

# Little Lost Robot CIC Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy & Procedure

Policy Updated January 2024

Next review December 2024

## Purpose of Policy

To set out the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and how this will be implemented by Little Lost Robot CIC in the discharge of its duties

## Policy Application

This policy applies to all members of staff at Little Lost Robot CIC and all those organisations that have a working relationship with Little Lost Robot CIC including partners, funders, volunteers and freelancers.

## Policy Objectives

Our main policy objective is to ensure that we will, along with our partner agencies, promote safeguarding as our general practice. This means that staff and managers in all organisations working with vulnerable adults fully understand their safeguarding responsibilities and their active role in working together to safeguard vulnerable adults from harm.

For this policy to be effective it is essential that all staff have an applied understanding of what safeguarding means, knows that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, knows the signs and symptoms of potential harm, how to access safeguarding information, advice and guidance, and is committed to making an informed contribution to safeguarding vulnerable adults.

## Definitions

"Vulnerable adults are those people over the age of 18 who are, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of any disability, age or illness and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation." (Department of Health, 2000).

Vulnerable Adults include:

people who experience disability or have physical or sensory impairments

people who have learning difficulties

people who experience mental ill health, or have social or emotional problems and who may exhibit challenging behaviour

older people whose situation is complicated by additional factors

people who live in care homes

people with drug or alcohol problems

people in extreme poverty

homeless people

1.2 'Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it'. (Department of Health, 2000)

## Types of Abuse

Abuse can be:

- Caused through action or omission and neglect
- Intentional or be the unintentional result of a person's actions or lack of awareness
- A single act or the result of persistent actions or restrictions over time which are cumulatively abusive

It is important to be alert to and be able to recognise signs of abuse.

Abuse may include but is not restricted to some of the following forms:

**Physical abuse:** this is usually the use of force to cause pain and injury and signs might include burns, bruising, scratches, or accidents that cannot be explained and female genital mutilation (FGM). Also included is misuse of medication or forcing someone, for example, to stay in a care home against their wishes

**Neglect and acts of omission:** including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

**Financial or material abuse:** this is when a vulnerable adult is exploited for financial or material gain. Often valuables will go missing or there may be a change in financial circumstances that cannot be explained

**Sexual abuse:** this includes rape and sexual assault or sexual acts which the vulnerable adult has not or could not consent to or was pressurised or manipulated into. Signs can include changes in behaviour or physical discomfort

**Psychological abuse:** this might be emotional abuse such as threats of harm or abandonment, bullying behaviour including cyber bullying, grooming and radicalization, enforced isolation, blaming or controlling behaviour, or verbal and racial insults. Signs may be fear, confusion or disturbed sleep

**Discriminatory abuse:** this includes any sort of abuse based on a vulnerable adult's race, gender or impairment such as their mental or physical health

**Organisational abuse;** On occasion institutions, develop practices which allow the abuse of customers. It 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

Modern Slavery, encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Possible indicators: withdrawn, unkempt, loss of documents, avoiding eye contact

Domestic Abuse, including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and 'honour' based violence

Self-Neglect covers a wide range of behaviour including neglect for self, surroundings, health, hygiene and hoarding.

Please see B&NES Self-Neglect Policy and Best Practice Guidance where appropriate

## Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Principles

The following principles underpin all of our work with vulnerable adults:

Everyone has the right to live their life free from violence, fear and abuse

Everyone has the right to be protected from harm and exploitation

Everyone has the right to independence, which carries with it a degree of risk

## Employer Responsibility

Little Lost Robot CIC will ensure that:

All staff, freelancers and volunteers are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults and that they are informed about and take full responsibility for their actions at all levels.

