

Calder Walking Group - Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:

Calder Walking Group is a fully constituted Group and includes 'Sowerby Walkers and Ramblers' and 'Royd Walking Friends'.

Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. As a constituted Group, we have a responsibility to each other, our fellow walkers and for the wider community. As such, it is imperative that we have a Safeguarding Policy for both children and vulnerable adults who we may come into contact with during our activities.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and, in particular, protecting them from significant harm, depends upon effective joint working between ourselves, agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children and vulnerable adults, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children and vulnerable adults who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the individuals and, where necessary, to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children and vulnerable adults.

As such, we at Calder Walking Group, agencies and professionals should:

- ✓ be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- ✓ be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children and vulnerable adults;
- ✓ share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances;
- ✓ contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare;

Definitions of abuse and neglect:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the individual's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child or vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the individual's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the individual participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing the individual frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of an individual, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing an individual to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g.: rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving individuals in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet an individual's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the individual's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Procedures

What to do if you have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult.

You may have concerns about a child or vulnerable adult because of something you have seen or heard, or a child or vulnerable adult may choose to disclose something to you. If a child or vulnerable adult discloses information to you:

- ✓ Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Social Care Services.
- ✓ Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- ✓ Accept what is said.
- ✓ Reassure the child or vulnerable adult, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep *ego: 'Everything will be alright now', 'You'll never have to see that person again'*.
- ✓ Do reassure and alleviate guilt if the child or vulnerable adult refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'*.
- ✓ Do not interrogate the child or vulnerable adult; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- ✓ Do not ask leading questions (e.g.: Did he touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- ✓ Do not ask the child or vulnerable adult to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- ✓ Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- ✓ Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- ✓ Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child or vulnerable adult (do not paraphrase).
- ✓ Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

Whatever the nature of your concerns, please discuss them with one of the walker leaders or Trustees at Calder Walking Group (Adrian Horton or Karen Harker).

If you still have concerns, you, or the Trustee, should refer to:

**Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
For a Child**

Multi Agency Screening Team, Halifax Tel: 01422 393336
Emergency Duty Team Calderdale (Out of hours service) Tel: 01422 288000
Police Safeguarding Unit Halifax 01422 337042 / 01422 337 370
Police 01422 337000 / 101

Safeguarding Procedures: <https://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/report-concerns/>

What information will you need when making a referral?

You will be asked to provide as much information as possible. Such as the child's or vulnerable adult's full name, date of birth, address, school, GP, languages spoken, any disabilities the child or vulnerable adult may have, details of the parents, if applicable. Do not be concerned if you do not have all these details, you should still make the call.

You should follow up the verbal referral in writing, within 48hr.

Adrian Horton - Chair – Calder Walking Group

Karen Harker – Secretary – Calder Walking Group

