identified by the Disclosure process and has not been disclosed on the application form or at an interview will be discussed with the individual and may lead to the dismissal of a member of staff.
- 2.4 Where possible we aim for all staff and volunteers to be registered with the DBS update service and checks will be undertaken every two years or a new application submitted if necessary.

3. Roles and Relationships for staff

- 3.1 Abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, young people and vulnerable adults is most easily concealed where there is confusion among adults about roles and responsibilities. All paid workers and Volunteer staff working with children and young people will have clear guidelines and expectations of their role through an individually discussed and agreed role description, which will be signed by both parties.
- 3.2 Our child and vulnerable adults protection practice is designed not only to protect young people but also our paid and voluntary staff who have responsibility for them and take on board the safer practice guidance 2009. This is what we mean by establishing a safeguarding culture. All staff and volunteers are expected to observe the following general guidelines:
- Treat all young people and adults with respect
 - Provide an example of good conduct that you wish others to follow. Remember – you are a role model at all times. Take care with how you act, what you say and how you say it.
 - Do not assume that your ‘good name’ will protect you
 - Do not assume ‘it could never happen to me’
 - Observe the sensible ratio of adults to young people/vulnerable adults, unless it is a specific activity, which has an awarding body recommended standard ratio.
 - Check out any hazards and assess/manage risks
 - Whilst respecting the need for privacy and confidentiality, never be alone with a young person or vulnerable adult. When it is appropriate to work one-to-one, make sure that others are within earshot and preferably within sight. There should always be a minimum of two workers per project so that this can happen.
 - Respect a young person’s right to personal privacy
 - Be aware that physical contact with a young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted and therefore avoid behaviour that may be misconstrued.
 - Make sure young people and vulnerable adults stay in sight of workers
 - Think carefully about your site and avoid situations where young people or vulnerable adults can get lost easily and activities which involve a lot of waiting around
 - Only parents or registered specified carers can carry out personal care for young people or vulnerable adults who require it. This must be organised by a member of staff before an activity/event.

- Always operate within Vauxhall City Farm's policies and principles available from your line manager.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or concerns of abuse to their line manager.

4. Training and Supervision

- 4.1 In-house training and supervision will be made available to all staff and volunteers to help to ensure that there is a practical understanding of this policy and these procedures and guidelines. Access to external training will be made available where it is appropriate. Staff and volunteers working directly with children and young people should ensure that they attend Safeguarding training every 2 years minimum.
- 4.2 Paid staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults will have access to supervision which can also be used to ensure the staff member's knowledge and practical application of this policy is appropriate. Supervision consists of a mixture of management support, time to reflect on professional development and practice.
- 4.3 All staff and volunteers should report any incident, allegation or concern at the earliest opportunity available regardless of their next planned supervision date.

5. Activity/Sessions

- 5.1 We ensure that the following procedures are followed whether our activity or session is indoors or outdoors:
- The ratio of staff to young people/vulnerable adults is appropriate for the activity. This is based on an informal needs assessment, taking into consideration among other things the needs of the young people/vulnerable adults (including age, ability, and behaviour) and the venue. Where a member of staff is unsure, they should check with their line manager.
 - If the activity taking place is subject to a National Governing Body (NGB) then ratios dictated by the NGB will be observed.
 - Roles and responsibilities of staff are clear and understood by all.
 - A register of attendees is kept.
 - Risk assessments of the venue, activity, equipment and other potential hazards at least two weeks prior to the activity/session.
 - All incidents and accidents are recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead via the Supervisor in charge of the activity (using relevant forms).
 - Safety procedures are understood by all adults through formal risk assessments.
 - Fully equipped first aid kit available.
 - At least one attending adult to hold a current first aid qualification. This person will be made known to all staff on the day.
 - All adults, young people and vulnerable adults know what to do in an emergency.
 - Both male and female workers where possible accompany mixed gender groups.
 - Start and finish times are clear and are met.

- 5.2 For sessions in which we have direct responsibility for the young people/vulnerable adults. Details of all participants, contact numbers, venues, timetables etc are retained by another member of staff not involved in the activity.
- Parental/guardian consent forms are completed by all participants
 - Relevant medical and dietary needs are noted and confidentially monitored (all staff should have sight and know where to access this), however where medical support or intervention is needed the appropriateness of staff involvement needs to be discussed and agreed with parents/carers.
 - In some circumstances professional medical support/care may be more appropriate than staff involvement.

