

JUST ACTION

Safeguarding Policy

This Safeguarding Policy applies to Just Action and to all its staff and volunteers in relation to all programme activities

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Purpose of this Policy

This document is the Safeguarding Children, Young people and vulnerable adults policy for Just Action, which will be followed by all staff and volunteers and promoted by those in leadership positions within the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that all members working for or on behalf of Just Action do not harm children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that safety risks and cases of misconduct are identified, reported and addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.

Safeguarding Statement

Just Action fully recognise their responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and are committed to being a fully accessible and inclusive organisation welcoming and respecting the diversity of all staff and volunteers. Just Action believe that children, young people and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. We also believe that all those working on behalf of the organisation have a right to personal support and guidance concerning the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Definitions

Safeguarding: Safeguarding is the responsibility that an organisation has to ensure that their staff, volunteers, associates, operations and projects do not do harm to children and other vulnerable people; that they do not expose them to the risk of discrimination, neglect, exploitation, harm and abuse and that any concerns the organisation has about children and vulnerable people within the communities in which they work are reported to the appropriate authorities. It is also the responsibility that the organisation has for protecting its employees, volunteers and associates when they are vulnerable, for example, when ill or at risk of harm or abuse (Source - The Global Standard for Volunteering for Development).

Staff and Volunteers: When we refer to 'staff' and 'volunteers' throughout this policy, this means permanent, temporary, full time or part time staff and volunteers.

Child and young person: A child or young person is defined as anyone under the age of eighteen years, in accordance with Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.

Child Abuse / Exploitation: Refers to any and all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the vulnerable persons health, survival, development or dignity. Abuse towards vulnerable person can take place in any setting, public or private. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Abuse can include

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

Emotional abuse: Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children and vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far 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 child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children and vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child and/or vulnerable adult though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child 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 children and vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children and vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect: Neglect is the failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child'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, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect from physical and emotional harm or danger or ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

Who might be an abuser?

Children and vulnerable adults can be abused by a wide range of people – anyone, in fact, who has contact with them. This includes family members, professional staff, paid care workers, other vulnerable people, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends and associates, people who deliberately take advantage of vulnerable people, strangers and people who see an opportunity to abuse.

Abuse is always wrong, but it's especially worrying when carried out by someone in a position of power or authority, who uses that power to harm a child or vulnerable adult.

What to do if children or vulnerable adult talk to you about abuse?

It is recognised that a child or vulnerable adult may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously with you individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations, YOU MUST:

- Listen carefully to the child or vulnerable adult, DO NOT directly question them.
- Give the child or vulnerable adult time and attention.
- Allow the child or vulnerable adult to give a spontaneous account; do not stop a child or vulnerable adult who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the child's or vulnerable adult's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's / vulnerable adult's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they might share or have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling you and that they have not done anything wrong.
- Tell them what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.
- Report the event immediately (reporting procedure listed below).
- DO NOT make promises that you can't guarantee.
- DO NOT ask the child or vulnerable adult to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.
- DO NOT give your home address.

Through observation or information received, you may become concerned about a child or vulnerable adult who has not spoken to you. It is good practice to ask a child or vulnerable adult why they are upset or how a cut or bruise was caused, or respond to a child or vulnerable adult wanting to talk to you. This practice can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

Allegations against adults who work with children or vulnerable adults

If you have information which suggests an adult linked to Just Action works with children or vulnerable adults (in a paid or unpaid capacity) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or vulnerable adult.
- Behaved towards a child/children or adult/s in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

You should report this immediately following our reporting procedures outlined below.

