



Working with Vulnerable Adult & Safeguarding Policy



Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Policy

Statement

Escape Arts is committed to keeping vulnerable adults safe from harm and exploitation and to uphold their rights, always acting in their best interests and with the consent of individuals *(in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998.)*

Scope

For the purposes of the policy a member of staff includes: all employees, including sessional staff and volunteers, work experience placements and trainees. This policy applies to all staff regardless of whether or not they have regular contact with vulnerable adults. Escape Arts expect all people working for the organisation, volunteering or attending events or workshop sessions are treated with the same dignity and respect, and have equal access to any of Escape's services, as any other adult.

Escape Arts values and principles

- To provide access to information, activities and knowledge – all vulnerable adults will have access to information that they can understand to make an informed choice, including access to expert knowledge and advocacy, as required and enable them to take part in all activities and events.
- Offer Choices – all vulnerable adults will have the opportunity to select independently from a range of options based on clear and accurate information.
- Confidentiality – all vulnerable adults will know that information about them is managed appropriately and there is a clear understanding of confidentiality and its limits among staff/volunteers.
- Consent – all vulnerable adults have the right to be supported to make their own decisions and to give or withhold their consent to an activity or service. Consent is a clear indication of a willingness to participate in an activity or to accept a service. It may be signalled verbally, by gesture, by willing participation or in writing. No one can give, or withhold, consent on behalf of another adult unless special provision for particular purposes has been made for this, usually by law.



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- Dignity and respect – all vulnerable adults will be given the same respect and dignity as any other adult, by recognising their uniqueness and personal needs.
- Equality and diversity – all vulnerable adults will be treated equally and their background and culture will be valued and respected.
- Fulfilment – all vulnerable adults will be invited to engage in activities and offered services that enable them to fulfil their ability and potential.
- Independence – all vulnerable adults will have as much control as possible over their lives whilst being safeguarded against unreasonable risks.
- Privacy – all vulnerable adults will be free from unnecessary intrusion into their affairs; and there will be a balance between the individual's own safety and the safety of others.
- Safety – all vulnerable adults will feel safe, and live without fear of violence, neglect or abuse in any form.
- Support – all vulnerable adults will be supported to report any form of abuse and to receive appropriate support following abuse for as long as may be required.

To ensure a safe environment for vulnerable adults Escape operates

- A Safeguarding process for all staff & volunteers working with vulnerable adults which recognises and responds to, recording and reporting concerns about abuse
- A recruitment process that ensures that all staff who have regular, direct and unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults are carefully selected and have a current DBS check.
- Management, support, supervision and training of staff / volunteers
- A risk assessment procedure.
A rigorous management of records, confidentiality and sharing of information
- A complaints procedure in place that can be used if there are any concerns.

Supported by the following policy

- Health and Safety
- First Aid training
- Equal Opportunities
- Confidentiality Policy
- Child Protection Policy



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SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS - Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We will work together to prevent and minimise abuse. If we have concerns that someone is being abused our loyalty to the vulnerable person comes before anything else – our group, other service users, our colleagues and the person's friends and family.

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION - If we know or suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, we will do something about it and ensure our work is properly recorded. We will work within the boundaries of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

Definitions

A vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who:

- Is or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness
- AND is unable to take care of him / herself
- OR is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation

A vulnerable person may fall into any one of the following groups: older and frail people; people with a mental health need, a learning difficulty, a physical impairment, a sensory impairment; people who are substance or alcohol dependent; or family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people. Abuse may be single or repeated acts. It can be:

- Physical: for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining or giving the wrong medication.
- Psychological and emotional: for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse.
- Financial: including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.
- Sexual: such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent – this can occur in any relationship.



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- **Discriminatory:** including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks;
- **Institutional:** the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** including ignoring medical or physical care needs. These can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable person: for example, where a person is deprived of food, heat, clothing, comfort or essential medication, or failing to provide access to appropriate health or social care services.

How Might We Notice Abuse?

Concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:

- A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult.
- A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
- An observation of the behaviour of the vulnerable adult by the volunteer, member of staff or carer.

Our Commitment

To support vulnerable adults who are experiencing, or at risk from, abuse, Escape Arts is committed to:

- Identifying the abuse of vulnerable adults where it is occurring.
- Responding effectively to any circumstances giving grounds for concern, or where formal complaints or expressions of anxiety are expressed.
- Ensuring the active participation of individuals, families, groups and communities wherever possible and appropriate.
- Raising awareness of the extent of abuse on vulnerable adults and its impact on them.
- Promoting and supporting work designed to reduce abuse and the fear of abuse as experienced by vulnerable adults.



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- Regularly monitoring and evaluating how our policies, procedures and practices for protecting vulnerable adults are working.
- Making sure our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring our procedures are in line with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Procedures.

Prevention and Confidentiality

All staff and volunteers will have DBS checks before they will have one to one direct contact with vulnerable adults or their carers.

All staff and volunteers will be requested to read Escape Arts Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, and will be offered safeguarding training.

Escape Arts will work with vulnerable adults in a way that meets all the aspects of confidentiality in our different policies, but where abuse to a vulnerable person is alleged, suspected, reported or concerns are raised, the Safeguarding Adults Procedure must be followed. The confidentiality of the vulnerable person will be respected wherever possible and their consent obtained to share information. The vulnerable person should be made aware that staff cannot ignore issues around abuse and that steps will be taken to deal with them in as sensitive a manner as possible. The welfare of the individual is paramount.

The Procedure

1. You think abuse has or may have occurred. Act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a vulnerable adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to:

Make Safe. Deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the adult is in no immediate danger and seeking medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.

Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence. Where an assault of some kind is suspected do not wash or bathe the person unless this is associated with first aid treatment necessary to prevent further harm.

If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed. This may include suspending the member(s) of staff or volunteer. The staff member or volunteer is also entitled to support at this stage. Please refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.



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Inform. Tell your line manager immediately or the Artistic Director if your line manager is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation. Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed.

Record. Record details of the allegation as soon as possible somewhere that can be kept secure. Include:

- a. The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident, what the vulnerable adult said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.
- b. The appearance and behaviour of the victim.
- c. Any injuries observed.

It is the responsibility of the Line Manager or Artistic Director:

1. Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.
2. Deal with any immediate needs:
 - Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe
 - Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged
 - Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost
 - If the alleged perpetrator is also a vulnerable adult, ensure that a member of staff is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
3. Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible, the victim.
4. Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding adults procedures i.e. meeting the definition of abuse as defined in this Policy and Procedures.
5. Address issues of consent and confidentiality.
6. A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised wherever:
 - A crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed.
 - There is a suspicion that an abuse has taken place.
 - The allegation involves a member of staff or paid carer.
 - Other vulnerable adults are at risk.
 - The alleged perpetrator is a vulnerable adult.
 - They are unsure if abuse has taken place



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2. Bringing the concern to appropriate persons: If an adult makes a disclosure or staff member believes that the individual is experiencing domestic abuse and if necessary their adult or children project lead and artistic director can make a referral to MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference). MARAC is a multi-agency meeting which domestic abuse victims who have been identified as at high risk of serious harm or homicide are referred to. The MARAC is attended by representatives from a range of statutory and voluntary sector agencies. During the meeting relevant and proportionate information is shared about the current risks, enabling representatives to identify options to increase the safety of the victim and any other vulnerable parties such as children. The MARAC then creates a multi-agency action plan to address the identified risks and increase the safety and wellbeing of all those at risk. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim. However, taking in to account the UK law which prioritises the safety of children, the MARAC will also make links with other multi-agency meetings and processes to safeguard children and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator.

A MARAC referral can be made without the the permission of the victim if the need for intervention is high.

Important to note that Domestic Violence and abuse is any type of hurt taking place between adults who are close to each other (this might be between parents, boyfriend and girlfriend or within families. Hurt can take place in lots of different ways. Sometimes it can result in physical violence, but can also be emotional abuse, financial abuse or sexual abuse. Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone. Most people think it mainly happens to women, but it can happen to men as well. Listed below are different types of abuse.

- hitting, slapping, pulling hair, biting and kicking
- name calling, bullying, controlling what the other person does (mental / emotional abuse)
- controlling or taking all the money, not letting the other person work
- forcing the person to have sex, touching them against their will

Useful websites:

<http://www.talk2someone.org.uk>

Talk to someone: 0800408 1552

8:30am - 8:30pm Monday - Friday

10am - 4pm Saturday

<https://www.refuge.org.uk/our-work/our-services/refuge-warwickshire-domestic-violence-service/>

Talk to someone: 08082000247 (this is a 24 hour service)



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Call Adult Social Care Team - contact 24 hours-a-day on: 01926 412080

The person making the referral should ideally have the following information available; however, the lack of any of this information should not delay the referral:

- The name of the vulnerable adult, date of birth and age
- Address and telephone number
- Why the adult is considered vulnerable
- Whether consent has obtained for the referral, and if not the reasons e.g. the vulnerable adult lacks mental capacity or there is an over-riding public interest (e.g. where other vulnerable adults are at risk)
- Whether there are any concerns or doubts about the mental capacity of the vulnerable adult
- Whether the police are aware of the allegation, and whether a police investigation is underway

Our adult social care teams can offer advice and support to the person and/or their carers and, where necessary, arrange appropriate services.

Warwickshire Police - if you think a crime may have been committed. Specify it is a safeguarding issue (999 in an emergency)

This policy and procedure was reviewed and adopted on: 23rd Oct 2018

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