6. Work with young disabled people and/or young people with additional or special needs

- 6.1 When required staff will receive training on strategies for managing behaviour for example where some young disabled people/vulnerable adults may demonstrate more physical contact or affection towards the staff and other young people.
- 6.2 If additional personal care is needed, then a qualified carer or parent must accompany the young person/vulnerable adults. This should always be agreed prior to the activity/event.
- 6.3 All staff to be aware of and understand specific medical or diagnosed conditions mentioned on the young person's consent/health form, and potential consequences.
- 6.4 Staff to contact any external venues being used to check that they are accessible and that there are appropriate facilities.
- 6.5 Staff and volunteers are encouraged not to lift or move disabled young people/vulnerable adults without prior discussion with line manager and relevant training.

Procedures for Handling a Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection Concern

7. Identifying and avoiding child/vulnerable adult abuse, neglect and exploitation.

- 7.1 **Child/vulnerable adult abuse, neglect and exploitation** is a term used to describe ways in which children, young people and vulnerable adults are harmed, usually by adults and often by those they know and trust. There are five main areas of abuse, neglect and exploitation of which adults working with these groups should be aware:
- 7.2 **Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child/vulnerable adult such as to cause a severe and detrimental effect on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to children/vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child/vulnerable adult opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children/vulnerable adults, interactions beyond their developmental ability, overprotection, the limitation of exploration or learning, prevention of normal social interaction, seeing or hearing ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including online bullying), causing them to frequently feel frightened or in danger. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child/vulnerable adult, although it may occur alone.

In our work, we will help to prevent emotional abuse occurring by **NOT**:

- Providing repeated negative feedback
- Repeatedly ignoring a young person/vulnerable adults' efforts to progress
- Repeatedly demanding performance levels above those of which the young person/vulnerable adult is capable
- Over emphasising the winning ethic
- Ignoring when other people may be causing emotional abuse, i.e. bullying.

7.3 **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child/vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may occur in pregnancy, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from the home or abandonment), failing to protect a child/vulnerable adult from physical or emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or irresponsiveness to, a child/vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

In our work, we will help to prevent neglect occurring by **NOT**:

- Leaving young people/vulnerable adult alone without proper supervision
- Exposing a young person/vulnerable adult to unnecessary heat or cold without fluids or protection
- Exposing a young person/vulnerable adult to an unacceptable risk of injury
- Tolerating neglect by peers

7.4 **Physical Abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the child/vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces injury in a child/vulnerable adult.

In our work, we will help prevent physical abuse occurring by **NOT**:

- Exposing young people/vulnerable adults to exercise or training which disregards the capacity of the young person
- Exposing young people/vulnerable adults to injury due to overplaying, over-training or fatigue
- Exposing young people/vulnerable adults to alcohol, or giving them the opportunity to drink alcohol below the legal age
- Exposing young people/vulnerable adults to performance enhancing drugs and recommending that they take them

7.5 **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child, young person/vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child/vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape or buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as involving children/vulnerable adults in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children/vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child/vulnerable adults in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children/vulnerable adults.

In our work, we will help prevent sexual abuse occurring by ensuring that leaders **avoid** inappropriate contact with young people/vulnerable adults and take care to ensure that their contact and language with young people/vulnerable adults cannot be misconstrued by them or those around them.

