

## **SUMMARY OF THE INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS' (THE "INSTITUTE'S") CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

This document is intended as a summary only of the Institute's Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures and accompanying guidelines. Copies of these documents can be obtained at any time on request. Capitalised terms have the definitions given in those documents, unless otherwise stated.

### **What happens if?**

### **What if you suspect abuse or an allegation is made?**

The seven main areas of abuse are:

- physical
- neglect
- sexual
- emotional/psychological
- discriminatory
- financial
- domestic violence

These may come to your attention in a number of different ways. Some (non-exhaustive) examples:

- unexplained or serious injuries
- unexplained changes in behaviour
- a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult describes what appears to be an abusive act
- someone else expresses concern about a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult

If a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult tells you about abuse then they see you as "safe". Listen to them and take what you are told seriously. You should help to reassure them.

If a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult speaks to you in confidence:

- react calmly and listen carefully to what they are saying
- avoid making promises to keep secrets
- reassure them that they were right to tell
- allow them to continue at their own pace
- make a full and written record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible

### **The Procedure**

If you suspect abuse, a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult confides in you, or a complaint is made about any person or about you, it is your responsibility to report it.

### **If a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult tells you about abuse by someone else**

- react calmly and listen carefully
- reassure them that they were right to tell
- explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared
- ensure their safety
- allow them to continue at their own pace
- do not interview them or other witnesses
- keep questions to an absolute minimum and make sure that they are not leading questions
- tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- make a full written record of what has been said, heard and/or seen as soon as possible which must be signed and dated
- relay the information immediately to the Group HR Manager (if the allegation relates to a member of staff)/the Head of Public Engagement (if the allegation relates to a member/the volunteer co-ordinator if it relates to a volunteer)
- maintain confidentiality and do not discuss with other persons
- do not contact the Parents until advice is taken from Social Services

*In an emergency (where a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult is at immediate risk of harm) contact the police or Social Services directly. Inform the Group HR Manager/the Head of Public Engagement/the volunteer co-ordinator (as appropriate) of the action you have taken and why.*

### **If you have a concern about a Child and/or Vulnerable Adult's safety and well-being**

- record the concerns and any conversations with them and their Parents. The written record must be dated and signed
- report the concerns to the Group HR Manager (if the concern relates to a member of staff)/the Head of Public Engagement (if the concern relates to a member)/ the volunteer co-ordinator (if the concern relates to a volunteer) immediately

### **If you receive a complaint or allegation about any person, including yourself**

- write careful notes of what you have witnessed, heard or are told. Sign and date them
- pass your notes to the Group HR Manager (if the complaint/allegation relates to a member of staff)/the Head of Public Engagement (if the complaint/allegation relates to a member)/the volunteer co-ordinator (if the complaint/allegation relates to a volunteer) immediately

Anyone working for or on behalf of the Institute has the right to report any concerns or suspicions about any of their colleagues in confidence and free from harassment.

The Institute does not expect its staff, members, volunteers or representatives to be experts at recognising potential abuse nor should you investigate any alleged abuse. However, you do have a responsibility to act in accordance with the Policy if you have any concerns about the behaviour of anyone (adult or child) towards Children and/or Vulnerable Adults.

Further information about the Policy and guidelines can be obtained from the HR Department.

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