

Safeguarding

This induction video will cover safeguarding. It will cover what safeguarding is, your role as a volunteer and what steps need to be taken if something does not feel right.

The message is simple, if you see something, say something.

What is safeguarding? Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect. Everybody has the right to be safe no matter what their circumstances and we are all responsible for the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The law about safeguarding applies to people under the age of 18 years old and people over the age of 18 years old who are in need of support because of their age, disability, mental health needs, drug or alcohol misuse, or other illness, and/or who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm.

What is abuse? Abuse comes in many forms and could be a single act or a repeated act or it could be a failure to act. It could be intentional, and it could be a crime.

Types of abuse include physical, sexual, emotional, financial, neglect, discrimination, which is abuse based on a protected characteristic, domestic, organisational, which is when abuse happens in a care home, company or organisation, modern slavery or self-abuse which could include self-harm or self-neglect which causes serious problems for that person.

As a volunteer, your role in safeguarding is to be aware that abuse happens and to be curious. You need to be the eyes and ears, make a report and tell your single point of contact if anything concerns you.

Your role is not to investigate or enquire, it is to be curious and observe how people look and behave. You may deliver a food parcel to a house and notice young children are home alone, or you could speak to someone in person or over the phone and they seem scared or fearful of someone else in the household. If you get a sense that something does not seem right, report it immediately to your point of contact. If you think a serious crime is being committed or if someone is in immediate danger, then you should contact the police. Safeguarding professionals will take things from there.

If you see something, say something. Whatever the circumstances, you have a responsibility to act if you have any concerns about abuse – doing nothing is not an option.

What should you do if someone discloses abuse to you? Always ensure you take any concerns seriously, listen carefully, do not ask any questions other to clarify what is being said to you and avoid the use of leading questions. Do not promise to keep anything a secret. It is not your responsibility to investigate any concerns yourself, the organisation you are volunteering with will have a designated safeguarding lead. After the disclosure, write down what was said to you, keeping to the facts. If there is immediate risk to someone, tell someone as soon as possible. You may need to call the emergency services to keep somebody safe.

If your volunteering role requires a DBS (disclosure and Barring) check, your organisation will let you know and assist you to complete this where necessary. If you are in a non-DBS volunteer role,

you must never work alone with a young person or vulnerable adult and you must stay in a public place where you can be observed by other people.

In terms of making friends with service users. Volunteers should not give out any contact details. If you have built up a friendship with someone you are supporting and would like to meet them outside of your volunteering hours. Please declare this to your point of contact before giving out any of your contact details. Volunteers must not accept any offers of accommodation, travel, food, drink, entertainment, hospitality, money, or gifts of any kind. This is to make sure that the relationship between the volunteer and the service user is as equal as it possibly can be.

Unfortunately, some people who want to exploit or abuse others may see volunteering as an opportunity to do this. This will only be a very small number of people, but we do need to be alert to the possibility. If you see a volunteer being given money or inappropriate gifts by an individual or crossing boundaries, report it to your point of contact.

Your own safety is important. Should you find yourself in a situation where you do not feel safe, please leave immediately and do not worry about the task. Please advise your single point of contact in the first instance. Please talk to your single point of contact if an individual is offensive or abusive, you are worried about anyone or want to get some advice on something you have seen or heard.

Who to advise? In an emergency, please contact 999. In the first instance, please advise your point of contact at the organisation you are volunteering with. You can also contact Volunteer Centre Dorset on 01305 269214 and ask to speak to the safeguarding lead. The contact number for the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Team is 01305 221016 and the number if you are worried about a child is 01305 228866.

Remember safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and now you have the opportunity to help keep Dorset residents safe. If you see something say something

Thank you for listening to the safeguarding section of your induction. Please ensure to watch all the other videos and do get in contact should you have any questions.

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