



Document: **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

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and Theatre Company

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – The legal and procedural framework for safeguarding children

Appendix 2 – Contacts and additional resources

Appendix 3 – Child/ Vulnerable Adult Protection concern reporting form

Appendix 4 – Reporting procedure

Appendix 5 – Adult code of conduct

Appendix 6 – Children’s code of conduct

Appendix A – Forms and signs of abuse (children)

Appendix B – Form template and signs of abuse (vulnerable adults)

Appendix C – Guidelines for dealing with abuse or signs or abuse

General Statement

Reedham Community Association & RCA Stage School and Theatre Company (RCA) has a duty of care towards children and vulnerable young people under the age of eighteen, to protect them from physical, emotional and sexual abuse or harm and ensuring their wellbeing. We are committed to creating, safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaging in any Reedham Community Association, training. Members should show respect and understanding for individual’s rights, safety and welfare at all times.

It is a requirement that any member of the RCA has a responsibility to pass on information and concerns to Norfolk Social Services. A list of contact numbers and additional resources are contained in Appendix 2.

This policy applies to users of the village hall, the adjacent pavilion building, field and users of the play facilities next to the hall'

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding legislation and government guidance says that safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcome

What is a vulnerable user?

- Vulnerable users could include:
- children,
- young people,
- adults with learning difficulties or physical disability
- Frail elderly people.
- Carers

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

The importance of child protection is well known but it also needs to be remembered that village hall committees owe a duty of care to all those using their premises, which means that the safety of those who cannot read warning signs, who are frail or physically less able needs to be borne in mind.

"A Co-ordinated Approach - Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action." [Working together to Safeguard Children \(HM Government\)](#)

Further advice and support

At any stage you may wish to seek further advice or support from the following sources:

Child Protection:

NSPCC – www.nspcc.org.uk or 0116 234 7223

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline – 0808 800 5000

Criminal Records Bureau – www.disclosure.gov.uk

Save the Children – www.scfuk.org.uk

Early Years Partnerships – based in County Council Social Services depts.

Vulnerable Adults Protection: Action on Elder Abuse – helpline 0808 808 8141 Age Concern – helpline 0800 009966

Details of Premises and staffing

All 'Anywhere' Village Hall Committee members, staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard vulnerable users of the hall and its premises (see above definition) and those who may come into contact with vulnerable users.

They should respond to any concerns they may have regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or psychological safety of a vulnerable person or concerns relating to discriminatory or financial violation or exploitation of a vulnerable person.

This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith.

Policy Statement

1. No member of the trustees, helpers or other volunteers or staff will have unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults unless they have been through the safe recruitment procedure (see box below) and introductory Child Protection or Vulnerable Adults Protection training.

2. All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.
3. All staff and volunteers need to be aware of this policy, child protection, and vulnerable adult issues, and should be offered introductory training. A copy of the appendices will be provided to all who request it.
4. There will be a nominated and named Child/vulnerable user's protection officer to whom any suspicions or concerns should be reported. This person is Rebecca & Chris Bradbury
5. The management committee will endeavour to keep the premises safe for use by children and vulnerable adults. The committee recognises that a higher standard of safety is required where use is made by small children, those who cannot read safety notices and physically disabled adults
6. Any organisations or individuals hiring the hall for the purposes of holding activities where Ofsted registration is required (see table below) should show their registration and their own Child Protection Policy. Safe recruitment processes should be used to appoint staff who will be working with children or vulnerable adults in any kind of activity.
7. The committee will ensure that hirers are made aware of their obligations under the Licensing Act 2003 to ensure that alcohol is not sold to those under the age of 18. The committee will ensure that hirers are aware that no children may be admitted to films when they are below the age classification for the film on show. No gambling or entertainment of an adult or sexual nature shall be permitted on the premises.
8. These policies and procedures will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate in the interim periods.

Checks and Training

The Reedham community association and RCA Stage School is an organisation that provides direct activities to children and young people. Where project and development workers do have direct access to children through their work with communities a full DBS disclosure will be sought. In addition all members will be made aware of child protection issues and proper reporting procedures.

