



## Child Protection Policy

Last Reviewed: 12th March 2024





## 1. Policy Statement of Intent

RammyMen provides services to a wide range of people, including children, and those having a close relationship with children.

All staff and volunteers play an important role in promoting the safety and protection of children with whom our organisation works directly, or learns about indirectly.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that RammyMen acts appropriately when it becomes aware that a child may be at risk, and to be able to identify potential risks. It provides a framework which ensures that those involved with working with the organisation have the appropriate information to take the necessary steps to prevent or tackle potential child safeguarding issues.

This policy will be reviewed regularly and revised as appropriate under the guidance of the designated, Director-level Safeguarding Manager:

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This document must be read in conjunction with the appropriate activity's Covid Secure Assessment Document for those activities that take place in co-located physical space.



## 2. Safeguarding Principles

2.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For those we work with, hear about indirectly, or come into contact with to be safe and for our activities to be effective, each member of staff, volunteer and director must play their full part in safeguarding.

2.2 Everyone working with attendees of any age must listen to what they say, take their views seriously, and work with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs, or communicated needs of others.

2.3 All volunteers will be asked to read in full the Child Protection Policy.

2.4 Safeguarding issues will be central within any recruitment processes, with DBS or enhanced DBS checks required where volunteers, members of staff or directors will have direct contact with children.

2.5 All volunteers, members of staff and directors shall be provided with their own copy of the Child Protection Policy which shall include the up-to-date contact details of the designated Safeguarding Manager.

### 3. Definitions

#### 3.3 Potential Issues to Consider

Abuse is a violation of a person's rights or dignity by any other person or persons. There are many kinds of abuse, which can be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and it may be a single or repeated act. Abuse includes:

- Physical: including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, squeezing, shaking, suffocating, punching, drowning, burning/scalding, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.
- Sexual Exploitation: including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts including activities such as looking at or being involved in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging individuals to behave in sexual ways.
- Psychological, Domestic and Emotional Abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation/belittling, name-calling, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- Financial or material: including theft, fraud, selling of assets, exploitation, the misuse of misappropriation of possessions.
- Neglect or acts of omission: including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care, social care, education services or misuse of medication, adequate nutrition or heating, leaving in soiled clothes, exposing a person to unacceptable risk, omitting to provide or ensure adequate care and supervision.
- Discriminatory: including racist, sexist behaviour and harassment based on a person's ethnicity, race, culture, sexual orientation, age or disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- Human and Civil Rights: including failing to treat a person as an equal with dignity and respect.
- Bullying and cyberbullying: behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone.

- **Trafficking:** where young people get tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported to be exploited. Reasons can include benefit fraud, forced marriage, forced labour, domestic slavery or committing crimes such as moving drugs, begging, theft or working in drug production.
  
- **Criminal and Gang Exploitation:** where young people are manipulated and coerced into committing crimes; this can include peer and gang pressure, particularly in gangs where violence is integral to the group's identity.
  
- **Genital Mutilation:** where genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. Mutilation of male genitals (circumcision) for religious or cultural reasons are legal in the UK, with 12,200 circumcisions performed annually. The cultural and religious practise of genital mutilation in girls is illegal in the UK as is travelling abroad to have the procedure to be carried out.
  
- **Grooming:** where someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Identifying malintent in relationships is difficult, but there are certain signs to look out for such as an adult misrepresenting themselves, in particular their age.
  
- **Non-Recent Abuse:** historical issues that must be investigated, even if they are not currently taking place.
  
- **Online Abuse:** can be extremely invasive and damaging, particularly with the prevalence and importance of social media, online chats, online gaming, text messages etc in the life of a young person.
  
- **Self Harm:** when someone intentionally damages or injures their body.
  
- **Eating Disorders:** where someone has an unhealthy attitude to food which can take over their life or make them ill. It can involve eating too much or too little, or becoming obsessed with weight and body shape.



