



Nottinghamshire Federation of Women's Institutes

Safeguarding Policy

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Board of Trustees to ensure adherence of this policy.

Nottinghamshire Federation of Women's Institutes (Notts FWI) is a membership organisation offering services to a wide range of individuals in line with the Women's Institute constitution throughout Nottinghamshire. It is recognised that some of those who access Women's Institute services will be children, young people (under 18) and vulnerable adults.

The welfare of the child, young people or vulnerable adult will always be paramount, therefore, Notts FWI has to make sure that the people it is working with are exposed to minimal risk in all matters and also to make sure that its' staff and volunteers are likewise at minimal risk of being accused.

Notts FWI's Safeguarding Policy applies to all staff, the Board of Trustees, volunteers or anyone working or volunteering on behalf of the organisation.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive services provided by, or on behalf of, the organisation
- To provide staff, Trustees, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Notts FWI with the overarching principles that underpin the organisation's approach to Safeguarding.

The Legal Framework

The policy has been drawn up on the basis of UK law. See Appendix 3.

How Might We Notice Abuse?

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

1. A direct disclosure by the child, young person or adult.
2. A complaint or expression of concern by a volunteer, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
3. An observation of the behaviour of the person by the volunteer, member of the public or carer.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, either within or acting on behalf of the organisation. All staff members and volunteers of Notts FWI play an important part in promoting the safety and protection of the young people and vulnerable adults with whom the organisation works. Everyone within Notts FWI needs to be alert to the potential of abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults both within their families and also from other sources – including abuse by members of the organisation. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult in accordance with this Policy and procedures.

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION - If we know or suspect that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being abused, we will do something about it and ensure our work is properly recorded.

1. Recruitment, Selection & Training of Staff & Volunteers

- 1.1 Notts FWI will ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures take account of the need to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. Two references will be taken up for all successful candidates prior to a formal offer of employment and, where appropriate, referees will be asked to comment on the applicant's suitability to work with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults.
- 1.2 Where relevant to the post, the WI members/staff will have the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service check taken out. The check will be requested prior to the applicant having direct contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and/or their carers.
- 1.3 Induction for new staff and volunteers will include information on all relevant policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All staff and volunteers will be required to read Notts FWI's Safeguarding Policy and on-going training will be provided if necessary.
- 1.4 All staff and volunteers will have a designated supervisor who will provide appropriate ongoing support and supervision.

2. Reporting Procedure

- 2.1 Abuse of vulnerable adults and young people can take many forms including physical, emotional, sexual, financial and institutional. It is not the responsibility of anyone working or volunteering within Notts FWI to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, consequently all cases of suspected or alleged abuse must be raised in line with the procedures identified in this Policy.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of the person that first becomes aware of a situation where there may be a child, young person or vulnerable adult subject to, or at risk of, abuse to:
 - Inform the staff member/volunteer's Line Manager immediately – or the senior member of staff/Chair – Board of Trustees, if the Line Manager is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation
 - Record the factual details of the allegation
 - Clarify the distinction between fact, opinion or hearsay. There must be **no** attempt by the person to whom the allegation has been reported or has concerns/suspicions regarding potential abuse to investigate the matter themselves

2.3 The line manager, in consultation with Chair of Board of Trustees will:

- Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action
- Deal with any immediate needs of the individual concerned, ensuring that other service users are not put at risk
- Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff/volunteer but should not, in any circumstances, discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or, if possible the victim
- Address issues of consent and confidentiality

Make a formal referral on the same day as the concern/allegation has been raised to either Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care or the Police wherever:

- A crime has been, could have been, or yet could be committed
- There is suspicion that an abuse has taken place
- The allegation involves a member of staff, volunteer, paid carer or anyone who works on behalf of Notts FWI

Other children, young people or vulnerable adults are at risk

2.4 Where a decision is made not to refer, the concern/allegation must be recorded together with the reasons for the decision.

