

Well Kneaded Safeguarding Policy and Procedure September 2023

Safeguarding Officers: Bryony Lewis, Hannah Ahern
bryony@wellkneadedfood.com- 07920055678
hannah@wellkneadedfood.com- 07828236847

Introduction:

Well Kneaded aims to educate, train and equip young people aged 16-25, who have faced disadvantage. The following policies and procedures are to make sure that Well Kneaded has all the right processes in place to protect and safeguard both adults at risk (18-25) and young people (16-18). It is essential that these policies and procedures are upheld by all members of the team.

Well Kneaded Safeguarding Policy

At Well Kneaded we are committed to keeping people safe from harm. We firmly believe that all individuals should be treated with dignity, respect and compassion. Our desire is for each individual to be given every opportunity to develop and to recognise their own positive value and sense of self-worth. We believe that all individuals have the right to live a life free from exploitation, harm and mistreatment, the right to feel and to be safe.

Well Kneaded will seek to ensure that all members of the team and trustees promote these values, creating an environment where all individuals are protected from abuse. Where abuse occurs, or is suspected or alleged, Well Kneaded will respond with speed, sensitivity and with our focus on protecting anyone at risk from further harm. All staff have a duty to report any concerns or suspicions that an individual is being, or is at risk of being, abused. We will ensure that all members of the team are trained to be competent and feel confident in dealing with safeguarding issues.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the Well Kneaded team. We are aware that the team will come into contact with many people, through our customers and at events. These policies and procedures will provide a means to recognise, respond, report, record and refer if any breach of safety is suspected or disclosed.

Safeguarding at risk adults

Definition of an 'Adult at risk':

An 'adult at risk' may be a person who:

- Is elderly and frail due to ill health
- Has a learning disability
- Has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- Has mental health needs including dementia or personality disorder
- Has a long-term mental illness/or condition
- Misuses substances or alcohol
- Is unable to make their own decisions and is in need of care and support
- Is a young adult, over the age of 18, who has care and support needs and is 'in transition' from childrens' to adults' services
- Is a carer (looking after another person with care and support needs)

In the context of safeguarding adults, the extent to which the adult is at risk is related to how able they are to make and exercise their own informed choices free from duress, pressure or undue influence of any sort, and to protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation. It is important to note that people with capacity can also still be 'at risk'.

It is always essential in safeguarding to consider whether the adult at risk is capable of giving informed consent. If they are, their consent to any course of action should be obtained. This may be in relation to whether they give their consent to:

- o An activity that may be abusive – if consent to abuse or neglect was given under duress, for example, as a result of exploitation, pressure, fear, intimidation – this apparent consent should be disregarded.
- o A Safeguarding Adults investigation going ahead in response to a concern that has been raised. Where an adult at risk with capacity has made a decision that they do not want action to be taken and there are no public interest considerations, their wishes must be respected. The person should be given information and have the opportunity to consider all the risks and fully understand the likely consequences of their decision over the short and long term.

If after discussion with the adult at risk who has mental capacity, they refuse any intervention, their wishes must be respected unless:

- o there is a public interest – eg not acting will put other adults or children at risk
- o there is a duty of care to intervene eg a crime has been, or will be, committed

Context

Unlike Child Protection there is no statutory protection for, or definition of, adults at risk of abuse. There is a presumption that adults have the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their lives. If someone has been assessed as not having mental capacity, then decisions should be made in their best interests as set out in the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Adults at risk should be given information, advice and support in a form they can understand and have their views included when decisions are being taken about their lives. All decisions taken about another person's life should be timely, reasonable, justified, proportionate and ethical.

Key Principles of Adult Safeguarding

In the safeguarding of adults, Well Kneaded is guided by the six key principles set out in The Care Act 2014 and Making Safeguarding Personal. Well Kneaded aims to demonstrate and promote these six principles in our work:

- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent
- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

Well Kneaded Safeguarding Procedure for adults 'at risk'

Definition of 'Abuse' ('No Secrets', Department of Health, 2000)

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has 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.