The Reedham community association and RCA Stage School has a designated person responsible for all matters relating to child protection whose responsibility it is to:

- Provide a single point of contact for staff/ volunteers on child protection issues
- Provide internal consultation to staff and volunteers
- Ensure that good working practice is followed by RCA volunteers
- Contact the social care services if required

- Ensure that training is available to RCA volunteers as required

The RCA child protection officers are Rebeca Bradbury & Chris Bradbury

All staff, volunteers and Trustees working on behalf of Reedham Community Association have a duty:

- To promote the welfare and safety of children.
- To be alert to potential indicators of abuse and neglect.
-

Staff, volunteers and Trustees may receive disclosures of child abuse and observe children who are at risk. This policy will enable staff/trustees/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues

Safe Recruitment

All staff or volunteers, working directly for the RCA Stage School must:

- complete an application form which shows their employment history.
- provide at least two references.
- if working directly with children or young people or vulnerable adults one of the references should come from someone who has supervised them working with children, young people or vulnerable adults before.
- if working directly with children or young people or vulnerable adults they should be checked under the Disclosure and Barring Service and a copy of the DBS disclosure form kept on the secretary's file.

Any volunteers working for the village hall committee and having unsupervised access to vulnerable users (eg running children's entertainment) may also be required to go through these procedures

Code of Conduct for RCA volunteers

If working with communities staff, volunteers and Trustee's should:

- Treat all adults, children and young people with respect and dignity
- Avoid being alone with children/young people for excessive amounts of time and ensure that meetings and contacts are kept as open as possible.
- If privacy is required then RCA volunteers should ensure others of the location and time.
- Encourage others to adopt safe practices and signpost to relevant support for help on child protection.
- RCA volunteers will be aware of range of resources available and where to obtain them – such as the Child Protection checklist for voluntary groups on the NRCC website.
- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow ourselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking situations.

- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person, even in fun
- such as the NSPCC [Safeguarding for Voluntary and Community Groups learning resources](#) and the [Charity Commission safeguarding guidance](#).

Reporting Incidents

The nominated Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult representative Rebecca Bradbury will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the local authority Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult lead agency. The representative may choose to have a confidential discussion with others in order to clear up any misunderstandings or to corroborate and support any suspicions before reporting a concern to the lead agency. The nominated person should:

- Know who to contact at the local authority.
- Know who to contact in Social Services for advice and referrals.
- Know about helplines and other sources of help for children and young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure an environment in which staff have the opportunity to raise any child protection or vulnerable adult protection concerns.

Ofsted Requirements

If you or hall hirer work as a childminder, or provide day care for children under 8 years old for more than two hours each day you must register with Ofsted and be inspected regularly. Nursery education settings which are on their local authority's directory to provide free places for three to four year olds must also be inspected regularly by Ofsted.

(www.ofsted.gov.uk) These requirements cover Playgroups, nurseries, After School Clubs and Holiday Clubs, amongst others.

Useful Procedures

1. All Nominated trustees, volunteers and staff will be given information about child protection and should attend introductory level Child Protection training and Protection of Vulnerable Adults training where possible.
2. An annual review will take place following the AGM to allow for any required up-date of policies and or procedures. New trustees, volunteers and staff must be given an induction to this policy and understand their responsibilities.
3. A copy of the policy will be displayed for the attention of all in the village hall and made available on request to hirers.