**3.4 Any form of abuse can be either deliberate or the result of ignorance or lack of training, knowledge or understanding. Often if a person is being abused in one way they are also being abused in other ways.**

### **3.5 Who may be an abuser?**

The person who is responsible for the abuse may be a stranger but is often well known to the person being abused and could be:

- A relative/family member
- A member of staff or volunteer
- A paid care worker
- Another service user
- A neighbour
- A friend or associate

### **3.6 What are the signs?**

Some of the following might be indicators of abuse, neglect or other safeguarding issues:

- Multiple bruising or finger-marks
- Injuries the person cannot give a good reason for
- Deterioration of health for no apparent reason
- Loss of weight
- Inappropriate or inadequate clothing
- Withdrawal or mood changes
- A carer who is unwilling to allow access to the person
- An individual who is unwilling to be alone with a particular person
- An unexplained shortage of money
- Posting of inappropriate photos, images or videos
- Suicide notes or goodbye letters
- Discussion of intentions to undertake risky activities, eg self-harm or injury
- Discussion of illegal activities eg substance misuse
- Sharing of personal information or pressurising others to share personal information
- Change in the tone of messages
- Direct reference to issues of a safeguarding nature, eg disclosure of abuse
- Spending excessive or a lot less time interacting virtually
- Appear secretive or cagey
- Avoid being alone with a person or persons they know



- Alcohol or drug misuse
- Nightmares or bed-wetting
- Self-harm
- Unusual or unexpected language or sexualised behaviour
- Changing in eating habits and weight
- Changes in moods
- Fear of going to school or other places
- Behaviour issues
- Lack of confidence, nervousness, anxiety, depression
- Problems eating or sleeping
- Bullying others
- Having money or possessions they can't explain
- Have difficulty making or maintaining relationships
- Act in ways inappropriate for their age
- Poor appearance or hygiene
- Health and developmental problems
- Being left alone for long periods of time

### 3.7 What is meant by the term 'Appropriate Agency'?

These agencies are responsible for the investigation and coordination of all incidents of suspected abuse. Where there is an indication that a criminal offence has been committed, the appropriate agency is **ALWAYS** the police.

### 3.8 Designated Safeguarding Manager

This is the manager designated within the organisation to whom any safeguarding concerns should be reported. Their details can be found on page 2 of this document.

Staff, members and volunteers should report any safeguarding concerns directly and as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Manager.

## 4. Policy Context

There are a number of key pieces of guidance which set out a framework for organisations working with vulnerable adults. In summary these are:

- Government statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government 9th December 2020)
- Making Safeguarding Personal - a toolkit for responses (Local Government Association 2015)

There are many websites and resources for identifying and dealing with child safeguarding issues. Please speak with the Safeguarding Manager identified on page 2 for more help.

## 5. Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Safeguarding Issues: Procedure

5.1 The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the minor at risk. To this end, if any person reasonably suspects or is told that someone is being, has been, or is likely to be at risk they must take immediate action as set out in this policy, and pass their concerns to the designated safeguarding manager and appropriate agency.

5.2 It is important to note that RammyMen is not an agency with statutory powers to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect, neither can it remove children from abusive situations. It is the organisation's duty to report such allegations to the appropriate agency:

- Local Authority Social Care
- The Police

If a minor is at risk of immediate physical harm or danger, ask them to call 999 and ask for the police, or preferably make the call yourself. Social Care Services should be contacted at the same time, to ensure that the safeguarding element is reported and followed up. The designated Safeguarding Manager should also be informed as soon as possible.

5.3 If a child or any other person is aware of, or discloses concerns/abuse, staff and volunteers should:

- Listen and acknowledge what is being said
- Always be reassuring and calm
- Be aware that the person's ability to recount their concern or allegation will depend on age, culture, language and communication skills and disability



- Not promise full confidentiality
- Seek to obtain their consent to take up their concerns
- Explain what you'll do next
- Try to encourage and support them to share their information
- Don't talk to any alleged perpetrator - confronting them could make the situation much worse for the individual making the allegations
- Don't delay in reporting the issue
- Consult with the designated Safeguarding Manager immediately (details on page 2 of this document)

5.4 If a concern or allegation is made about a member of staff, attendee or volunteer within the organisation: do not inform the person in question as this may prejudice any police investigations. Consult the designated Safeguarding Manager immediately.