A consensus has emerged identifying the following main different forms of abuse:

- **physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions;

- **sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting;
- **psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
- **financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
- **neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating; and
- **discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Training and Awareness

Well Kneaded will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its Trustees, Employees, Volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (eg. contractors).

For all employees who are working or volunteering with adults at risk this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in Safeguarding Adults.
- Recognise an adult potential in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Respond to the concern.
- Record all the information they have received.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding Alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with individuals.
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure.

Recognising the signs of abuse

Employees, trustees and volunteers are well-placed to identify abuse. The adult may say or do things that let you know something is wrong - it may come in the form of a disclosure, complaint, or an expression of concern. Everyone within the organisation should understand what to do, and where to go to get help, support and advice.

Respond

The person raising an alert will respond in the following way:

- Make an immediate evaluation of the risk and take steps to ensure that the adult is in no immediate danger
- Where appropriate dial 999 for an ambulance if there is a need for emergency medical treatment
- Consider contacting the police if a crime has been, or may have been, committed
- Will not disturb or move articles that could be used as evidence, secure the scene, for example by locking a door
- Contact the children and families section if a child is also at risk
- If possible make sure that other service users are not at risk

'No Secrets' puts forward the following factors to be taken into account when making an assessment of the seriousness of the risk to the person:

- vulnerability of the person
- nature and extent of the abuse or neglect
- length of time the abuse or neglect has been occurring
- impact of the alleged abuse

- risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts of abuse or neglect
- risk that serious harm could result if no action is taken
- illegality of the act

Reporting Concerns

Any employee, trustee or volunteer who becomes aware that an adult is or is at risk of, being abused must raise the matter immediately with the Well Kneaded Safeguarding Officer (SO) (see the flowchart for more detail). As soon as possible after the disclosure detailed notes are to be written using the incident report form. Try to note the words used, the way they were said and the facts of who was concerned, the dates, times, places and nature of abuse. The notes should be given to the SO as soon as possible. The SO will take over responsibility for handling the situation, but you may be required to provide further information at any stage.

If the adult requires immediate protection from harm, contact the police and Adult Social Care.

Early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response where there are emerging concerns. To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements no one should assume that someone else will do it.

Recording and Record Keeping

A written record must be kept about any concern regarding an adult with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made. This should be done within 24 hours of the incident being reported.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Referral

A referral to the Local Authority Adult Safeguarding Team should be made when:

- the person is an adult at risk and there is a concern that they are being, or at risk of being abused or neglected, and at risk of significant harm
- the adult at risk has capacity to make decisions about their own safety and wants this to happen
- the adult at risk has been assessed as not having the capacity to make decisions about their own safety, and a decision has been made in their best interests
- a crime has been committed against an adult at risk
- the abuse or neglect has been caused by a member of staff or volunteer
- other people or children are at risk from the person causing the harm
- the person causing the harm is also an adult at risk

Getting Consent at the Referral Stage:

The mental capacity of the adult at risk and their ability to give informed consent to a referral is significant, but not the only factor, in deciding what action to take. The test of capacity is to find out if the adult at risk has the capacity to make decisions about the referral, about their own safety, including an understanding of longer term harm as well as immediate effects and ability to take action to protect themselves from future harm. If the adult at risk has capacity and does not consent to a referral and there are no public or vital interest considerations, they should be given information about where to get help if they change their mind. The referrer must assure themselves that the decision to withhold consent is not made under undue influence, coercion or intimidation. A record must be made of the concern and the adult at risk's decision not to refer. A record should also be made of what information they were given.

Making a Decision to Refer Without Consent:

If there is an overriding public interest or if gaining consent would put the adult at risk at further risk, a referral should be made. This would include situations where:

- other people or children could be at risk from the person or situation causing harm
- it is necessary to prevent a crime
- where there is a high risk to the health and safety of an adult at risk
- the person lacks capacity to consent

The adult at risk would normally be informed of the decision to refer unless telling them would jeopardise their safety or the safety of others.