- 7.6 **Exploitation:** Exploitation is a form of abuse involving the manipulation, coercion, or deception of a child or vulnerable adult for another person's gain, advantage, or gratification. It takes advantage of power imbalances, often through grooming, forcing victims into sexual activity, criminality, or servitude. Victims may not recognize the abuse, even if it appears consensual
- 7.7 Child and vulnerable adult **abuse, neglect and exploitation** can and does occur outside the family setting. Although it is a sensitive and difficult issue, child/vulnerable abuse has occurred within institutions and within other settings, for example, sport and other social activities. Research indicates that abuse which takes place within a public setting is rarely a one-off event. We will ensure that those involved in our work are aware of this possibility and that all allegations are taken seriously, and appropriate action pursued.
- 7.8 The Vauxhall City Farm supervisor in charge of an activity/session may be informed of situations where the reporter is unsure about whether the allegation constitutes abuse or not and is therefore unclear about what action to take. There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice rather than abuse, but those responsible should always report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as Vauxhall City Farm's named person or seek advice/consultancy from the Local Authority Safeguarding Team. This is because it may be just one of a series of other instances which taken together cause concern. We acknowledge that feelings generated by the discovery that a family member or member of staff/volunteer is, or maybe, abusing a child/vulnerable adult, will raise concerns among other staff or volunteers, including the difficulties inherent in reporting such matters. However, it is essential and expected that any concerns for the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult arising from abuse or harassment by a member of staff or volunteer should be reported immediately.

8. Identifying potential abusers and whistle blowing

- 8.1 People who pose a threat of sexual abuse to children, young people and vulnerable adults can be skilled at avoiding detection. Vauxhall City Farm staff and volunteers are made aware of the following possible indicators that might alert them to a possibility of sexual abuse:
- Pays an unusual amount of attention to individual or groups and/or provides them with presents, money or favours.
 - Seeks out vulnerable young people/adults, for example, young disabled people.
 - Seeks out opportunities to spend time with single children/vulnerable adults or a small group on a regular basis.
 - Takes a child/vulnerable adult or small group of children to his/her home.
 - Is vague about previous employment or gaps in employment history.
 - Avoids co-working or supervision of his/her work.
 - Encourages secretiveness about his/her activities with young people.
 - Talks or behaves inappropriately towards children/vulnerable adults and young people
- 8.2 Through training, management and supervision, we will attempt to make sure that these indicators are recognised. All staff and volunteers will be encouraged to share concerns about this type of practice.

- 8.3 Staff and volunteers should be supported to voice their concerns about anyone (including colleagues) that they have concerns about as a result of their work with Vauxhall City Farm immediately and without fear of repercussion. Staff and volunteers should bring matters of concern to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if they are not immediately available, their line manager who will immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or relevant external agencies.
- 8.4 Staff and volunteers are encouraged to report any behaviour by a colleague that raises concern regardless of source.

9. Allegations of abuse against professional members of staff, leaders, instructors and volunteers

- 9.1 The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Vauxhall City Farm's appointed Child Protection person. Where there is a formal complaint or allegation of abuse against a member of our staff, (paid staff, leaders, instructors or volunteers), the member of staff will be immediately suspended from work. This action is a neutral act designed to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise. There may be any one of three types of investigation:

- (a) An internal disciplinary or misconduct investigation
- (b) A Social Services led child protection investigation
- (c) A Police led criminal investigation

The results of any Police and Social Services investigation may well influence any internal disciplinary investigation.

When an allegation is made against a member of staff, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must consult with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). Each Local Authority (LA) must now have a Designated Officer (LADO) responsible for ensuring that allegations are managed in a proper way. The current LADO details should be obtained from the LA website.

It is a legal requirement under Vauxhall City Farm's Duty to Refer to the DBS.

- 9.2 If there are concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteers, this should be raised in the first instance with the Vauxhall City Farm supervisor in charge of the activity who will discuss this with their line manager. If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, then the supervisor, Line manager or Chief Executive will deal with it as an internal matter.
- 9.3 If the allegation is about poor practice by the "Vauxhall City Farm" supervisor, or where the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, then this should be referred directly to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will decide how this will be dealt with and whether or not to initiate a formal course of action. He or she may wish to discuss this with the Chair of Trustees or another professional organisation as part of that consideration. Where any formal complaint is received, Vauxhall City Farm would ask for this to be put in writing (see complaints procedure).
- 9.4 Any suspicion that a child has been or is being abused by a member of staff, **MUST** be reported to the supervisor and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately who will take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