This means:

Ensuring the highest standards of safe recruitment, supervision and management oversight of Little Lost Robot CIC staff, particularly but not exclusively those working directly with vulnerable adults

Ensuring that vulnerable adults are seen and listened to and that their views are taken fully into account when making decisions

Taking appropriate action regarding any concerns expressed about their welfare, commensurate with their rights to privacy and wherever possible on the basis of informed consent

All members of staff, freelancers and volunteers who are employed by or on behalf of Little Lost Robot CIC, and who have contact with vulnerable adults and their families or carers, will have a clear understanding of Little Lost Robot CIC responsibilities for safeguarding

Reviewing our policies and procedures about safeguarding at least every year and in response to lessons from research and serious case reviews and ensuring continuous improvement

Promoting the highest standards of safeguarding practice across Little Lost Robot CIC and our partners, including robust standards for safe recruitment and ongoing checks

## Safe Employment

Robust procedures are in place to ensure that staff who have access to vulnerable adults or access to sensitive information about vulnerable adults are employed safely.

This means:

There is a culture throughout Little Lost Robot CIC that enables safeguarding issues to be addressed

Recruitment and vetting procedures prevent unsuitable people from having contact with vulnerable adults

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

Staff who work or have contact with vulnerable adults and their families or carers have appropriate safeguarding and safe working practices training, including induction, consistent with their role and function

Little Lost Robot CIC recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse vulnerable adults in some way. All reasonable steps are taken to ensure suitable people are recruited

## Safe Recruitment Procedures

Interview and induction:

A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure check will need to be present before a candidate can begin work for and with Little Lost Robot CIC, if necessary, for the role

Two confidential references will be required, of which one should be regarding previous work with vulnerable adults (for posts in which there will be direct contact with vulnerable adults)

Evidence of identity (passport or driving license with photo) will be required

All staff will be required to undergo an interview carried out to acceptable protocol and recommendations

All staff working directly with, or responsible for, work with vulnerable adults should receive formal induction, during which:

A check will be made that qualifications can be substantiated

The job requirements and responsibilities will be clarified

They should receive a copy of and sign up to the Staff Handbook and our values and code of conduct

Safeguarding procedures are explained and training needs are identified

Training:

Staff / freelancers and volunteers will receive training to:

Analyse their own practice against established good practice and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them against false allegations

Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice or possible abuse

Respond to concerns expressed by a vulnerable adult

Work safely and effectively with vulnerable adults

Understand their right to confidentiality if they have concerns about another member of staff/volunteer

Little Lost Robot CIC requires staff / volunteers to attend at least one internal safeguarding training event and if necessary additional external training from the appropriate bodies.

## Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure

The DBS's aim is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children, young people or other vulnerable members of society. Little Lost Robot CIC insists that any member of staff over the age of 18 working with vulnerable adults must have a DBS check within the following terms:

DBS checks are required, and can only be obtained, for those working in roles that involve working directly and regularly with, or being in sole charge of, children, young people and vulnerable adults. Please consult SAFE child's DBS guidelines: <http://www.safecic.co.uk/>

For more information, please see Disclosure and Barring Service website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

DBS checks for both staff, freelancers and volunteers are processed through an umbrella organisation – Theatre Royal Bath.

## Designated Officer

The Designated Officer has operational responsibility for receiving concerns about the safety and welfare of vulnerable adults and they will make decisions about what action needs to be taken and liaise with other agencies involved in safeguarding, especially adult social care.

The Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Officer also has a responsibility to ensure vulnerable adult policies and procedures are reviewed and kept up to date and that all relevant staff access appropriate levels of training.

The Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Officer is:

Ruby Sant

Email: [ruby@lostrobot.org](mailto:ruby@lostrobot.org)

Phone: 07703 319557

Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Deputy Officer is:

Juliet Webb

Email: [juliet@lostrobot.org](mailto:juliet@lostrobot.org)

Phone: 07365 519479

## Employee Responsibility

All staff employed by Little Lost Robot CIC who have access to vulnerable adults and their families or carers, and those who have access to sensitive information, will have induction and on-going training so that they know of the appropriate procedures and personnel in place, and of their role in responding to concerns about vulnerable adults and other safeguarding matters. Additionally, line management and/or supervision is in place to appropriately support staff.

