

Food Family Action Safeguarding Policy¹

Family Food Action works through community partners to relieve family food poverty. Our delivery model is low risk in terms of safeguarding as it does not normally involve direct contact with vulnerable adults or children. However, we are committed, as far as is reasonable and practicable, to preventing harm and ensuring the health, wellbeing, and rights of everyone (including children, at-risk adults, and visitors) arising from undertaking FFA activities or coming into contact with FFA team members and activities - and to respond appropriately when/if harm does occur.

This policy relates to the safeguarding of those that may be vulnerable:

FFA commits to:

- creating an inclusive, safe, and non-judgmental environment to work in
- identify risks, and to control those risks wherever practicable
- provide information and training in relation to safeguarding - as required by the expectations and responsibilities of the role
- provide adequate support and supervision to all team members carrying out FFA business
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process
- review this policy and associated procedures regularly (at least annually) and revise policy and procedures as the need arises

Definitions (for this document)²

- **Safeguarding:** In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect.³
- **Vulnerable adult:** A person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation⁴
- **Child:** A person below the age of 18

FFA roles:

- **Volunteer:** someone who contributes to the delivery of FFAs services (either in FFAs sorting hub with a team of 3-4 other volunteers under the supervision of a sorting lead or as a driver delivering goods to our 4 community partners) but who is not part of the management group
- **Management group member:** a named role holder on the FFA management group (includes trustees and non-trustees)
- **Sorting leads:** a designated member of the management group who supports and has responsibility for the weekly team of sorting and delivery volunteers and for ensuring that all procedures are followed, that volunteers present are aware of FFA policies (ie check that they have read and signed the relevant documents), that a team meeting occurs at the start of sorting and that any issues which occur are recorded and acted on.
- FFA commits to ensuring that relevant trustees/lead volunteers will receive training and DBS certification as soon as possible following commencement of role and within three months.

¹ FFA also has a Health & safety policy to protect people from harm caused by manual handling, lifting and food hygiene. This should be read in conjunction with this safeguarding policy.

² A glossary of types of abuse experienced by children and adults is included at the end of this policy.

³ NHS 'What is Safeguarding? Easy Read' 2011

⁴ 1 March 2000. 'No secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse', Department of Health. (The broad definition of a 'vulnerable adult' referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper Who decides? issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department.

- **Safeguarding lead:** FFA trustee who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of vulnerable adults or children who will have Basic DBS certification and have undertaken Safeguarding training. The Safeguarding lead can be contacted via specific email safeguarding@familyfoodaction.org.uk or via any Sorting Lead or Trustee. If the Safeguarding Lead is unavailable or an allegation of abuse is made about him/her there is a secondary safeguarding lead who can be contacted via Sorting Leads or Trustees. The secondary safeguarding lead will also have basic DBS certification and have had safeguarding training.
- **Team Members:** a collective term to describe everyone engaged in delivering FFA activities including volunteers and members of the management group

POLICY STATEMENT

Family Food Action:

- undertakes to design and carry out all our activities, as far as is reasonable and practicable, in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from working with or coming into contact with FFA.
- this includes the way in which information about individuals and organisations we support is gathered and communicated
- has a designated safeguarding lead/trustee
- will ensure that all team members are aware of what is required from them under this safeguarding policy and that it is practised at all times
- follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process
- co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services when/if they need to conduct an official safeguarding investigation associated with FFA activities and/or team members
- works with community organisations with safeguarding and health and safety policies governing their staff, premises, and activities.
- will review this policy annually

Implementation

FFA's activities are such that there are very few opportunities for abuse of vulnerable adults or children to occur however this does not mean we have a false sense of security. We will continue to monitor all activities and seek to minimise situations where abuse might occur.

Although the number of people who actively seek to abuse vulnerable adults and children is very small, FFA can reduce opportunities for abuse in various ways.