4. Organisations hiring the hall for activities for children will be asked to show their Child Protection policy before the first booking commences. Individuals hiring the hall for activities for children will be made aware of this policy. Organisations hiring the hall for activities specifically involving vulnerable adults will be asked to show their Vulnerable Adults Protection policy before the first booking commences. Other organisations hiring the hall whose activities may involve vulnerable adults will be made aware of this policy.
5. The committee will require hirers to report any damage, breakages or safety issues needing attention to the booking Clerk, who will inform the appropriate people. These will be dealt with as soon as practicable, in the light of the circumstances, with provision to prevent access by children and vulnerable adults pending repair where appropriate.
6. A hiring agreement which includes appropriate clauses will be entered into for all hirings for licensable activities. The committee will ensure that these provisions are observed when holding any licensable activities itself. The committee will give written instructions to those selling alcohol concerning the licensing offences which must be avoided.
9. Contractors engaged to carry out work at the premises must not be allowed unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults. Appropriate supervision will be arranged if necessary.
10. If the premises might be used by more than one hirer, the attention of hirers will be drawn to the need to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are supervised when using toilets.
11. If we have a concern about a child or children we will telephone the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on **0344 800 8021** immediately. We will be put through to a Social Worker who will take all of the relevant details. We will make sure we are prepared with full details of the child and family, plus what our concerns are, details of any support we have provided to the child/family and what we would like to happen. We will ensure we gain consent from the parent/carer unless to do so would place the child at further risk of harm or undermine a criminal investigation. If we have not sought consent from the parent/carer we will inform the CADS worker of this and the reason for this.

The CADS worker will agree a way forward with us and keep us informed. They will send us a written record of our conversation within 5 working days. The outcomes could include a full referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further investigation, the Police, or for work with Early Help. We will not investigate and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

We will make careful records of all conversations, in ink, including the dates and times of who we spoke to, the information shared and the action agreed. We do not need to send a written referral.

Full details on this process can be found at www.norfolkscb.org under 'How to Raise a Concern'.

We understand if we are unhappy about a decision made by CADS or MASH we can use the Resolving Professional Disagreements policy on www.norfolkscb.org and contact the Safer Programme for more advice on this process.

Appendix 1

The Legal and Procedural Framework for Safeguarding Children

All of the following provide the legal and procedural framework for Safeguarding children and young people:

- The Children Act 1989
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified by UK Gov.1991)
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- Every Child Matters 2003
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- What to do if you're worried about a child. DOH 2003
- What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused 2015
- The Children Act 2004
- National Service Framework for Children, Young People & Maternity Services 2004
- Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People 2005
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011
- Disclosure and Barring Service 2012
- Guidance for Safer Work Practices for Adults who work with Children and Young People 2015
- Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers
- Seven Golden Rules for information sharing

Appendix 2

Contacts and Additional Resources

Local Contacts

- Norfolk County Council Children's Services - <https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-andfamilies> Telephone: 0344 800 8020
- Police - <https://www.norfolk.police.uk/advice/child-protection> In an emergency telephone: 999
- Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership - <https://www.norfolkscb.org/> Telephone: 01603 223409 (general matters) Address: The Woodside Centre, Witard Road, Norwich, NR7 9XD
- Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on 0344 800 8021 **National Contacts**
- The NSPCC - <http://www.nspcc.org.uk> Helpline: 0808 800 5000 or email help@nspcc.org.uk For Safeguarding training, resources and consultancy phone: 0116 234 7246.
- Childline UK - <http://www.childline.org.uk> Telephone: 0800 1111

Resources

- A wide range of resources and training material for community groups can be obtained from NSPCC <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk>.
- The Charity Commission Guidance for Safeguarding - www.gov.uk/guidance/safeguarding-duties-for-charity-trustees

Appendix 3

Child/Vulnerable Adult Protection - Concern Reporting Form

Please give as much information as possible, using extra sheets if necessary.