2.5 Any allegation made against a member of staff or member/volunteer should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Trustees who will take action as per this Safeguarding Policy. In the event of an allegation being made against the Chair of the Board of Trustees, this should be reported to the Vice Chair or their nominated representative.

2.6 Where a disclosure of abuse is made, care should be taken to explain to them the procedure that will be followed and they should be informed that it might not be possible for Notts FWI to maintain confidentiality.

2.7 Where a member of Notts FWI makes an allegation regarding another organisation.

3. Accusations made against Notts FWI Staff / Member / Volunteer

If a staff member of Notts FWI is accused of abuse they will be immediately suspended on full pay. If a Notts FWI member / volunteer is accused of abuse they will be immediately suspended from any Committee positions held. This does NOT mean that there is a presumption of guilt: it is to protect the member of staff / WI member/volunteer from further accusations. The Chair of the Board of Trustees will then follow the Safeguarding Policy for the organisation.

4. Good Practice

All staff and volunteers should be familiar with and adhere to Nottinghamshire Federation of Women's Institutes Guidelines for Good Practice for working with Members and Service Users (see Appendix 2).

Appendix 1: Guidelines

The following are guidelines on immediate action to be taken following a reporting of abuse by a child, young person, vulnerable adult or any member of staff/volunteer:

- React calmly so not to frighten or deter him/her
- Re-assure him/her that it is not their fault
- Don't promise to keep the information to yourself – inform the individual of Notts FWI's confidentiality policy and explain what this means
- Explain that you need to make sure they will be safe and may have to pass on the information to somebody trusted to deal with it appropriately
- Listen carefully to what they say and take them seriously
- Allow them to tell you what happened in their own words
- Clarify what you have heard to establish the basic facts
- Avoid leading questions
- Do not ask specific questions regarding explicit details.

** If possible make brief notes during the initial disclosure, explaining why you are doing this. If this is not possible, a record of the conversation must be made as soon as possible afterwards. All notes must be dated and signed by the staff member or volunteer taking them, recording the information as set out within this Safeguarding Policy. The information to be included is set out under section 2.2 of the Policy.

Appendix 2: Good Practice Guidelines for Working with Service Users

If it is necessary for a member of staff/volunteer to meet a Member or service user outside of Trent Bridge House, then wherever possible, this meeting should be in a public place. Visiting members or service users at their home is not encouraged, however, it is recognised that in certain circumstances it may be unavoidable. In the event of a staff member/volunteer visiting a member or service user at home, they should ensure that another member of Notts FWI knows where they are going and what time they are expected to complete their visit, or take 'a friend'.

Members and service users should never be given access to the home address or telephone number of any volunteer or staff member of Notts FWI. Members and Service users' contact details should never be disclosed to anyone outside of Notts FWI without their explicit consent.

Appendix 3: Legal Framework

- The Mental Health Act (1983)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- The Children Act (1989)
- Protection of Freedoms Act (2012)
- The Children Act (2004)
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- The Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Care Act (2014)
- The Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)
- Making Safeguarding Personal Guide (2104)
- The Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Working Together (2015)
- The United Convention of the Rights of the Child (1991)

Appendix 4: Glossary

Young Person/Vulnerable Adult in the context of this policy, is a young person defined as anyone aged less than 18 years. 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 themselves

OR is unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation

This includes people:

- With a mental health need or a learning difficulty,
- physical impairment or sensory impairment
- substance or alcohol dependency or
- who receive personal care, nursing or support to live independently in their own home or a care home or
- who are older and frail or
- who are family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult

People who may be vulnerable to abuse -

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 abuse: for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining or giving the wrong medication or

Psychological abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, shouting, swearing or

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 or

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 or

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 or

Institutional: the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people at risk of abuse. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect 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 or

Domestic Abuse: incident or pattern of incidents of controlling coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse by someone that can be a partner or family member, regardless of gender or sexuality or

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.