It is the responsibility of all employees, volunteers and freelancers to report suspected abuse. Never keep suspicious or inappropriate behaviour or abuse to yourself. If you are a freelance employee, it is not your responsibility to decide if abuse is taking place, but it is your responsibility to inform the Designated Officer at Little Lost Robot CIC of concerns or suspicions.

The Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Officer will decide whether this is a matter that should be referred to the Police for investigation. A referral to the relevant Local Authority Adult Social Care Team (or appropriate alternative) should always be made where a safeguarding concern is suspected - using the relevant referral form.

Ensure that any complaints are dealt with using the Little Lost Robot CIC complaints procedure. The complaints procedure should be prominently displayed in workshop settings.

All (freelance) project/event facilitators must:

Complete risk assessments for each project /event and should include issues relating to vulnerable adult protection;

Maintain a project/event attendance register;

Record emergency and home contact telephone numbers for all vulnerable adults in the group which should then only be held by the Little Lost Robot CIC project manager

Avoid personal contact with vulnerable adults outside of the work setting (for example lifts home, giving out your telephone number)

Ensure access to an out of hours telephone numbers for relevant managers to contact in an emergency, if they are not present at the session;

Ensure awareness of any vulnerable adults who are required to take medication during the course of the session;

Ensure awareness of any medical condition or impairment that may lead to a participant having a seizure during a session;

All freelance project/event facilitators must inform the Designated Officer at Little Lost Robot CIC if a vulnerable adult discloses something that the artist feels puts the vulnerable adult or others at risk

Physical contact with participants should be kept to a minimum, avoid touching below the shoulder;

Avoid being alone with a vulnerable adult. If this is unavoidable, ensure you are in sight and sound of other adults (i.e. keep doors open and inform other adults if possible);

All freelance project/event facilitators must have referral mechanisms at hand in order to support the vulnerable adult and should not take on board a counselling role;

Ensure formal permission for Photographic and Video Images has been obtained. Never use a vulnerable adult name against their picture on any work they have created, unless they specifically give their permission

## Process for Dealing with Disclosure of abuse

Information about participants is generally treated as confidential, and only shared with external agencies where this has been requested or agreed by the participant. However, if abuse is suspected, the need to safeguard the vulnerable adult overrules the right to confidentiality. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to report suspected abuse.

If a vulnerable adult discloses abuse:

Do:

Stay calm and try not to show if you are shocked

Listen carefully, be sympathetic and reassure the person they have done the right thing in telling someone

Tell the participant that what they have told you will be taken seriously

Tell the participant you will do your best to support them

Tell the participant as early as possible that you cannot keep the information to yourself. Be clear who you need to tell and why

Clarify whether the abuse requires an urgent response

Immediately make a clear, straightforward written record, recording the conversation as precisely as possible

Contact the Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Officer

Don't:

Press for more details – this is the job of the investigation

Make promises you cannot keep or about keeping or secret

Pass on information to anyone who doesn't have a legitimate need to know

Make judgements

## Process if abuse is suspected

It is important to remember that you are not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has taken place. Your responsibility is to report any concerns or disclosures to the Designated Officer at Little Lost Robot CIC as soon as possible, who will inform the appropriate agencies

Ask the person just enough questions to establish what has happened and whether there is ongoing immediate danger

Ensure the person is safe and supported

If there is immediate danger, or if the vulnerable adult is seriously injured, call the emergency services on 999

If you have been unable to inform the Designated Officer at Little Lost Robot CIC within 24 hours, you must report the incident yourself to Virgin Care Adult Safeguarding Team rather than delay further

You will need to give the following information:

why you're concerned

the vulnerable adult's name, age and address

if anyone lives with them

if they're getting help from any organisation

who may be doing the abuse

If a crime is suspected the police must also be contacted by telephoning 101 (or in an emergency, 999)

As soon as possible, write up detailed notes and the actions taken using the Little Lost Robot CIC safeguarding Reporting Form