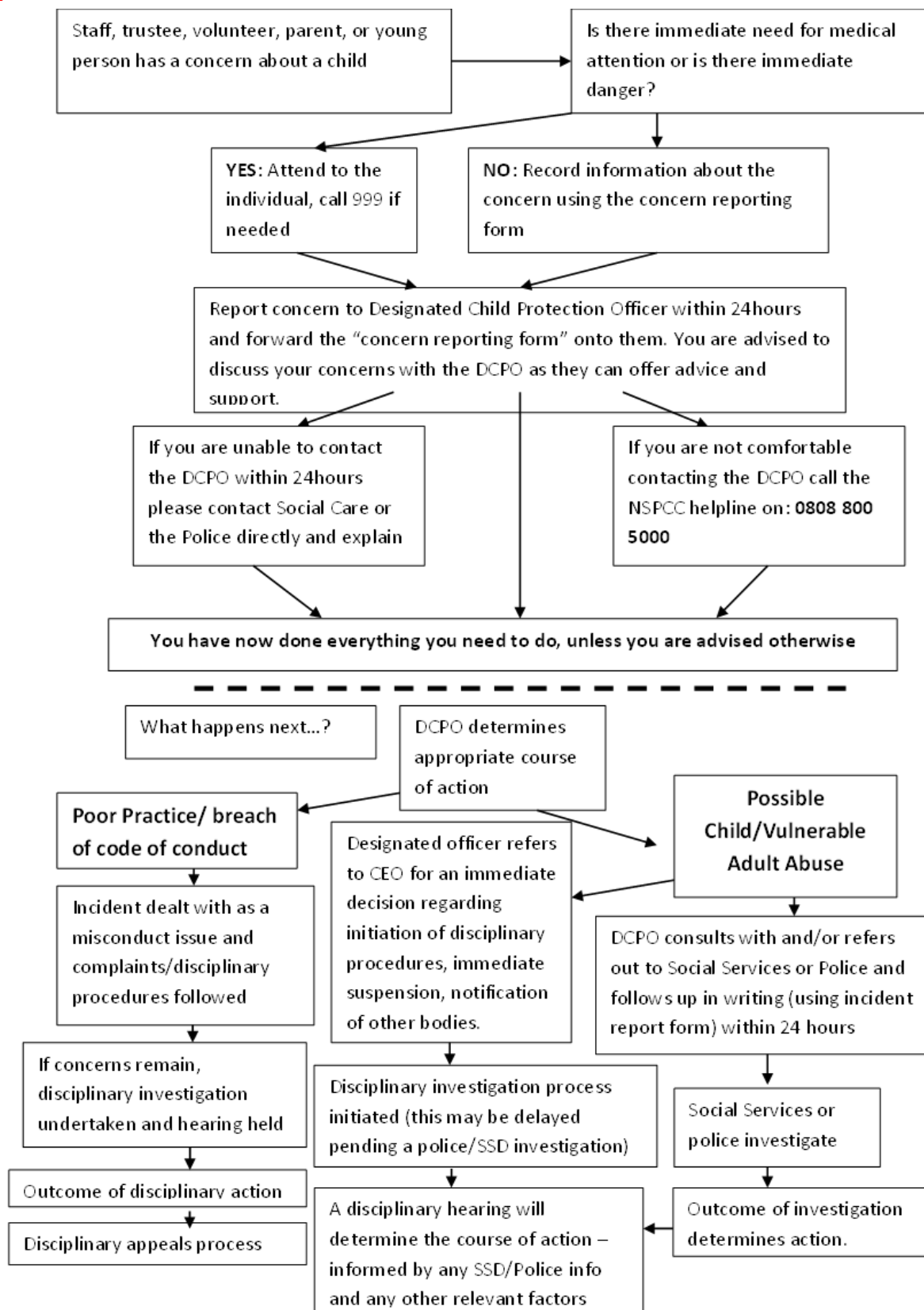
Once completed please pass this form to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Your Details		
Name	Contact Number	Position
Details of the person at risk		
Name	Age	Gender
Home Address		Home Number
		Name of parent(s) / carer(s)

Are there any special factors relating to this individual (e.g. ethnicity, religion, language difficulties, disability)? Please give details:	
What is your concern? If you are reporting the concerns of someone else please include their details.	
Please describe what has prompted your concern. Include times, dates, and details of any specific incidents, and names of any people involved.	
Please give details of the person(s) allegedly responsible for abuse/poor practice:	
Have you spoken to the individual at risk? If so, what was said?	
Have you spoken to anybody else about your concern? If so, please give details, including any further actions agreed:	
Is there any other information you feel is relevant to this incident?	
Your signature:	Date

Thank you. Please now pass this form to the Designated Child Protection Officer.