- 9.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead should refer the allegation to the Local Authority Designated Officer who may involve the Police. The Chief Executive will determine who should deal with any media enquiries.
- 9.6 In most cases the parents or carers of the child should be contacted as soon as possible by the Designated Safeguarding Lead following advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer. This will depend on being sensitive to the needs of the young person.
- 9.7 Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.
- 9.8 If the supervisor is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Chief Executive, who will then be responsible for taking the action outlined above. If the allegation is against the Chief Executive, direct contact should be made with the Chair of Trustees. If the Chair or any other Trustee is the subject of an allegation, the matter should be reported to the Chief Executive.
- 9.9 Irrespective of the findings of the Social Services or Police, the Designated Safeguarding Lead with the Chief Executive and/or Chair must assess all individual cases under the appropriate disciplinary/misconduct procedure, to decide whether a member of staff can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the Police. In such cases the Designated Safeguarding Lead, with the Chief Executive and/or Chair must reach a decision based upon the information that is available. The welfare of children and young people must always remain paramount.
- 9.10 Consideration should be given to what support may be appropriate to children, young people, vulnerable adults their parents/carers and members of staff.
- 9.11 Where allegations are unfounded, the Chief Executive will work to ensure that the person concerned is given appropriate support to continue his or her work.
- 9.12 All paid and voluntary staff will have direct access to a child protection guidance sheet which includes relevant contact numbers.

10. Signs and Indicators of abuse.

- 10.1 Our staff may be aware of abuse in a number of ways:
- A child/vulnerable adult may tell them (disclose)
 - A third party may have reported an incident, or concern
 - They (the staff member) may have a concern
- 10.2 Abuse, neglect and exploitation in all its forms can affect a child/vulnerable at any age. The effects can be so damaging that, if not treated, they may follow an individual into adulthood.
- 10.3 There have been a number of studies suggesting disabled young/vulnerable people face an increased risk of abuse through various factors such as stereo-typing, prejudice, isolation, or an inability to communicate. Children/vulnerable adults from ethnic minorities who may be experiencing racial discrimination may be similarly powerless, as may also children and young people that are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender or questioning their sexual orientation.

- 10.4 Dealing with child/vulnerable adult abuse is rarely straightforward. In some cases, a child's behaviour, or an injury, may suggest that the child/vulnerable adult has been abused. In many situations, however, the signs will not be clear cut and decisions about what actions to take can be difficult. The signs and indicators in the following list are not exhaustive, and the presence of one or more indicators is not proof that abuse is actually taking place.

Signs and indicators:

- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent
- The child/vulnerable describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her
- Someone else, a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child/vulnerable adult
- Unexplained changes in behaviour, for example becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden uncharacteristic outbursts of temper
- Inappropriate sexual awareness
- Sexually explicit behaviour
- The child/vulnerable is distrustful of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship will normally be expected
- Has difficulty making friends
- Is prevented from socialising with others
- Displays variations in eating patterns including over eating, loss of appetite etc
- Loses weight for no apparent reason
- May make obvious attempts to conceal abuse (for example; refusing to remove a coat or jumper in hot weather)
- Use of sexually explicit language that is inappropriate to the age of the child

This is not an exhaustive list

It is NOT the responsibility of those working for Vauxhall City Farm to decide whether abuse is occurring, but it 'IS' our responsibility to act on any concern. It is also our responsibility, subject to any child/vulnerable adult protection implications, to consider the needs of those young people/vulnerable adults who are the perpetrators of abuse.

11. Responding to Allegations, Concerns or Suspicions

- 11.1 It is understandable that people who are well-motivated, loving and caring individuals, with a deep commitment to young people/vulnerable adults, are reluctant to believe that children/vulnerable adults may be suffering harm.
- 11.2 It may be difficult to accept that children/vulnerable adults could be at risk because of the way the organisation or activity is being run and/or the attitudes of those involved. We will strive to raise levels of awareness without creating an atmosphere of anxiety or suspicion. However, a basic principle should exist that if a member of Vauxhall City Farm staff becomes aware of anything which causes them to feel uncomfortable, they should talk immediately to their Line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Unpaid members of staff and sessional workers can also inform a paid member of staff. This means being aware of the attitudes of staff, instructors, coaches and volunteers and of the interactions between them and the children/young people/vulnerable adults and with each other.

11.3

Out of hours contact. Vauxhall City Farm recognises that some of the work carried out by staff and volunteers may be out of usual hours of contact (e.g. after 5pm) or in off-site locations - if staff have a concern, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Safeguarding Officer, and in their absence a member of the Senior Management Team. However, in the instance that a child/vulnerable adult may be at immediate risk then staff/volunteers should contact the police.