5.5 If the concerns or allegations are raised by another person, the staff member/volunteer receiving the allegation must make notes of the information and contact the designated Safeguarding Manager who will consult with them immediately about what action to take.

5.6 If a safeguarding issue is brought to a member of staff/volunteer, the staff member/volunteer who receives the information must make it clear to that person that the information will be passed to the designated Safeguarding Manager for consultation and for further action to be taken.

5.7 If the member of staff/volunteer has any reason to believe that having a conversation could place themselves or anyone else at risk, they must ask another member of staff/volunteer to join them if possible. If this is not possible they should listen attentively, but must take every precaution to maintain their own safety, and should end the conversation if necessary.

5.8 All staff and volunteers are responsible for contact the designated Safeguarding Manager (details on page 2 of this document) as a matter of urgency to discuss a concern and reduce any further harm.

5.9 Staff and volunteers should never feel inhibited in seeking advice and guidance about any concern for someone's safety and wellbeing.

5.10 All decisions about managing a safeguarding concern should be not made by one person in isolation unless someone is at risk of immediate physical harm or danger. In this situation, call 999 and ask for the police. The designated Safeguarding Manager should then be contacted, and the Social Care Services, if appropriate.

5.11 All concerns should be immediately discussed with the designated Safeguarding Manager.

5.12 It is the responsibility of the designated Safeguarding Manager to assess the risk to the minor. Staff/volunteers should provide as much detail as possible.

5.13 A record of any conversation with authorities, including person's name, telephone number, time, and outcome should be formally logged by the designated Safeguarding Manager.

## 6. Confidentiality

6.1 Disclosure of a safeguarding issue by an individual, and the consequences of such a disclosure is not easy. It is likely to have profound effects on that individual and other family members. It may be difficult for them to agree to a referral to statutory services.

6.2 Anyone reporting an issue must be made aware in a sensitive way that complete confidentiality is not possible where there is a risk of significant harm or abuse to them or any other individual.

6.3 Where an individual has not consented to sharing information for a referral, the reasons for the referral need to be clearly explained to them so that any ongoing/future supportive relationship can be maintained as far as is possible.

6.4 Under no circumstances should an alleged abuser be alerted, directly or indirectly, that concerns have been raised. This may result in important evidence being lost. Formal investigations will be carried out by the appropriate statutory agencies.

6.5 It is good practice to inform a minor at risk that a safeguarding referral concerning them is being made, where it is appropriate dependent on their capacity and understanding. It should be made clear that this will be a statutory agency that will make a decision about what help

and support they need to stay safe.

**6.6 All safeguarding issues should be recorded within the central safeguarding log.**

**6.7 The following guidance should be followed, and tailored in line with the minor's age and level of understanding:**

- Whenever possible and practical, take notes during any conversation
- Explain why, and the importance of recording information
- Explain that the person giving you the information can have access to any information about them
- Where it is not appropriate to take notes at the time, make a written record as soon as possible afterwards, and always before the end of the day
- Record the time, date, location, format of information (eg letter, telephone call, direct contact) and the person present when the information was given
- Include as much information as possible but be clear about which information is fact, hearsay, opinion and do not make assumptions or speculate
- Include the context and background leading to the concern or disclosure
- Include full details of referrals to Social Care and the Police
- Pass ALL records to the designation Safeguarding Manager

## **7. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers**

**7.1 Allegations against staff or volunteers abuse of an adult must be raised immediately with the designated Safeguarding Manager (see page 2 of this document for details). The designated Safeguarding Manager in consultation with organisation Directors will make a decision whether to suspend or remove the member of staff/volunteer from service pending the outcome of an investigation. If there is any question of risk then the member of staff/volunteer shall be immediately removed.**