Appendix 4



Appendix 5

ADULT'S CODE OF CONDUCT

I WILL

- Treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect and dignity
- Ensure that their welfare and safety is paramount at all times
- Always act in a professional way and not accept bullying, swearing or other disruptive behaviour
- Liaise openly with parents & carers
- Adhere to Safer Working Practices at all times
- Listen to, and act upon, any disclosures, allegations or concerns of abuse and the welfare of children/adults
- Attend training when requested to ensure that skills are up to date and relevant
- Make activities FUN and enjoyable

Name:

Signed:

Date:.....

Appendix 6 – to be used when working with children/vulnerable adults in community settings.

YOUNG PEOPLE’S CODE OF CONDUCT

I WILL

- Treat everyone how I would like to be treated
- Arrive on time with the correct clothes and equipment
- Help anyone, if needed
- Be friendly
- Respect each other – including other children, young people and all staff and helpers
- Follow the rules
- Speak to staff and volunteers if I have any worries
- Join in with activities to have FUN!

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix A

This appendix gives guidance on how to recognise the signs of abuse in children. If you are not in regular contact with children or young people some of these signs will be harder to detect. This guidance will probably be most useful as a reminder for those who have had some basic or introductory child protection training.

Forms and signs of abuse

Ways to recognise child abuse and neglect

Physical abuse: Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child. Physical abuse can be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Visible Signs:

- Injuries to any part of the body
- Children who find it painful to walk, sit down, to move their jaws or are in some other kind of pain
- Injuries which are not typical of the bumps and scrapes associated with children's activities
- The regular occurrence of unexplained injuries
- The child who is frequently injured, where even apparently reasonable explanations are given

Behavioural Signs:

- Furtive, secretive behaviour
- Uncharacteristic aggression or withdrawn behaviour
- Compulsive eating or sudden loss of appetite
- The child who suddenly becomes ill co-ordinated
- The child who finds it difficult to stay awake

- The child who is repeatedly absent

What to listen for:

- Listen for confused or conflicting explanations of how the injuries were sustained
- Evaluate carefully what is said and preferably document it ad verbatim
- Consider if the explanation is in keeping with the nature, age and site of injury

Consider:

- What do you know about the family?
- Is there a history of known or suspected abuse?
- Has the family been under stress recently?
- Do you have concerns about the family?

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 making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

The recognition of emotional abuse is based on observations over time of the quality of relationships between parent/carer and the child.

Watch for parent/carer behaviours

- Poor attachment relationship with the child
- Unresponsive or neglectful behaviour towards child's emotional or psychological needs
- Persistent negative comments about the child
- Inappropriate or inconsistent developmental expectations of the child
- Parental problems that supercede the needs of the child
- Dysfunctional family relationships including domestic violence

Watch for child behaviours:

- Emotional indicators such as low self esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress, anxiety
- Behavioural indicators such as attention seeking, withdrawn, insecure
- Physical indicators such as failure to thrive/faltering growth, delay in achieving developmental, cognitive or educational milestones

Sexual abuse: Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Sexual abuse may also include noncontact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

There may be no recognisable signs of sexual abuse but the following indicators may be signs that a child is or has been sexually abused:

Physical signs

- Signs of blood or other discharge on the child's under clothes
- Awkwardness in walking or sitting down
- Tummy pains
- Regression into enuresis (bed or clothes wetting)
- Tiredness

Behavioural signs:

- Extreme variations in behaviour (e.g., anxiety, aggression, or withdrawal)
- Sexually provocative or inappropriate behaviour, or knowledge that is incompatible with the child's age and understanding
- Drawings and/or written work which are sexually explicit (indirect disclosure)
- Direct disclosure; It is important to recognise that children have neither the experience nor the understanding to be able to make up stories about sexual assault.

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, 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.

Indicators of neglect are recognisable in the child, in the parent/carers' behaviours and within the home environment.

