

Safeguarding Policies

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Chinese Community Centre (Hereinafter “the Centre”). This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with the Centre
- The design and implementation of the Centre’s programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by the Centre and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under the Centre’s Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by the Centre or associated personnel

Scope

- All staff contracted by the Centre
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to the Centre, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians

Policy Statement

The Centre believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Centre will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

The Centre commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

1. Prevention

The Centre's responsibilities

The Centre will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with the Centre. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Supervisory arrangements for the management of the Centre activities and services.

We will aim to protect children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance from abuse and our team members from false allegations by adopting the following guidelines:

- We will keep a register of all individuals attending our activities.
- We will keep a register of all team members (both paid staff members and volunteers)
- Registers will include arrival and departure times and the names of others in the building at the time.
- We will keep a record of all sessions including monitoring and evaluation records.
- Our team members will record any unusual events on the accident/incident form.
- Written consent from a parent or guardian will be obtained for every child attending our activities.
- Where possible our team members should not be alone with a child, although we recognise that there may be times when this may be necessary or helpful
- Team members should escort children of the same sex to the toilet but are not expected to be involved with toileting, unless the child has a special need that has been brought to our attention by the parent/guardian.

- We recognise that physical touch between adults and children can be healthy and acceptable in public places. However our team members will be discouraged from this in circumstances where an adult or child is left alone.

Recruitment and appointments of workers and volunteers

In recruiting and appointing workers, we – the Centre will be responsible for the following:

- Identifying the tasks and responsibilities involved and the type of person most suitable for the job.
- Drawing up the Selection criteria and putting together a list of essential and desirable qualifications, skills and experience.
- All applicants should apply in writing and their application will cover their personal details, previous and current work/volunteering experience.
- We will always send a copy of our safeguarding policy with the application pack.
- We will make sure that we measure the application against the selection criteria
- All applicants need to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason why they should be considered unsuitable to work with children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance. The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) requires that people applying for positions which give them” substantial, unsupervised access on a sustained or regular basis” to children under the age of 18 must declare all previous convictions which are then subject to police checks. They can then only be offered a job subject to a successful police check. This includes potential employees, volunteers and self-employed people such as sports coaches. They are also required to declare any pending case against them. It is important that your applicant in this particular category understands that all information will be dealt with confidentially and will not be used against them unfairly.
- We will ask for photographic evidence to confirm the identity of the applicant e.g. their passport
- We will request to see documentation of any qualifications detailed by the applicant.
- We will always interview our candidates, ask for two references and a police check.
- We will at least two people from our organisation on the interview panel.
- We will request two written references from people who are not family members or friends and who have knowledge of the applicant’s experience of working with children, at risk adults or beneficiaries of assistance. We will ask the referee to also comment on their suitability for working with children. We will also try and follow up written references with a telephone call.
- The same principles apply to young people who have been involved with the organisation and have become volunteers.
- We will ensure that our successful applicant obtains an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from the Criminal Records Bureau. They will need to show the DBS before we will confirm them in post. The applicant will also need to get a co-signature from a registered body.

Support and Training

We, the Centre are committed to the provision of safeguarding training for all our team members.

Staff responsibilities

Child safeguarding

The Centre staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

Adult safeguarding

The Centre staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

The Centre staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy

Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations.

2. Enabling reports

The Centre will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

The Centre will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

What to do if you suspect that abuse may have occurred

The Centre's **current designated person is Ms Beverley Lin.**

The role of the designated person is to:

- Obtain information from staff, volunteers, children, parents, at risk adults or carers who have safeguarding concerns and to record this information.
- Assess the information quickly and carefully and ask for further information as appropriate.
- They should also consult with a statutory protection agency such as the local social services department to clarify any doubts or worries.
- The designated person should make a referral to a statutory protection agency or the police without delay.

The designated person has been nominated by the Centre to refer allegations or suspicions of neglect or abuse to the statutory authorities. In the absence of **Ms Beverley Lin** or person reporting the safeguarding concern does not feel comfortable reporting the issue to the designated person they may report to any other appropriate staff member.

a. Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to Ms Beverley Lin or any other appropriate staff member.

b. Suspicions will not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above.

c. It is the right of any individual to make direct referrals to the protection agencies. If for any reason you believe that the nominated persons have not responded appropriately to your concerns, then it is up to you to contact the protection agencies directly.

3. Response

The Centre will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

The Centre will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

The Centre will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

What to do after a person has talked to you about abuse

The procedure

- a. We adopt the “Recognise, record, report” model.
 - Make a note/record immediately or as soon as possible of the abuse you recognized or have been told about.
 - You should write down exactly what the individual has said and what you said in reply and what was happening immediately before being told (i.e. the activity being delivered).
 - You should record the dates, times and when you made the record. All hand written notes should be kept securely.
 - You should use the form “Reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse.” This form is attached at the back of this policy. (Appendix 1)

- b. You should report your discussion with the designated person as soon as possible. If this person is implicated, you need to report to another appropriate staff member. If both are implicated, report to Social Services.
- c. You should under no circumstances discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those nominated above.
- d. After an individual has disclosed abuse the designated persons should carefully consider whether or not it is safe for the individual to return home to a potentially abusive situation. On these rare occasions it may be necessary to take immediate action to contact Social Services to discuss putting safety measures into effect.

Allegations against a member of staff

We will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child, at risk adult or beneficiary of assistance. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation,
- A child protection investigation,
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action if there are concerns

a. Concerns about poor practice:

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Person or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Chair who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the Centre should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

b. Concerns about suspected abuse

- Any suspicion that an individual has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Designated Person, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the individual in question and any other individual who may be at risk.
- The Designated person will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The relatives or carers of the individual will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the Designated Person is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Centre Director or Chair who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

c. Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- The Designated Person will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the Centre will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the Centre must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout

Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from [NGO]'s programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the NGO serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child

A person below the age of 18

Harm

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

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

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

Safeguarding

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes. One donor definition is as follows:

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

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.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term ‘survivor’ is often used in preference to ‘victim’ as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual’s choice how they wish to identify themselves.

At risk adult

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care 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 exploitation.



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Reporting allegations or suspicions of abuse

If you have any concerns about safeguarding you should inform the designated person detailed below.

Organisation

Name

Job/Role

Address

Tel no

Important contacts outside the organization

Area Child protection Committee

Social services office

Address

Tel no

Emergency no

Police station

Address

Tel no



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NSPCC Child Protection Helpline 0808 800 5000

Other numbers

Reporting Suspected Abuse

Confidential Recording Sheet

Organisation

Name of person reporting

Name of child

Age and date of birth

Ethnicity

Religion

First language

Disability

Parent's/Carer's name (s)

Home address/Tel no

Are you reporting your concerns or reporting someone else's. Please give details.

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include date, time, specific incidents.

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

Have you spoken to the victim? If so, what was said?

Have you spoken to the parent/carer/responsible(s)? If so, what was said?

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, please give details?

Have you consulted anybody else? Please give details



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Person reported to and date of reporting

Signature of person reporting

Today's date

Action taken

Notes
