

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY - FEBRUARY 2023

### Purpose

Tempo acknowledges it has a responsibility for the safety of children and adults at risk who come into contact with our temporary workers and employees. Tempo is committed to practices which protect children and adults at risk from harm. This policy is applied equally to Tempo employees and its temporary workers ("candidates").

The key objectives of this policy are:

- to ensure children and vulnerable adults are given our highest priority
- to identify, recognise and respond to possible indicators of abuse, neglect or situations where extra support to prevent abuse may be implemented
- to support our staff to ensure that they know how to report and deal with any allegation of abuse or neglect.

Whilst it is impossible to ensure a child or vulnerable adults would never come to any harm, this policy and associated guidelines aim to help us to protect such individuals.

Each person will be regarded as an individual, listened to, have their feelings respected and opinions valued. Where we suspect any area of risk, we will endeavour to offer early intervention, referral and a strong network of support.

This policy is not contractual, but aims to set out how we normally deal with such issues.

### Scope

This policy applies to anyone working for us in any capacity. This could include those that are employed, agency or voluntary.

Upon registration with Tempo, this policy is provided to all workers to ensure they understand how to manage disclosures, concerns or incidents reported to or observed by them.

### Definitions

In this policy, a child is any person aged under 18; an adult is someone aged 18 or over.

A vulnerable child may have a disability, suffer from a mental health problem, be defenceless, be non-assertive, have learning difficulties, have sensory impairments, be physically ill, be in care, have parents who are drug or substance dependant, or are themselves suffering from illness or have disabilities.

A vulnerable adult may be unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may be because they:

- have a mental health problem
- have a disability
- are old or frail
- have learning difficulties
- have a sensory impairment

- have an illness
- are homeless

There may be in residential accommodation, sheltered housing, receiving domiciliary care, or receiving any form of health care.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be an act of neglect or a failure to act. It may occur when a child or vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

Many types of abuse can be inflicted, some may be due to negligence, ignorance or lack of understanding. The person inflicting the abuse is often known to the person being abused, they may be:

- a family member, friend or neighbour
- a paid carer or volunteer
- a health worker, social care or other worker
- another resident or service user
- an occasional visitor or someone who is providing a service who deliberately exploits vulnerable people
- a stranger

Types of abuse include:

- 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

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a vulnerable adult or child's life include:

- Physical injuries (bruising, fractures, burns, bedsores)
- Fear
- Depression
- Unexplained weight loss
- Malnutrition
- Untreated medical problems
- Confusion
- Loss of sleep
- Unexpected or unexplained change in behaviour
- Unexplained shortage of money

These signs don't necessarily mean that someone is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour.

There may also be some concerning behaviour from those with adults at risk or children in their care which raises concerns for the service users safety and wellbeing.

## **Planning and Supervision**

All activities or work involving children or vulnerable adults should be planned to ensure that the age and ability of the participant(s) is considered.

Employees, volunteers or freelancers supervising activities or work should be competent and trained to do so. Supervision should take account of the age, gender, nature of the activity and any special needs of the individual(s).

Where appropriate, a risk assessment will be undertaken and documented.

All workers should be mindful when working alone with a child or vulnerable adult. If the working environment does not require a worker to work alone with children and/or vulnerable adults then they should ensure that this scenario is avoided to ensure their own safeguarding as well as the children and/or vulnerable adults. If it is not avoidable, as is the case in classroom and residential environments, then workers must be mindful of this, keeping doors open wherever possible.

This guidance applies also to transport in vehicles - workers should not offer to transport a child or vulnerable adult anywhere unless accompanied by a further person or as part of a formal, authorised arrangement.

## **Physical Contact**

Under no circumstances should any employee, worker or volunteer have any physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult unless this is to prevent accident or injury to themselves or anyone else (eg to prevent a fall), or in the case of medical assistance being needed (eg to administer first aid), or to provide nursing or other general care, in which case the prior consent of the affected person should be requested where possible. Where appropriate, consent from parents or those with parental or caring responsibility should be obtained.

If a child or vulnerable adult is hurt or distressed, the worker should do their best to comfort or reassure the affected person without compromising their dignity, or doing anything to discredit the person's own behaviour.

To protect both themselves and our business, workers should avoid the following:

- being alone with children or vulnerable adults out of public view wherever practical
- kissing or hugging them or any unnecessary physical contact
- engaging in rough or sexually provocative games
- making sexual comments
- taking a child or vulnerable adult alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, taking a child or vulnerable adult to the toilet unless either (a) another adult is present or (b) another adult is aware (this may include a parent)
- letting allegations made by anyone go unacknowledged, unresolved or not acted upon

If physical contact is used, workers must adhere to the following principles. The contact must:

- Be in accordance with the setting's behaviour policy
- Be non-abusive, with no intention to cause pain, injury or discomfort.
- Be in the best interests of the child or vulnerable adult and others.
- Have a clear education / care purpose
- Take account of gender issues.

Workers working in an education or social care setting should be aware that it is their responsibility to familiarise themselves with the relevant behaviour policy.