Physical signs

- Abnormal growth including failure to thrive
- Underweight or obesity
- Recurrent infection
- Unkempt dirty appearance
- Smelly
- Inadequate/unwashed clothes
- Hunger
- Listlessness

Behavioural signs:

- Attachment disorders
- Indiscriminate friendliness
- Poor social relationships
- Poor concentration
- Developmental delays
- Low self esteem

Environmental signs:

- Insufficient food, heating and ventilation in the home
- Risk from animals in the household
- Inappropriate sleeping arrangements and inadequate bedding
- Dangerous or hazardous environment

Appendix B:

Categories and predisposing factors of adult abuse

Predisposing factors: Some examples of factors which may place people at risk of abuse are listed below. Adult abuse often occurs when a vulnerable adult is faced with a set of circumstances where there is potential for harm. The presence of one, or more, of these factors does not automatically imply that abuse will follow, but may increase the likelihood:

The Individual:

- Poor communication or communication difficulties
- History of falls and/or minor injuries
- Physical and/or emotional dependence on others
- Mental health needs, especially moderate or severe dementia
- Rejection of help
- Aggression
- Self-injurious behaviour
- History of repeatedly making allegations of abuse
- High level dependency on others to meet their care needs
- Substance misuse
- Previous history of violent relationships within the family or social networks

The Environment:

- Overcrowding
- Poor or insecure living conditions
- Geographical isolation
- Poor management and/or high staff turnover

Relationships (in particular with carers):

- Unequal power relationships
- Increased dependency of vulnerable adult
- Multiple dependency within the family or social networks
- Multigenerational family structure where conflicts of personal interests and loyalties may exist
- Role reversal or significant change in the relationship between the vulnerable adult and carer
- History of abuse within the family
- Significant levels of stress on the carer
- Isolation of the carer, due to the demands of caring, leading to a lack of practical and emotional support
- Lack of understanding about the vulnerable adults condition, resulting in inappropriate care
- Dependency on the vulnerable adult
- Difficult or challenging behaviour by the vulnerable adult which the carer finds intolerable or stressful
- History of the carer being abused or being a perpetrator
- The carer feels exploited, resentful, angry or guilty

- Financial difficulties
- Illness or disability of the carer
- Significant and long term stress of the carer

Discriminatory abuse: Discriminatory abuse exists when values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies mainstream opportunities to some groups or individuals. It is the exploitation of a person's vulnerability, resulting in repeated or pervasive treatment of an individual, which excludes them from opportunities in society, for example, education, health, justice, civic status and protection. It includes discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, sexuality, disability or religion.

Potential indicators:

- Lack of respect shown to an individual
- Signs of a sub-standard service offered to an individual
- Repeated exclusion from rights afforded to citizens such as health, education, employment, criminal justice and civic status

Physical abuse: The non-accidental infliction of physical force that results in bodily injury, pain, or impairment. Examples include the inappropriate application of treatments, involuntary isolation or confinement, misuse of medication.

Potential indicators:

- Any injury not fully explained by the history given
- Injuries inconsistent with the lifestyle of the vulnerable adult
- Bruises and/or welts on face, lips, mouth, torso, arms, back, buttocks, thighs
- Clusters of injuries forming regular patterns or reflecting the shape of an object
- Burns, especially on the soles, palms or back; immersion in hot water, friction burns, rope or electrical appliance burns
- Multiply fractures
- Lacerations or abrasions to mouth, lips, gums, eyes, external genitalia
- Marks on body, including slap marks, finger marks

- Injuries at different stages of healing
- Medication misuse

Sexual abuse: Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without consent. Consent to a particular activity may not be given because:

- A person has capacity but does not want to give consent
- A person lacks capacity and is therefore unable to give consent
- A person feels coerced into activity because the other person is in a position of trust, power, or authority

Potential indicators:

- Significant change in sexual behaviour or attitude
- Pregnancy in a women who is unable to consent to sexual intercourse
- Wetting or soiling
- Poor concentration
- Vulnerable adult appears withdrawn, depressed or stressed
- Unusual difficulty in walking or sitting
- Torn, stained or bloody underclothing
- Bruises, bleeding, pain or itching in genital area
- Sexually transmitted diseases, urinary tract or vaginal infection, love bites
- Bruising to thighs or upper arms

Psychological abuse: The use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing and other verbal conduct, or any other form of mental cruelty, that results in mental or physical distress. It includes the denial of basic human and civil rights, such as choice, self-expression, privacy and dignity.

