

## **Mamas Matter CIC Safeguarding Procedures**

Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. Mamas Matter CIC is committed to ensuring safeguarding for families and babies accessing our service. We will work together to prevent and minimise abuse. We will take reasonable actions to practice, promote and protect the mothers and children accessing our services,

All coaches, directors, volunteers and associates of the organisations should consider potential safeguarding risks when planning work and activities and should consider how those risks can be mitigated.

For events, it should indicate on the event booking form whether attendees may include babies and/or children, and this should be considered during the event planning process.

When providing classes and events aimed specifically at parents with perinatal mental health conditions we should consider adults safeguarding risks as well as those of their babies so this policy will set out procedures for both babies and vulnerable adults.

### DEFINITION OF VULNERABLE

What is a vulnerable person? The definition of 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.
- Is unable to take care of him/herself.
- Is unable to protect him/herself from significant harm or exploitation.

What is vulnerable child? The definition of a vulnerable child is a person under the age of 18 years who:

- Who are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for them of social care services.
- Whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for them of social care services.
- Have a physical or mental impairment.
- Who are in the care of a public authority.

A vulnerable person may come under any of the following groups, people with:

- A mental health illness.
- A learning difficulty.
- A physical impairment.
- A sensory impairment.
- People who are substance or alcohol dependent.
- Older people.
- Children.
- Family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.

## RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF HARM/ABUSE IN BABIES

Recognising the occurrence or risk of harm is not easy and it is not the coach's responsibility to decide whether harm has occurred. However, it is the coach's responsibility to look out for signs of abuse and act if there are any concerns.

The risks of harm/abuse include:

- Physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, punching, burning, misuse of medication, inappropriate restraint
- Domestic abuse: including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional abuse. It also covers so-called 'honour' based violence
- Sexual abuse: including rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching, exposure to pornographic material, abuse of a position of trust
- Psychological or emotional abuse: including belittling, name calling, threats of harm, intimidation, isolation
- Modern slavery: covering slavery (including domestic slavery), human trafficking and forced labour. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever they can to pressurise, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse and inhumane treatment
- Neglect and acts of omission: including withholding the necessities of life such as medication, food or warmth, ignoring medical or physical care needs
- Discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- Institutional or organisational abuse: including regimented routines and cultures, unsafe practices, lack of person-centred care or treatment
- Extremism and radicalisation
- Child trafficking
- Female genital mutilation
- Commercial exploitation
- Bullying or harassment

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse can be a one-off incident or repeated, on-going ill treatment.

People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

It may not always be easy to identify signs of abuse, but the following are some significant ones to be aware of:

- Unexplained bruising or injuries
- Sexually explicit language or behaviour, inappropriate to age or development
- Sudden changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Comments or disclosure by a child
- A noticeable change over a period of time such as weight loss, poor hygiene or unkempt appearance
- Signs of bullying or intimidation

## RECOGNISING THE SIGNS OF HARM/ABUSE IN ADULTS ABUSE :

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or group of people and may be single or repeated acts. This can include :

Physical :

- Hitting, slapping, smacking, burning, shaking, biting, kicking, pushing and restraining.

- Administering incorrect medication.
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Being denied food or water.

Psychological and Emotional :

- Shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliation.
- Threats of harm or abandonment.
- Intimidation.
- Verbal abuse.
- Stopping you from seeing people.
- Cyberbullying and isolation.

Financial :

- Including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money or other valuables.
- Pressure in connections with wills, property or inheritance.
- Internet scams or doorstep crime.

Sexual :

- Such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her consent.
- Sexual harassment.
- Being forced to watch sexual acts or pornography.
- Being forced to take part in the production of child pornography.
- Rape
- Sexual teasing or innuendo.
- Grooming.

Discrimination :

- Including racist or sexist remarks.
- Including any comments based on a person's disability, age or illness.
- Any other forms of harassment.
- This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious and cultural activity, services or support network.

Neglect :

- Including medical or physical care needs. These can be intentional or deliberate, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable adult.
- Failure to have basic needs met. Such as food, clothing, shelter, being absent from school, cleanliness and lack of medical and dental care.

Institutional :

This is the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and children 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.

## REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

A safeguarding concern may arise in several ways. For example:

- You may witness abuse taking place
- You may notice behaviour which gives rise to a suspicion that a baby or child has been harmed or is at risk of harm

If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place, the priorities will be:

- To arrange any medical treatment (note that offences of a sexual nature will require expert advice from the police in order to preserve evidence)
- To call the police if you have witnessed a crime being committed
- If you have not witnessed a crime being committed, but a crime is suspected, and it is not

an emergency, you should encourage and support the victim and help towards reporting the matter to the police

- To preserve evidence
- To keep yourself, other workers and service users safe
- To inform the Social Services as soon as possible on the same day
- To record what happened and submit it to Social Services soon as possible on the same day.

Concerns about or evidence of abuse may be shown in different ways this maybe through :

- A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult or child.
- An indirect disclosure by the vulnerable adult or child. (i.e hinting that something is wrong or using a scenario to ask questions.)
- A complaint or expression of concern by another member of staff, a volunteer, another mother, a carer, a member of public or a relative.
- An observation of the communication/behaviour of the vulnerable adult or child by the volunteer, member of staff or carer.

Process for Reporting a Concern or Disclosure of Abuse :

- Keep calm and act immediately. Safety is paramount.
- Listen to the vulnerable adult/child and let them talk freely without asking too many questions.
- Don't be judgemental or let your feelings and opinions get involved.
- Reassure them that they're doing the right thing by talking about it.
- Then ACT if there is immediate danger. Make contact with the appropriate emergency services. This may include the police, paramedics or mental health crisis team.
- Tell the vulnerable adult/child you cannot keep the information confidential and that you must act to keep them safe. Let them know whom you will be talking too and why.
- Do not discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator.
- Do not destroy any articles that could be used in evidence such as emails, text messages or notes from conversations.
- Write a record of events, using words exactly as the vulnerable adult/child used. This may include behaviours shown and any injuries. Add times, addresses, names, anything that maybe helpful in supporting the investigation.

Useful Contact Details :

Harrogate Safeguarding Adults:

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – Customer services centre : 01609780780

Harrogate Safeguarding Children :

Safeguarding Vulnerable Children – Customer services centre : 01609780780

Charity/Group Support : HADCA - 01423 504074

Independent Domestic Abuse Service (IDAS) : Provide refuge space and support for people experiencing domestic violence. : 03000110110.

IDAS Rape Support Line : Open Tuesday and Thursday from 5PM-7PM and Saturday 10AM-12PM.

Victim Support : 01904643100

National Groups and Charities :

National Domestic Violence Helpline : A 24 hour helpline offering a service for women experiencing domestic violence : 08082000247.

The Mix : Free information and support for under 25s : 08088084994.

National LGBT + Domestic Abuse Helpline : 08009995428

Samaritans (24/7 Service) : 116 123

NSPCC : 08088005000

Childline : 08001111