All staff, workers and volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults, whether acting in a paid or unpaid capacity, should:

- exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues
- challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report allegations or suspicions of abuse
- if the recipient of any complaint or accusation from a child or vulnerable adult, listen without making or implying any judgement as to the truth of the complaint or accusation
- keep parents/relatives informed of all anticipated activities
- remember that those who abuse children and vulnerable adults can be of any age, gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place
- ensure risk assessments are completed on each activity.

## **Communication**

Communication is vital in establishing relationships built on trust and understanding. Those working with children or vulnerable adults should listen to what they are saying and respond appropriately. Such people are entitled to the same respect as any employees, workers and volunteers. It should also be made clear to them what standards of behaviour and mutual respect are expected from them.

Those working with children/vulnerable adults should behave appropriately, observing the boundaries of professionalism, ensuring that language is moderated in their presence and should refrain from adult jokes or comments which are clearly unsuitable. Workers should also note that what may be acceptable language to their friends may not be regarded as such by those of an older generation.

## **Behaviour and Abuse**

We do not tolerate anti-social behaviour. We aim to ensure good working relationships.

All our employees, workers and volunteers have a strict duty to never subject any child or vulnerable adult to any form of harm or abuse. This includes, but is not limited to:

- to cause distress by shouting or calling them derogatory names
- to slap them
- to hold them in such a way that it causes pain, or to shake them
- to physically restrain them (except to protect them from harming themselves or others)
- to take part in horseplay or rough games

- to allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind
- to do things of a personal nature for the person that they can do for themselves (this includes changing clothing)
- to allow or engage in sexually suggestive behaviour within a person's sight or hearing, or make suggestive remarks to or within earshot of the child or vulnerable adult
- to give or show anything which could be construed as pornographic
- to seek or agree to meet them anywhere outside of the normal workplace without the full prior knowledge and agreement of the parent, guardian or carer
- to engage with them online in an unacceptable manner.

## **Contact Outside of Work**

Contact should not be made with any of the children or vulnerable adults with whom you/we are working for any reason unrelated to the particular work. In particular, our employees, workers and volunteers are required to maintain our reputation for integrity and responsibility in dealing with such people, and should not enter into any social or other non-work-related arrangements with them.

## **Gifts and Inducements**

On no account should any of our employees, workers or volunteers give a child or vulnerable adult a gift, or buy refreshments etc, which could in any way be considered a bribe or inducement to enter into a relationship with that person or give rise to any false allegations of improper conduct against the individual.

Our employees, workers or volunteers should not accept any gift or favour from a child or vulnerable adult unless this is of nominal value and is declared to their relevant Line Manager at the placement preferably, but if this is not possible it should be declared to Tempo's Company Director.

## **Safety**

The safety of the people we, and our workers, work with is paramount and we are committed to providing a safe environment within which to work. Those working with children or vulnerable adults should ensure all appropriate risk assessments and security checks have been carried out prior to any assignment. This could include first aid cover, risk assessments and accident reporting.

If transporting children or vulnerable adults, the transport should be checked to ensure it is roadworthy and adequate for the purpose. Any equipment used must be safe and only used for the purpose for which it is intended. Users should be adequately trained. Appropriate insurance should be up to date and adequate to cover such assignments. Insurance documents must be verified by Tempo's Company Director.

## **Confidentiality**

All personal information regarding children or vulnerable adults is highly confidential and should only be shared with appropriate people on a need to know basis. Information will be stored in a secure, password protected file, access limited to Ollie Povey, Company Director, and will only be kept for as long as is needed before being permanently and securely deleted. Wherever possible,

documents relating to a specific child or vulnerable adult should identify them only with initials and not their full name as a further step to protect their identity.

The requirement for confidentiality is emphasised with anyone who is likely to have access to confidential material regarding children or vulnerable adults, or any of the bodies on behalf of whom we are working. Where specifically requested by a client, candidates may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

## **General Principles Regarding Suspected Abuse**

It is not our responsibility to investigate abuse. However, we do have a duty to act if there is a cause for concern and to notify the appropriate authorities via the nominated person so that they can investigate and take any action necessary.

This policy seeks to give workers an insight to Tempo's safeguarding policy, give practical advice about how to safeguard themselves and others and how to manage safeguarding concerns or disclosures appropriately.

The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount and all practical steps must be taken to protect them from harm. Any concerns raised by a child or vulnerable adult must be acted upon without delay.

## **Reporting of Suspicions of Abuse**

Under no circumstances should any employee, workers or volunteer try to deal with alleged abuse by themselves as it is not our responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place.

Anyone who witnesses or suspects abusive behaviour towards a child or vulnerable adult, or who has any concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, should record the details and report this immediately to the designated Child/Adult Protection Officer, clarifying the grounds for suspicion. In their absence, the placement Line Manager must be informed that there are grounds for concern. If neither of the above people are available, the worker can report a brief outline of their concerns to their relevant Recruitment Manager and they will make every effort to urgently contact the client's Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer to notify them of the worker's concerns. The Recruitment Manager must report this to the Company Director, Ollie Povey, whilst observing the strictest of confidentiality.