11.4 Our staff should be alert to any unusual incidents or activities that take place where they feel that staff, instructors, coaches or volunteers are putting themselves in a vulnerable position.

11.5 When dealing with a disclosure from a young person/vulnerable adult, staff should:

- Remind the young person about the Confidentiality Policy
- Listen carefully
- Clarify if necessary
- Stay calm and reassure
- Make accurate notes using the child/adult's own words (immediately after being told). All notes should be completed within 24 hours of a disclosure and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or, in their absence, another member of the senior management team or trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding)
- At the earliest opportunity the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be made aware of the disclosure (or, in their absence, another member of the senior management team or trustee with responsibility for Child Protection).

11.6 Staff should not:

- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading questions
- Use their own words to describe events.
- Investigate

12. Adult disclosures

12.1 We work with children and young people up to the age of 25 and other older adults, including those who may be considered adults at risk. Our staff will be encouraged not to ignore this fact.

12.2 The Care and support statutory guidance identifies ten specific types of abuse pertaining to adults. Click each category for signs and indicators (*Scie 2020*):

- [Physical abuse](#)
- [Domestic violence or abuse](#)
- [Sexual abuse](#)
- [Psychological or emotional abuse](#)
- [Financial or material abuse](#)
- [Modern slavery](#)
- [Discriminatory abuse](#)
- [Organisational or institutional abuse](#)
- [Neglect or acts of omission](#)
- [Self-neglect](#)

13. If there is a concern that an adult is at risk of abuse, staff should report the concern to the Safeguarding Team (DSL/DSO) for advice and follow

14. Bullying

Bullying will not be accepted, tolerated or condoned. All forms of bullying will be addressed on Vauxhall City Farm programmes. Bullying can include:

- Physical pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, etc.
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation and the continual ignoring of individuals
- Sectarian / racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual comments and / or suggestions
- Unwanted physical contact
- E-communications via social media or other online platforms

Young people/adults from ethnic minorities, that are disabled, LGBTQ+ and those with learning disabilities are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may be targeted.

Everyone has the responsibility to work together to stop bullying - the staff member / volunteer, the parent / guardian, the young person/vulnerable adult and the official.

Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and supported, whether it is the young person/vulnerable adult being bullied or the young person/vulnerable adult who is bullying. Any incident of bullying should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide if an investigation should take place.

15. E-Safety

- 15.1 Vauxhall City Farm recognises that e-safety is an important issue when dealing with the protection of young people and vulnerable adults. Staff and volunteers are expected to use computers, mobile phones, social networking and other technologies in a professional way. Care should be taken when using these media for personal use that boundaries are kept, and personal details are not exchanged with young people or vulnerable adults. In particular, staff and volunteers should not directly link with young people/vulnerable adults via personal social media accounts.

Staff should report any incidents involving the misuse of technical media or which involve young people/vulnerable adults being abused through this media should be reported to the Child Protection Officer.

16. Media Policy

- 16.1 One of Vauxhall City Farm's aims is to celebrate the positive achievements of young people and other service users. This may involve having dealings with the press and media. Vauxhall City Farm is keen to develop a good rapport and work proactively with the media, whilst ensuring that confidentiality and consent are always maintained.

Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk adults we work with is at the core of our media policy which is designed to ensure that no young person's own safety or privacy is compromised as a result of Vauxhall City Farm's relationship or dealings with the Press and other media agencies.

In particular the policy demands that consent is given by the young person and, if under 16, their parent, guardian or carer before any photographic material of that young person is made available in a public domain or any comment attributed to them or direct named reference made to them.

Important Contact Information

Vauxhall City Farm Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Sharon Noble
sharon@vauxhallcityfarm.org

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Cheryl McAndrew
cheryl@vauxhallcityfarm.org

Vauxhall City Farm Main line number: 020 7582 4204

All Lambeth safeguarding concerns (in and out of hours) please call 020 7926 5555

Lambeth Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://www.lambethsaferchildren.org.uk/>

Lambeth Safeguarding Adults Board <https://www.lambethsab.org.uk/>

In the event of a safeguarding concern