If the SO is unsure whether to refer they can contact:

- Wandsworth council for advice on 020 8871 6000

Next steps

Initial action by the SO

When informed of a concern or allegation, the SO will not investigate the matter or interview the member of staff, the child/ adult concerned or potential witnesses. He or she will:

- Obtain written details of the concern/allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving the allegation - not the child/adult making it.
- Countersign and date the written details
- Record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses
- Record discussions about the child/ adult at risk and/ or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions
- The person against whom the allegation has been made will be kept away from the person who has experienced a breach of safeguarding until the allegation has been investigated and a decision about future action has been made.

Individuals alleged to have caused harm: where this is an employee or volunteer

The SO will discuss with senior management liaising with police regarding the management of the risk involved. An immediate decision has to be made whether to suspend the employee where allegations amount to gross misconduct. Depending on the seriousness of the allegations the staff member concerned may be suspended on full pay pending further investigations. Whether a staff member should be suspended will be determined by carrying out a risk assessment. Suspension does not imply guilt. Suspension is a neutral act, not a sanction. Alternatives to suspension can be considered including leave of absence, transfer of duties or additional supervision. The employee has the right to know in broad terms what allegations or concerns have been made about them. Where suspension is being considered a meeting will normally be arranged with the staff member. Staff/volunteers have the right to be accompanied to the interview by a representative or a friend. The meeting is not concerned with examination of the evidence but rather an opportunity to discuss possible suspension. In making the decision it is useful to bear in mind that investigations into abuse can sometimes be lengthy, and it will be appropriate to review the suspension from time to time throughout the process. Well Kneaded has a duty to ensure that any staff or volunteer who has caused risk or harm is not in contact with other service users and others who may be at risk, eg whistleblowers.

Support offered to staff when an allegation has been made:

Whether a staff member is suspended or not it is vitally important that staff/volunteers are supported throughout this process. Well Kneaded will ensure that staff are supported by:

- Being given the name of a work contact, usually the CEO, who will keep them up to date about work activities outside of the investigation. Social contact with colleagues should not be precluded unless it is considered detrimental to any investigation. The type of information and frequency of contact should be agreed between the parties. The point of contact may keep the staff member up to date with the investigation where this has been agreed with the Safeguarding Officer.
- Offered a counselling service and/or Occupational Health.

Well Kneaded recognises that having an allegation made against a staff member is a very stressful situation. Staff/ volunteers are strongly advised to contact their GP if they feel their health is being affected.

False/Unfounded/Malicious Allegations

Where an allegation is made against a member of staff that is clearly and demonstrably without foundation or malicious, no suspension will occur, and the decision and evidence will be recorded. Without foundation means that there is clear evidence to show that the person making the allegation clearly misinterpreted events, or misunderstood what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. A malicious allegation is where there is a deliberate attempt to deceive and there is clear evidence of this. However, it may be that the details of the allegation will still be referred to the Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Team as false allegations are sometimes made because abuse is occurring somewhere else in the adult at risk's life. The justification for referring or not referring will be recorded.

Individuals alleged to have caused harm: Where this is another Service User

- Consider liaison with the police regarding the management of risks
 - Consider what actions should be taken including removing them from contact with the adult at risk.
- Arrangements should be put in place to ensure that the needs of the person causing harm are also met.

Well Kneaded Safeguarding Staff

The person in receipt of disclosures or suspicions should report concerns as soon as possible (at least within 24 hours) to the SO (Bryony Lewis 07920 055678, bryony@wellkneadedfood.com / Hannah Ahern 07828236847, hannah@wellkneadedfood.com) using the Incident Reporting Form or they can be contacted if there is a need to discuss/debrief.

