

Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

1.0 Introduction

Our employees working on sensitive contracts will come into contact with children and vulnerable adults. These contracts include, schools, children's nurseries, colleges, hospitals, medical practices, etc.

Shield is committed to working with these contracts to ensure that our employees promote and safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults in the workplace.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to make sure that children and vulnerable adults are protected from harm when they come into contact with our employees. We will be guided by and work closely with the Client and in particular the Designated Officer within the Clients workplace.

3.0 Practice Guidelines and Staff Code of Conduct

Shield employees will be expected to:

- treat everyone with respect
- whenever possible, ensure that there is more than one adult present when working in the vicinity of children or vulnerable adults
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions to the appropriate person at the Clients premises
- share concerns with a Shield area manager and/or the Designated officer at the Clients premises
- follow any site specific procedures at all times

Employees must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults
- be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in the presence of children or vulnerable adults
- trivialise or exaggerate children or vulnerable adults abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual

4.0 Definitions of Abuse

- Physical Abuse
Actual or likely physical injury or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering.
- Neglect
Actual or likely persistent or significant neglect or the failure to protect from exposure to any form of danger.
- Sexual Abuse
Actual or likely sexual exploitation.
- Emotional Abuse
Actual or likely persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection.

5.0 What to do if someone discloses an abusive act or experience to a Shield employee

If a child or vulnerable adult confides to a Shield employee that they are being or have been abused then they have placed that person in a position of trust. The employee concerned must:

- be clear that they cannot keep secrets or promise confidentiality and that they must pass on information if they think a child or young person has been or is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, in some way;
- react calmly and do not panic as this may frighten or silence the person;
- make a full record of what is being said, heard or seen as soon as possible and report it to the Clients Designated Officer and the Shield area manager.
- **DO NOT DELAY IN PASSING THE INFORMATION ON.**

It is not the sole responsibility of Shield Service Group Ltd to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. This will be decided after a full investigation and the relevant Clients' Designated Officer has been informed. It is the responsibility of Shield employees to act if there is cause for concern, in order that the Client and appropriate agencies can investigate and take the necessary action to protect a child or vulnerable adult. **All concerns should be reported the same working day.**

6.0 Responding to allegations of abuse or inappropriate or dangerous behaviour against a member of Shield staff

Regardless of the age of the individual person, if an allegation of abuse or inappropriate conduct is made against a Shield employee then it must be reported immediately to the Client's Designated Officer and the Shield area manager.

Concerns about employees must be treated with the same rigour as other concerns. If there are concerns that child abuse has taken place then this information will be passed to social services and/or the police for a full investigation by the Client, supported by the relevant Shield Senior Manager/Director.

The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount. Even when the presenting circumstances appear not very serious they must be followed up and they are examined objectively by someone independent of Shield.

Shield's Senior Managers will also need to refer to any disciplinary policy and procedure and decide whether the member of staff should be suspended pending a full investigation.

7.0 After an allegation

After an allegation or suspicion or concern has been investigated, there are likely to be strong feelings among the staff, service users, parents and maybe the wider community, which will need to be addressed. There are likely to be issues of rumour of fact, guilt or blame – if suspicions have been around for some time, impact on individuals, of the nature of what occurred and to whom. Shield's Management team will support the Client and employee in considering the best way of managing this.

8.0 Training

Shield employees will undertake basic safeguarding training as required by the Client organisation.


9.0 Recruitment

Enhanced checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be conducted on all staff that work in environments where there are children or vulnerable adults. Legislation and Client requirements will determine the frequency of DBS checks.

10.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and in line with legislation and Client requirements.

Signed:



Date: 1 May 2022

Malcolm Rose, Chief Executive Officer - On behalf of Shield Service Group Ltd