If anyone has suspicions, they must act on these and not ignore a potentially very serious situation. It is not the individual's responsibility to decide how serious the matter might be nor to investigate their suspicions - this requires expertise they are not expected to have.

Any allegations of abuse made against anyone working for us will be thoroughly investigated and dealt with through our disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal.

The Company Director, also the company's designated Child/Adult Protection officer will make a record of all allegations or reported incidents and assess whether any allegation or concern warrants any further action. They will:

- refer any suspicion of abuse to the social services, giving any other relevant information, including details of work with the family and whether parents or relatives are aware of the referral. This will be done verbally in the first instance and a written referral made within 24 hours of the initial telephone call.

- record fully (within 24 hours) all relevant information about the incident or concern, including details of any comments or explanations given by the parents/carers etc.

We will aim to maintain any request for witness anonymity, where appropriate and possible, and to provide support if required.

## **Disclosure of Abuse by a Child or Vulnerable Adult**

If a child or vulnerable adult alleges abuse, it is important to respond appropriately. This means giving them the opportunity to talk without asking probing questions. Staff/Workers should:

- stay calm
- acknowledge that they have heard the person
- listen carefully to what is being said
- find an appropriate opportunity to explain that the information will probably have to be shared with others
- never promise to keep secrets.
- allow the person to talk at their own pace
- not ask direct questions
- allow the person to say as much as they want to, by using active listening skills such as mirroring, neutral responses and active body language
- reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling someone
- tell them what steps will be taken next and with whom the information will be shared
- never promise to keep the disclosure a secret
- report the disclosure to the appropriate person without delay and record in writing what was said as soon as possible and in any event within 24 hours.

The written report should include:

- the child's or vulnerable adult's known details including name, date of birth, address and contact telephone numbers
- whether the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times, specific factors and any other relevant information, making a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay
- a description of any visible bruising or other injuries, also any indirect signs such as behavioural changes
- details of witnesses to the incidents
- the account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred
- accounts from others, including colleagues and parents.

Staff/workers may have to make a judgement about how much of the story they allow the child or vulnerable adult to disclose. This is dependent on the individual circumstances and the decision should reflect:

- that they are likely to have to repeat what is said to a social worker and/or the police. Therefore, it may be appropriate to stop them so that they do not have to tell their experiences several times.

- that it may be traumatic for them to disclose the details and, if distressed, they may need to continue to tell of their experiences.
- that any attempt to stop them telling should be done very sensitively so that they do not think that
- we do not want to hear, are disgusted, angry or disbelieving.

Whilst waiting for Social Services and/or the police, the member of staff/Worker should:

- reassure the child/vulnerable adult and make sure that they are safe, but don't make promises we cannot keep
- listen to them and tell them what is being done to maintain confidentiality at all times
- usually inform the child's parent(s), carer(s) or relatives, unless to do so would put them at risk.
- If uncertain, discuss with Social Services.

We recognise our duty to work with other agencies in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and in responding to abuse. All members of staff have a responsibility to be mindful of issues related to their safety and welfare and a duty to report and refer any concerns however minor they appear.

## **Information Sharing**

Sharing of information in cases of concern about a child's or vulnerable adult's welfare will enable professionals to consider jointly how to proceed in the best interests of the individual and to safeguard such people generally. Effective information sharing is a vital element of both early intervention and safeguarding. Often, it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared and is then put together that it becomes clear that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk or suffering harm.

The person's best interests must be the overriding consideration in making any decision to share information. The member of staff must weigh up what might happen if the information is shared, against what might happen if it is not, and make a decision based on a reasonable judgement.

There may be situations when they are unsure whether to share information. In such cases, they should speak with the Child/Adult Protection Officer on site at their placement.

Whenever information is shared, especially when there is a need to share without consent, the member of staff/Worker should document what they have shared and with whom and for what purpose. As at a later point in time they may need to justify the reasons for disclosure. In addition, if they make a decision not to disclose information following a request to do so, they should document the reasons for not making a disclosure.

## **Communicating this Policy**

Whilst all of our employees, workers and volunteers will be made aware of this policy and asked to read it, a copy will be readily available electronically on request. Hard copies can also be sent out to workers on request.



A copy of this policy is also available for all relevant bodies with whom we work and will be made available to parents and carers/family of the children or vulnerable adults with whom we plan to work. Any concerns about the assignment or people involved should be addressed with Tempo's Company Director.

## **Breach of this Policy**

Failure to follow the guidelines in this policy is considered a serious offence and will be investigated thoroughly and dealt with through our disciplinary procedure. Serious breaches may lead to dismissal (for employees) and termination of any agreement (for workers or volunteers).

## **Monitoring and Review**

Ollie Povey, the Company Director, will monitor and review this policy and procedures on an annual basis, or at an earlier opportunity should the need arise. The information gained via completed report forms and feedback from relevant external bodies will also form the basis for any necessary changes in policy or procedure.

Employees compliance with this policy will be measured via random company audits, monthly one to one performance management meetings, supervision meetings and annual appraisals.

The above list is not exhaustive.

## **Policy Owner**

Ollie Povey, Company Director, owns and maintains this policy. Should you have any questions or queries with regards to the policy, please contact Ollie Povey for clarification.