If the SO is unavailable, or if the concern involves them, you must report to the Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding: Margaret Fry 07939 236416, mrsmegfry@gmail.com

Safeguarding young people (16-18 years old)

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Safeguarding officer and a Safeguarding trustee
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [*more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office: ico.org.uk/for-organisations*]
- making sure that children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, young people and their families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Definitions of harm

Types of harm in children can have specifics that make them different to the definitions listed in our safeguarding adults policy. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children. Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse. An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.

- Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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 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. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

- Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities (including prostitution), not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child 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. Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse, although may demonstrate in different ways – see Awareness of other forms of abuse or exploitation.

- Neglect

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

This is not an exhaustive list and it must be recognised that it is not the role of staff/ volunteers to make an assessment of whether children or young people have suffered harm. Staff/ volunteers/ Safeguarding Coordinator all have a duty to report any concerns about harm in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Guidelines and Procedures.

- Online abuse

NSPCC offers this definition and summary description:

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. Children and young people may experience cyber bullying, grooming, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or emotional abuse. Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know, as well as from strangers. Online abuse may be part of abuse that is taking place in the real world (for example bullying or grooming). Or it may be that the abuse only happens online (for example persuading children to take part in sexual activity online). Children can feel like there is no escape from online abuse – abusers can contact them at any time of the day or night, the abuse can come into safe places like their bedrooms, and images and videos can be stored and shared with other people.

NSPCC website: Online abuse definition accessed September 2022

- Awareness of other forms of abuse or exploitation

There are a number of other forms of abuse and exploitation, and it would be appropriate for all staff and volunteers to have an awareness of guidelines relating to other forms of abuse including:

- Domestic Abuse / Intimate Partner Violence
- Human Trafficking
- Forced Marriage
- Honour-based Violence (HBV)
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Sexual Exploitation
- Spiritual Abuse

Recognising the signs of abuse

The harm or possible harm of a child may come to the charity's attention in a number of possible ways;

- Information given by the child, his/ her friends, a family member or close associate.
- The child's behaviour may become different from the usual, be significantly different from the behaviour of their peers, be bizarre or unusual or may involve 'acting out' a harmful situation in play.
- An injury which arouses suspicion because;
- It does not make sense when compared with the explanation given.
- The explanations differ depending on who is giving them (e.g., differing explanations from the parent / carer and child).
- The child appears anxious and evasive when asked about the injury.
- Suspicion being raised when a number of factors occur over time, for example, the child fails to progress and thrive in contrast to his/her peers.
- Contact with individuals who pose a 'risk to children' ('Guidance on Offences Against Children', Home Office Circular 16/2005). This replaces the term 'Schedule One Offender' and relates to an individual that that has been identified as presenting a risk or potential risk of harm to children. This can be someone who has been convicted of an offence listed in Schedule One of the Children and Young Person's Act 1933 (Sexual Offences Act 2003), or someone who has been identified as continuing to present a risk to children.
- The parent's behaviour before the birth of a child may indicate the likelihood of significant harm to an unborn child, for example substance misuse, or previous children removed from their carers, although this is not always the case.
- Parents known to be experiencing domestic violence abuse in the home, where children are present.

Respond, to allegations or disclosure, of abuse

- Listen to what the child has to say with an open mind.
- Do not ask probing or leading questions designed to get the child to reveal more.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, as well as what was said.
- Do not ask children to write a statement.
- Never promise the child that what they have told you can be kept secret. Explain that you have responsibility to report what the child has said to someone else.

- The designated Safeguarding Officer (.....) must be informed immediately.

No professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a professional has concerns about a child's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer harm, then they should share the information with local authority children's social care

Reporting

An incident report form must be filled out and given to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible (no longer than 24 hours).

Recording and Record keeping

Details of the incident must be recorded on the incident report form as well as notes of any further conversations. The words and details given by the child or the person raising concern must be recorded. Records must be kept securely and in keeping with GDPR.

Referring concerns about a child

The designated safeguarding lead will act on behalf of Well Kneaded in referring concerns or allegations of harm to Children's Social Services: