



Safeguarding

Adults Policy

1. Introduction

Dunton Community Garden is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who use its services are not abused and that working practices minimise the risk of such abuse.

All people have a right to:

- live a life that is free from violence, fear and abuse
- be protected from harm and exploitation
- independence which may involve a degree of risk

Dunton Community Garden is committed to:

- Safeguarding and promoting the independence, wellbeing and safety of people with care and support needs
- Raising public awareness of safeguarding
- Promoting work on the prevention of abuse
- Tackling abuse in all settings
- Ensuring that all volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
- Involving people who access services and carers in continual service improvements
- Applying learning from serious case reviews
- Ensuring that volunteers are provided with appropriate training in safeguarding

Dunton Community Garden will:

- Ensure people accessing services receive information about how to raise concerns if they suspect or experience abuse in all its forms including neglect
- Empower individuals with knowledge and understanding so that they will be aware of what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour towards them
- Enable volunteers to recognise poor practice, or abuse and respond appropriately
- Raise awareness of how volunteers can enable people to acknowledge they may be at risk of abuse, and signpost them to effective support
- Recognise that children may also be at risk when working with families and adults with care and support needs.
- Ensure rigorous recruitment and selection practice, and adhere to pre appointment checking requirements e.g. references will always be taken up and the Disclosure and Barring process followed where appropriate
- Ensure clear service standards are maintained and where relevant volunteers receive clear operational guidance and appropriate training

Safeguarding Children

Dunton Community Garden believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.

Dunton Community Garden recognises that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who receive Dunton Community Garden services, including the children of adult service users
- to provide volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding children and young people

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Dunton Community Garden.

Dunton Community Garden seeks to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for volunteers
- recruiting volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children/young people, parents, and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children/young people appropriately
- providing effective management for volunteers through supervision, support and training

2. Link with other policies

Please also see our Whistleblowing Policy

3. Definitions

This policy relates to adults who may have care and support needs, whose independence and well-being would be at risk, permanently or periodically, if they did not receive appropriate support and who may be at risk of abuse, maltreatment or neglect. This includes adults with physical, sensory and mental impairments and learning disabilities however those impairments have arisen e.g. whether present from birth or due to advancing age, chronic illness or injury, and those who may or may not be eligible for community care services whose needs in relation to Safeguarding is for access to mainstream services and the police, or who are unable to protect themselves. This policy also

includes any individual who may be at risk as a consequence of their role as a carer in relation to any of the above.

The duty to identify abuse and report it applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Dunton Community Garden.

4. Nominated safeguarding lead person

The nominated person, Hazel House, should be notified immediately by any staff or volunteers who have concerns about

- a child or young person
- a person who works with children

Concerns should be raised if

- a child has been harmed, or may have been,
- a criminal offence has possibly been committed against or related to a child or young person; or
- someone has behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or young people.

For vulnerable adult concerns should be raised if:

- abuse, maltreatment or neglect are occurring or suspected
- someone has behaved towards a vulnerable adult in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

The nominated person will provide advice and support to staff unsure about how to proceed with a particular case, and take line management responsibility for the safe delivery, quality and effectiveness of Dunton Community Garden services. The nominated person is responsible for ensuring Dunton Community Garden is aware of developments in safeguarding best practice, advising on changes to policy and practice (in line with Local Safeguarding Board policies) and coordinating safeguarding audits and reporting.

One of Dunton Community Garden Trustees, Hazel House, is nominated to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements. This includes ensuring that there is sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively;

5. How to raise concerns

- If someone is at immediate risk of harm, dial 999 for the police
- Contact Hazel House by phone or email as soon as possible. A decision will be made which includes whether to make a referral, who will make the referral, and how information about the concern will be securely recorded, stored and, if appropriate shared.
- To report a concern or to get advice:
 - Central Bedfordshire Council: 0300 300 8122
 - Out of office hours: 0300 300 8123
 - email at adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
 - fill in an online form, email at adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

6. How to report an allegation made against staff or volunteers

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children, young people and vulnerable adults who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person/vulnerable adult;
or
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children/young people/vulnerable adults in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

Any such allegation should be reported immediately to Hazel House. The relevant local authority should be informed within one working day of all allegations (by contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer LADO).

The local authority will provide advice and guidance on how to deal with allegations against people who work with vulnerable adults and will also ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to effectively liaise with the police and other agencies to monitor the progress of cases and ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process. Support and advice will be available to individuals against whom allegations have been made.

If Dunton Community Garden removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

7. Information sharing

Dunton Community Garden will co-operate in the sharing of appropriate information based on the principles defined below:

- Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis when it is in the best interest of the individual and especially to protect people with care and support needs.
- Confidentiality must not be confused with secrecy
- Informed consent must be obtained, but if this is not possible and other adults are at risk, it may be necessary to override the requirement
- It is inappropriate to give absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse, particularly when other people may be at risk or there is a legal duty to report criminal activity.
- Any exchange of information must be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Rights Act 1998, and Caldicott Principles

Dunton Community Garden will keep secure records of any work undertaken under this policy including all concerns received and all referrals made, and the responses made to these concerns and referrals. We will keep a record of the decision – whether it is to share information or not - and the reasons for it. If we decide to share, then we will record what we have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

8. Independent resources for children and young people

Children and young people can speak to an independent person outside of Dunton Community Garden through contacting either of the following:

- Childline on 0800 1111
- NSPCC helpline: 0800 328 0904

9. Being alert to signs of abuse and neglect and taking action

All volunteers should be alert to the signs and triggers of abuse, maltreatment, neglect and harm.

Indicators of abuse and neglect may be difficult to spot. Children and young people may disclose abuse but, in some cases, the indicators may be more subtle and appear over time. Everyone should be aware of the potential for children to be sexually exploited for money, power or status and individuals should adopt an open and inquiring mind to what could be underlying reasons for behaviour changes in children of all ages.

Abuse is behaviour towards a person that either deliberately or unknowingly, causes him or her harm or endangers their life or their human or civil rights. Abuse can take place in any setting, public or private, and can be perpetuated by anyone. Abuse includes physical, sexual, psychological, financial, discriminatory abuse, organisational, modern slavery, domestic abuse, self-neglect and acts of neglect and omission.

The impact of harm on a person is what is important, not who did it or what the intent was. Our aim is to protect people from abuse and avoidable harm, whether deliberate or not.

The seriousness or extent of abuse is often not clear when anxiety is first expressed. If a member of staff or volunteer is in any way concerned, they should raise their concerns with the nominated safeguarding lead person.

Therefore, Dunton Community Garden will ensure all volunteers are aware of:

- the signs of abuse and neglect,
- how to handle a disclosure

through induction, training and supervision.

10. Information sharing

Sharing information is an intrinsic part of safeguarding. The decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect. No practitioner should assume that someone else will pass on information which may be critical to keeping a child, young or vulnerable person safe.

The seven golden rules to sharing information are:

- Remember that Data Protection and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about individuals is shared appropriately.

- Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- Seek advice from the nominated person if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned.
- Share with informed consent where appropriate. Remember that you may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk.
- Consider safety and well-being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
- Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
- Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

In Dunton Community Garden work, the starting point for information sharing is to follow the steps in Sections 4 or 5 of this policy.

If children and young people have access to the internet or use mobile phones during time spent with Dunton Community Garden projects, computers will be placed where everyone can see them and use of the internet will be supervised when used by children and young people.

9. Code of behaviour

This section outlines the behaviour expected of Dunton Community Garden staff, volunteers, peer leaders and staff from other organisations who engage with children and young people through Dunton Community Garden and its activities.

This code has been developed to provide advice which will not only help to protect children and young people, but will also help identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse being made against individuals. Following this good practice code will also help to protect Dunton Community Garden by reducing the possibility of anyone using their role within the organisation to gain access to children and young people in order to abuse them.

When working with children and young people for Dunton Community Garden all volunteers are considered to be acting in a position of trust. It is therefore important that volunteers are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people and must act in an appropriate manner at all times and follow the code of conduct.

All members of volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the nominated person, Hazel House. Staff who breach this code of conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Any breach of this code involving a volunteer or member of staff from another agency may result in them being asked to leave the project. Serious breaches of this code may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the Police or Children's Services Department.

Adults must:

- treat all children and young people with respect

- treat children and young people fairly, without prejudice and always avoid favouritism
- value and take seriously children's and young people's contributions
- provide an example of good conduct for others to follow
- ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and relates to the work of the project
- remember that someone else might misinterpret actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- be aware that any physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse

Adults must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- rely on their good name or that of Dunton Community Garden to protect them
- believe "it could never happen to me"
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality
- allow allegations to go unreported
- let children and young people have their personal contact details (mobile number or address)