For example, by ensuring:

- the name and contact details of the safeguarding lead are displayed at the sorting hub and publicised among members
- that all safeguarding and sorting leads have DBS checks and undergone relevant training
- that volunteers know who is in the management group, their roles and how to contact them
- expecting individuals to be responsible for their own wellbeing and that of others on site
- providing a clear statement of FFAs values and expected behaviour
- a designated sorting lead on duty every week to provide supervision and support and have ultimate responsibility for monitoring on-site behaviour and reminding volunteers what is expected of them as required

- we have a proportionate and safe approach to recruitment and training
- volunteer delivery drivers do not take passengers or new volunteers in their cars (unless with mutual agreement and under their own responsibility)
- our community partners are aware of our safeguarding policy and know how to contact our safeguarding lead about any concerns
- by ensuring that FFA and the Ardagh (the community trust who own and loan our sorting space) are clear about our respective safeguarding responsibilities
- this policy is provided to all team members as part of their induction programme and any amendments are brought to their attention
- we have a robust and visible reporting procedure – what steps to take if there are concerns, or if a disclosure or allegation is made
- we publicise contact details for the local authority and police
- ensure this policy and our risk register are live documents that are regularly reviewed and updated

Recruitment

Although all reasonable measure will be taken by FFA to prevent the recruitment of volunteers who pose a risk to children or adults it is known this nevertheless less can occur and that the role could be used to gain access to those who are vulnerable either by age or by care and support needs. FFA volunteers are themselves unlikely to be vulnerable adults however any individual can have specific needs and vulnerabilities. We therefore strive to create a safe environment in which all team members can flourish and any visitors or members of the public who come into contact with FFA are protected, for instance by:

- recruiting adults aged 18 or above
- asking volunteers to:
 - a) read the FFA induction pack (with links to this policy, the health & safety policy and risk register) and sign to say they have done so before commencing work,
 - b) sign GDPR compliant consent for FFA to store their contact details
 - c) disclose details of any criminal convictions (except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) so an adequate risk assessment can be undertaken
- providing a clear job description and statement about the behaviour and values expected from all who work as part of the team (as part of their induction) i.e. the Safeguarding Code of Conduct 'Maintaining a Safe Culture within Family Food Action'.
- asking volunteers to fill in their next of kin contact details and any specific needs (e.g., allergens) or vulnerabilities before completing a shift
- FFA reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer and/or ban them from the property should they feel it is necessary

Training

The Safeguarding and sorting leads and Chair will undertake safeguarding training and the action to take if harm occurs. Volunteers will be expected to sign the induction pack to indicate they have seen and read FFAs safeguarding, and Health & Safety policies and risk register and agree to adhere to them in practice.

Reporting

The safeguarding lead will be available for team members to speak with should they feel the need to talk about an incident which has happened whilst working for or receiving assistance from the FFA, particularly if they feel they have been physically, sexually or emotionally abused.

Recording

- The Safeguarding lead will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they or another team member has.
- They will be responsible for escalating concerns appropriately either to the Chair and trustees or in the case of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse will seek immediate advice from Social Services Department or the Police.
- However, it is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional vulnerable adult and child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about someone.
- If a concern is brought to the attention of the safeguarding lead and not adequately dealt with the next step is to talk to the Chair of the Board of Trustees or contact Social Services/the Police as a private citizen to discuss your concerns.
- The Safeguarding lead & other team members must ensure that their recording of facts, incidents, assessments, referrals, and case discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, dated, factual and kept confidential. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence. Any supporting evidence should be preserved and clearly labelled.
- These records will be stored securely in a manner that safeguards the individual's right to privacy and security, they will be available to statutory bodies as required by law and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.

Whistle-blowing

Team members are encouraged to take action when suspicious that abuse is occurring at work – no matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is. FFA will respect and not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused. Staff have a responsibility to report any occurrences or suspicions of adult abuse and those who report abuse are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Disclosure of Information There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All team members 'personal and delicate information disclosed to FFA is confidential but may not always be secret, it is:

- Confidential to FFA and can be shared with team members on a 'need to know basis.'
- Can be shared with another agency when: -
 - Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held,
 - there is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent
 - the law requires it

Registered Charity Number: **1198241** Registered in England and Wales

Safeguarding Policy: Updated 5/2/2024

Review date: 5/2/2025

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there are any legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies.

Glossary of types of abuse experienced by children and adults at risk

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Bullying

This can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour. It is usually repeated over a period of time and occurs where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical, verbal, and emotional.

Physical

This harm is not accidental. Physical abuse is deliberate harm to a child or vulnerable adult which causes physical injury

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation

Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.