



Okehampton Food Bank Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

This policy is to ensure that Okehampton Food Bank has all the right things in place to protect and safeguard both children and adults at risk: using or visiting Okehampton Food Bank. Our overarching aim is to keep children and adults at risk safe.

Okehampton Food Bank is an independent food bank providing free food and household items for adults and their families subjected to food poverty.

Policy statement

Okehampton Food Bank believes in protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse, harassment and neglect. This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Okehampton Food Bank in working together to support adults as well as their children by safeguarding them from abuse and neglect whilst using the food bank. Employees, trustees, and volunteers should be made aware of how this policy can be accessed.

We have a policy of openness and will always ask appropriate questions where there is a possibility of risk to anyone using the food bank.

We believe:

- Everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and adults at risk to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.
- We will give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- We recognise that some children, young people and adults at risk are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Scope of the policy statement

This policy and related procedures are applicable to all working or volunteering with Okehampton Food Bank and include, trustees, employees, volunteers, and visitors.

In England, child safeguarding legislation is covered by three main acts. Adults at risk by the last two.

- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010

Key Principles of Adult Safeguarding:

In the safeguarding of adults, The Okehampton Food Bank are guided by the six key principles set out in **The Care Act 2014** and Making Safeguarding Personal. Okehampton Food Bank aims to demonstrate and promote these six principles in our work:

1. **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
2. **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
3. **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
4. **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
5. **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.
6. **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

Reporting Concerns:

It is critical that any employee, trustee, or volunteer who becomes aware of an adult being abused or at risk of abuse must take immediate action to address the situation.

The first step is to raise the matter directly with the chairman or most senior volunteer present at that time. That person then has the responsibility to contact the designated safeguarding officer for the food bank organization, if doing so is deemed appropriate based on the specific circumstances.

Prompt reporting and information sharing is essential for enabling an effective response when concerns about potential abuse are emerging. In cases where the adult is in immediate danger and requires urgent protection from harm, the employee, trustee or volunteer must not hesitate to directly contact the police as well as adult social care services. Safeguarding vulnerable adults is of the utmost priority, and it is crucial that everyone involved takes ownership of this duty of care.

No one should assume that someone else will handle reporting the issue - each individual has an obligation to speak up and ensure the proper authorities are notified right away. Timely intervention can make all the difference in preventing further abuse and getting the adult the support and protection they need.

Waiting or failing to act could have devastating consequences, so it is critical that all personnel remain vigilant and take the appropriate steps the moment abuse is suspected or identified.

Safe Recruitment & Selection:

Okehampton Food Bank is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to adults at risk, with care and support needs from people unsuitable to work with them. Okehampton Food Bank has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all volunteers.

Training and Awareness:

Okehampton Food Bank will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its all volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who require it (e.g. contractors).

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in Safeguarding Adults.
- Recognise an adult potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with individuals.
- Know about the Safeguarding Policy.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing :

Okehampton Food Bank expects all employees, volunteers and trustees to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection. However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if an adult is deemed to be at risk of harm or contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.

Important Contacts:

Designated Safeguarding contact

Name: Malcolm Hamilton

Telephone Number – 07484870173

Email – malcolm.hamilton@btinternet.com

Police

Emergency – 999

Non-emergency – 101

Telephone: 0808 2000 247

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>