Reporting procedure and whistleblowing policy

All reports should be made to the Just Action management team directly or written to:

justactionsamos@gmail.com

In the event that a representative or guest witnesses or reasonably suspects any wrongdoing on the part of any fellow representative or guest (i.e. breach of any of the Safeguarding Policy or the law) he or she shall promptly report the management team any suspicious activity within the next 24 hours, in accordance with the procedure laid out below:

Normal case procedure

1. The person who submits the report must formally notify the management team.
2. The management team must record the report on the designated "Safeguarding Reporting Form" and inform the reporting representative or guest regarding the procedures that will follow.
3. The management team must keep the identity of the whistleblower confidential, unless otherwise required by law.
4. The management team begins an internal investigation into the suspect; refer the case to the relevant authorities of the country where the operation is located; take all the actions and decisions that are necessary to solve the critical situation to ensure that children's and vulnerable adult's safety and wellbeing is the priority.

Special case procedure

1. If the reported person is part of the management team it is the responsibility of the remaining team to guarantee that the specific person is not involved with the case management and evaluation.
2. If a member of the management team witnesses a violation of the Safeguarding Policy, it is his or her duty to report to the remaining team, who must in turn follow the normal procedure.

Recruitment

Just Action is committed to ensuring that Just Action staff and volunteers:

1. Are suitable to work with vulnerable people.
2. Are informed of their responsibility to abide by and uphold the Safeguarding Policy.
3. Have read and signed the Code of Conduct.

For candidates who will be in direct contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults Just Action is committed to the following vetting prior to a placement offer:

1. Criminal background checks or other available means to be conducted.
2. Candidates to provide minimum one reference (preferably former supervisors, non-family members who are knowledgeable of the candidate's work with children or vulnerable adults and have known the candidate for more than one year).
3. Interviewing.

Photographs and videos of children, young people and vulnerable adults

- Always act with discretion; regardless of consent given, recognise when you do not have to take a photo and when the most humane thing to do is to put the camera away. Photography is always an imposition - especially in a humanitarian context.
- All staff and volunteers must obtain verbal consent from beneficiaries or guardians before taking any photographs or videos of beneficiaries.
- For people under 18 years old, or adults who do not have sufficient mental capacity to consent, a parent or guardian must give consent on their behalf.
- The quality of consent obtained is what is important here. For instance, if a subject is concerned about the impact of being photographed, then do not take their photo. Likewise, if there is a real or perceived imbalance of power between photographer and subject, gaining true consent may not be possible.
- Consent must be fully informed. Possible uses of the photo and where it may appear must be explained.

Rights & Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the management team of Just Action:

- To ensure staff and volunteers are aware of a vulnerable person's need for protection.
- To notify the appropriate agencies if abuse is identified or suspected.
- To support and where possible secure the safety of individuals and ensure that all referrals to services have full information in relation to identified risk and vulnerability.
- To ensure all legal requirements are met to accept volunteers to where the project operates.

Responsibilities of all staff and volunteers of Just Action:

- To be familiar with the Safeguarding Policy.
- To take appropriate action in line with this Policy.
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions.

The child, young person and vulnerable adult has the right:

- To be made aware of this Policy.
- To have alleged incidents recognised and taken seriously.
- To receive fair and respectful treatment throughout.
- To be involved in any process as appropriate.
- To receive information about the outcome.

Any incidences where staff or volunteers breach the Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed with potential discipline or dismissal.

Safeguarding reporting form

This form should be used to record safeguarding concerns relating to Children and/or Vulnerable persons.

In an emergency please do not delay in informing the police or social services. All the information must be treated as confidential and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer within one working day or the next working day if it's a weekend.

The form should be completed at the time or immediately following disclosure, but after all necessary emergency actions have been taken. Please complete the form as fully as possible.

1 Your details – the person completing the form

Name

Position

Telephone

Email

2 Details of the person affected

Name

Address

Telephone

Email

3 Details of the incident (please describe in detail using only the facts)

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4 Other present or potential witnesses

Name			
Address			
Telephone number		Email	

5 Additional relevant information (please detail anything else that you believe to be helpful or important)

I have completed this form and provided information that is factual and does not contain my own views or opinions on the matter.

Print name

Signature

Date