



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Policy and Procedures

Updated September 2022

INTRODUCTION

Who we are and what we do:

The Mill provides a welcoming, positive, accessible and inclusive space at the heart of Walthamstow, and works with the community locally to make things happen. We don't run services or decide what should go on here, but provide the space, facilities and some resources. All our groups, events and activities are brought to us by local people who want to make something happen in Walthamstow.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

All of our volunteers, trustees and employees play an important part in promoting the wellbeing, safety and protection of the children and vulnerable adults who use The Mill and take part in activities and groups here.

What is the purpose of this document:

The aim of this document is to ensure that The Mill acts appropriately when it becomes aware that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of abuse or neglect. It also sets out the procedures that all staff, volunteers and members of the public can expect when they raise concerns about a child or vulnerable adult.

OUR POLICY:

The Mill believes that:

- the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount.
- that all children and vulnerable adults, 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.
- that working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and their agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The Mill will seek to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting safeguarding procedures and providing support to any members of staff or volunteers who raise concerns about a child or vulnerable adult
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made (See [The Mill DBS Policy and Procedures](#))
- asking our room hirers to comply with our safeguarding policy and procedures when hiring our space to run a group for children or vulnerable adults in a regulated activity we will require you and your staff or volunteers to have been suitably vetted, including a DBS check at an appropriate level.
- sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving carers, parents and children appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

The Mill welcomes all sections of the community. Vulnerable adults who are under the care of local authority or support organisations should not be left at The Mill unaccompanied where there are no qualified or suitably trained support staff. If there are instances when a vulnerable adult is unaccompanied, Receptionists and staff may ask if they need anyone to be contacted on their behalf or call 999 if medical attention is required.

PEOPLE:

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Natasha McFadzean natasha@themille17.org
Trustee with Oversight of Safeguarding: Sharon Goldman sharon@themille17.org

What to do if you are concerned about a child or vulnerable adult :

The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of the vulnerable adults and children. We ask that you act on any suspicions of abuse or neglect and to pass on your concerns to the designated person. **If you feel that a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of physical harm you must call 999.**

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

As soon as you form a concern about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult, you should tell a member of staff and decide together if you should complete the attached form and discuss your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Please bear in mind that:

- It is **not** the responsibility of any staff or volunteer of The Mill to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, or to carry out an investigation – this is the responsibility of the local authority or the police.
- However, all staff and volunteers are required to act on any concerns raised, and the Designated Safeguarding Officer should ensure that a decision is made on the appropriate action to be taken in each case.
- Any suspected abuse or neglect must be reported as soon as practically possible to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- If a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect, the Designated Safeguarding Officer should explain to them that a report will be made to the appropriate agency.
- If you suspect a member of staff or volunteer of abuse, you must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, or the Trustee with Oversight of Safeguarding, or any other trustee. The Designated Safeguarding Officer and trustees will undertake a risk assessment and may suspend the suspected person from duties relating to children or vulnerable adults until any investigation is completed.

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (NATASHA MCFADZEAN)

has responsibility for following up all reports, so she should be your first port of call. However, you may also contact the Trustee with Oversight of Safeguarding (Sharon Goldman) if you do not want to approach Natasha.

THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER WILL:

- Talk through your concerns and look at the information you have written in the Record Form. She will sign and date this form.
- Immediately report the matter to Sharon as the trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding, or to The Chair of Trustees if Sharon is not available or is implicated in the concern.
- Obtain written details of the concern or allegation but not investigate or interview child, adult or witnesses.
- If necessary, the DSO or the DSL will report to the appropriate agency as soon as possible.

HOW INFORMATION WILL BE RECORDED

- Any concerns will be noted on the Record Form by the person who raises the concern, and any action to be taken will be noted on the same form by the Designated Safeguarding Officer. The DSO will also note any 'checkpoint' dates by which further action should be taken (if relevant), and any other comments.
- All Concern Record Forms and other case paperwork will be kept in a designated file in The Mill, and only accessible to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the trustee with Oversight of Safeguarding.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

We will respect privacy and confidentiality where possible, but if doing this leaves a child or vulnerable adult at risk of harm then that person's safety must come first.

We will provide you with support throughout the reporting process, and in any subsequent investigation. We ask that you remember that the safety of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount, and that fear of repercussions or damage to your relationship with the individuals or their family should not prevent you from making a report. We will endeavor to keep your report confidential, but this may not be possible in many cases.

You can make a report anonymously. If you do so, make sure you include enough information to help respond to the concern. It is better to identify yourself, this ensures that all information can be gathered and to support an investigation if required.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The risks of not observing this policy include:

- Abuse or harm to a vulnerable adult or child
- Children and vulnerable adults and their carers do not feel safe in The Mill
- Loss of confidence in The Mill
- Potential damage to the reputation of The Mill
- The Mill could be open to complaints and legal action
- The Mill is not able to achieve its aim in relation to children and vulnerable adults.

DEFINITIONS:

Child

Anyone under the age of eighteen years.

Vulnerable Adult

Anyone aged 18 years or over: "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and is or maybe unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against harm or exploitation" (Dep of Health: *No secrets* 2000).

Abuse

"Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons". (No Secrets, DH March 2000).

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly and it may be a single or repeated act. Abuse can include:

- **Physical abuse** - hitting; slapping; kicking; squeezing; shaking; suffocating; punching; drowning; burning; scalding
- **Sexual abuse** - rape; indecent assault; inappropriate touching; other 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 sexually inappropriate ways
- **Emotional abuse** - belittling; threats of harm; abandonment or withdrawal of social contact; humiliation, name calling; denial of required services, contacts and social or family networks
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - failure to access appropriate services for recognised needs; avoidance of required healthcare; ignoring physical needs; withholding of adequate nutrition, water, clothing or warmth; leaving in soiled clothes; exposing a person to unacceptable risk; omitting to provide or ensure adequate supervision
- **Financial or material abuse** - theft; fraud; embezzlement; selling of assets; withholding of money or possessions; intentional mismanagement of a person's finances or property
- **Discrimination** - any acts that use hurtful language, cause harassment or similar treatment of an individual because of their race, gender, age, faith, culture or sexual orientation



Safety and Welfare Concern Record Form

- Please fill this in if you have any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult.
- Fill in the form as soon as you can and include as much information as you can.
- Hand the form to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Natasha McFadzean), and discuss your concerns with her as soon as possible.

Your role at The Mill:

Your name:

Date	Time	Place

Name of child or vulnerable person (if known)	Address or phone number (if known)	Date of Birth, or age (if known)	Gender

What concerned you about this person? Were there any marks and bruises? Give as much detail as possible

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Are you concerned about anything else? eg: their mental health, their domestic situation.

Who did you give this form to?

Signature:

Date:

FOR INTERNAL USE

Form received by:
Role at The Mill:

Action to be taken:

Date completed :

Any other comments:

Amended Sept 2022