Potential indicators:

- Change in appetite

- Low self-esteem, deference, passivity, and resignation
- Unexplained fear, defensiveness, ambivalence
- Emotional withdrawal
- Sleep disturbance

Financial abuse: The unauthorised and improper use of funds, property, or any resources belonging to an individual. Examples include forcing changes to a will, preventing access to money, property, possessions or inheritance, and theft.

Potential indicators:

- Unexplained sudden inability to pay bills or maintain lifestyle
- Unusual or inappropriate bank account activity
- Power of attorney or enduring power of attorney obtained when vulnerable adult is unable to comprehend and give consent
- Withholding money
- Recent change of deeds or title of property
- Unusual interest shown by family or others in the vulnerable adult's assets
- Person managing financial affairs is evasive or uncooperative

Neglect and Acts of Omission: The repeated deprivation of assistance that the vulnerable adult needs for important activities of daily living, including the failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to the vulnerable adult or others.

Potential indicators:

- Poor physical condition, e.g. bed sores, unwashed, ulcers or poor personal hygiene
- Clothing in poor condition, e.g. unclean, wet, ragged
- Inadequate physical environment
- Inadequate diet
- Untreated injuries or medical problems

- Inconsistent or reluctant contact with health or social care agencies
- Failure to engage in social interaction
- Malnutrition when not living alone
- Inadequate heating
- Failure to give prescribed medication

Institutional Abuse: When rules and regimes of the home are seen as more important than the individual needs of the people who live in the home.

- Poor standards
- Inflexible regimes
- Lack of personal choice for food, bed and meal times, etc.

Appendix C

Additional Information

RCA volunteers should be familiar with the signs of abuse. Training will be provided but additional information can be found on the the SAFE website and information pack and in the SAFER pack (the RCA has copies of these available to members).

Procedure in the Event of a Disclosure

It is important that children are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation is made that a child has been abused or when there is a suspicion that a child has been abused.

If a child approaches you with information:

- Treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying. Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Tell the child that they are right to tell you. Don't interrogate the child or ask leading questions - The use of leading questions can cause problems for the subsequent investigation and any court proceedings.
- Reassure them that they are not to blame. Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.

- Be honest about your own position, what you have to tell others and why.
- Tell the child what you are doing and when and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Take further action - you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse - tell your nominated person immediately.
- Write down everything said and what was done within 24 hours. (See Appendix 3 for information you may need if reporting to other agencies.)
- Seek medical attention if necessary.
- Inform parents/carers unless there is suspicion of their involvement.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.

If people suspect a problem they should:

- Talk to the designated child protection person who will know the appropriate action to take and observe confidentiality. It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection officer.
- If this is not appropriate or if they are unavailable, contact the chairman of Reedham Community association (if neither is available nor appropriate, any person can contact social care services directly, contact numbers and additional resources are available in Appendix 2.)
- If a child is clearly at risk and immediate action is necessary contact Children's Services and in an emergency call 999.

It is unlikely that Reedham community association or RCA Stage School will have to record information but if this is the case, this information will be kept securely in an appropriate place.

Other Relevant Policies

Other relevant policies include:

- Protection of Vulnerable Adults Policy.
- Legislation relating to the protection of children and other references (Appendix 2).
- Recruitment and Induction Policy.
- Harassment and Bullying Policy.
- Volunteering Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Code of Conduct for adults working with children and vulnerable adults (Appendix 5).
- Code of Conduct for young people (Appendix 6).

For additional information on Child Protection Procedures access the Norfolk County Council Website for further information.

information should be read by all Trustees, Staff and Volunteers.

A copy of all resources and any other relevant information will be kept in Reedham Village hall office.