Do not assume that because another agency is aware of an incident that they will have completed a referral, or had the same understanding of an incident or concern as you

## Consent

We should aim to inform the client where a referral is due to be made on the grounds of safeguarding concerns (as detailed above) and seek their consent to do so, explaining

- what will happen to the information
- who will be told what
- who they will then tell
- why people are being told the information

In general, ask them how they want you to respond and how to keep them informed on developments, ensuring we keep them at the heart of the process. Sometimes you may think

that the risk is so great that it is better to contact Adult Social Care regardless, or there may be times when seeking consent might make matters worse or put the victim of the abuse at risk. In these instances, always talk to the Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Officer.

## Mental Capacity Act

The Mental Capacity Act applies to people aged 16 or over and provides a statutory framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make some decisions for themselves, for example, people with dementia, learning disabilities, mental health problems, stroke or head

If they refuse permission to report the concern the member of staff must consider with the Designated Officer if the person has the capacity to make a decision – if it is decided that they do not a referral should be made

If it is decided that they do have capacity, then it should be considered if the person is subject to threat or coercion

If there are any doubts or the staff member or the Designated Officer does not feel comfortable about making a decision in respect of capacity, then advice should be sought from the relevant social services team

## Five key principles

A presumption of capacity – every adult has the right to make his or her own decisions and must be assumed to have capacity to do so unless it is proved otherwise.

Individuals being supported to make their own decisions – a person must be given all practicable help before anyone treats them as not being able to make their own decisions;

Unwise decisions – just because an individual makes what might be seen as an unwise decision, they should not be treated as lacking capacity to make that decision;

Best interests – an act done or decision made under the Act for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity must be done in their best interests; and

Least restrictive option – anything done for or on behalf of a person who lacks capacity should be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.

Allegations against staff

In the event of an accusation of abuse being made against any member of Little Lost Robot CIC staff/volunteer/freelancer, the individual accused will be automatically suspended pending further investigations. The temporary suspension of a member of staff in no way implies guilt or innocence. It is a measure intended to protect and reassure both staff and/or vulnerable adult.

An internal investigation will be held and the member of staff/volunteer/freelancer against whom an accusation of abuse has been made will be summoned to a Disciplinary meeting as early as possible. They are entitled to be accompanied to this meeting. Minutes will be taken of the meeting. The task of the Disciplinary Committee is to decide whether or not the accused member of staff/volunteer/freelancer should be allowed to continue to work with vulnerable adults. At all times the welfare of the vulnerable adult should be of paramount importance.

In all cases where the accusation of abuse is found to be true, the Disciplinary Committee will normally terminate the employment, contract or agreement with the individual. Lesser measures may be taken at the discretion of the Disciplinary Committee.

This is an internal procedure and will be in addition to any external legal procedure necessitated by the relevant authorities.

## APPENDIX 1 REPORTING FLOW CHART

## APPENDIX 2 REPORTING TO B&NES

Staff referral form for reporting concerns about a vulnerable adult

Details of vulnerable adult

Your details

Report

This form should be copied, marked 'Private and Confidential', and passed confidentially to Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Officer, Ruby Sant, and to the statutory authorities (if they have been informed of the incident) within 48 hours of the incident.

Artist or freelancer's referral form for reporting concerns about a vulnerable adult

If you consider a vulnerable adult is at risk of immediate harm first call:

Emergency services 999 or Local police, central referral unit: 101

Then inform the Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Lead:

Ruby Sant – 07703 319557

In the event you cannot contact the lead person above, this is the local contact to use:  
Virgin Care Adult Safeguarding Team on the local rate number 0300 247 0201 where you will be connected to the local B&NES team

Outside Office hours, urgent concerns for both adults and children should be made to the  
Emergency Duty Team: 01454 615165

Details of vulnerable adult

Your details

Report

This form should be copied, marked 'Private and Confidential', and passed confidentially to:  
The Little Lost Robot CIC Designated Lead, Ruby Sant