



## **Our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Vulnerable Adults**

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, students or anyone working on behalf of the Youth Arts and Health Trust.

It should be read and understood alongside our Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect vulnerable adults who receive Youth Arts and Health Trust services.
- To provide staff, trustees and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

The Youth Arts and Health Trust believes that a vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all vulnerable adults and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them and will cooperate with all safeguarding enquiries or concerns raised. We have a policy of - **if in any doubt - raise a concern**.

### **Legal framework**

The principal legislation governing this policy is the Care Act 2014

The Care Act (2014) sets out the statutory requirement for local authorities, health, police and other agencies to both develop and assess the effectiveness of their local safeguarding arrangements. It sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the health and care system should protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

This is founded on the six key principles:

**Empowerment** – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.

*I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens.*

- **Prevention** – it is better to act before harm occurs.

*I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.*

- **Proportionality** – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

*I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them, and they will only get involved as much as needed.*

- **Protection** – support and representation for those in greatest need

*I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.*

- **Partnership** – local solutions through services working with their communities.

Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting, and reporting neglect and abuse.

*I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best results for me.*

- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

*I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.*

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of vulnerable adults wherever possible and responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture. It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence and Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organizational abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect

#### **Definition of Vulnerable Adults**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or abuse.

This **may** include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless.

#### **We will seek to keep vulnerable adults safe by:**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting vulnerable adult protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for all staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures to vulnerable adults' privacy online.
- Protecting personal data and privacy both online and in person by taking all reasonable measures, such as password protection and/or encryption of documents.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and training.

- Sharing information about vulnerable adult protection and good practice with staff and volunteers.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know.
- Having a Whistleblowing Policy with procedures which make it clear how to make a disclosure in the public interest (copy available on request).

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually

## **Vulnerable Adults Policy**

To be read and understood together with Our Safeguarding Policy.

### **Introduction**

The Youth Arts and Health Trust is committed to a practice which protects vulnerable adults from harm. Staff, trustees, and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognize our responsibilities to develop an awareness of issues and take appropriate action by –

- Adopting vulnerable adults protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about vulnerable adults' protection and good practice with staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving vulnerable adults appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

### **Statement of Intent**

It is the policy of the Youth Arts and Health Trust to safeguard the welfare of all vulnerable adults by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual abuse. This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in vulnerable adults can feel comfortable and secure while engaging in any of the services we provide. Personnel should always show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of the Youth Arts and Health Trust.

All Arts Therapists will uphold their professional code of conduct as relevant to their registration body (Health and Care Professions Council) which includes a commitment to professional boundaries, ethical standards and continuous professional development.

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## **Guidelines for all Youth Arts and Health Trust staff and volunteers**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **1. ATTITUDES**

Staff, trustees and volunteers are committed to:

- Treating vulnerable adults with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a vulnerable adult is saying.
- Valuing everyone.
- Recognising the unique contribution everyone can make.
- Encouraging and praising everyone.

#### **2. BY EXAMPLE**

Staff, trustees, and volunteers will endeavour to:

- Provide an example, which we would wish others to follow.
- Use appropriate language and challenge inappropriate language use.
- Respect an individual's right to privacy.

#### **3. ONE TO ONE CONTACT**

Staff and volunteers will:

- Consider whether time alone is appropriate with vulnerable clients.
- Only spend time alone with a vulnerable adult when necessary and agreed (e.g. individual arts therapy sessions).
- When privacy is needed (e.g. individual arts therapy or counselling sessions), ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts.
- Avoid lone working in any premises we use whenever possible.

#### **4. ONLINE CONTACT**

Staff and volunteers will:

- Consider whether time alone online is appropriate with vulnerable clients and ensure that they are aware of online risks.
- Only spend time alone online with a vulnerable adult when necessary and agreed (e.g. individual online arts therapy sessions).
- When privacy is needed (e.g. individual arts therapy or counselling sessions), ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its timing.
- Provide vulnerable adults with enough information to make informed consent about whether they wish to participate in an online Arts Therapy session.
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- Establish the location of the person at the beginning of an online Arts Therapy session in case of emergency.
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- Limit all contact vulnerable adults outside online Arts Therapy sessions to administrative necessities

- Ensure all staff have completed online safety training.

## **5. PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay.
- Do things of a personal nature for a vulnerable person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises, for example, where a person has limited mobility, the staff member should seek an additional member of staff to deal with such an incident.
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind.

## **6. GENERAL**

Staff and volunteers should:

- Adhere to the Health and Care Professions Council's Code of Conduct (for Arts Therapists) and show an excellent understanding of, and work within, professional boundaries always.
- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned.
- Never exaggerate or trivialize abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about a vulnerable adult, even in fun.

## **7. RELATIONSHIPS**

Staff, trustees and volunteers who are involved in relationships with other members of staff, trustees or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within the Youth Arts and Health Trust or the work of the organisation.

## **8. SHARING INFORMATION**

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In the Youth Arts and Health Trust every effort will be made to assure that, should individuals have concerns, they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities. Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis. Please note that if you have a safeguarding concern, we may need to share information with others under our legal duty of care responsibilities. Please see our data protection policy, or contact us, for more details. Policies are available on request or on our website.

## **9. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

All concerns should be reported as soon as possible to one of our Safeguarding Leads. If in the unlikely event that you are unable to contact a Safeguarding Lead then you must contact the local authority's Safeguarding Team yourself as soon as possible for advice, and then update our Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately after.

### **Our Safeguarding Leads are:**

**Laura Blatherwick (Charity Director and Designated Safeguarding Officer)**

**Contactable on 07967 188 493 / 01392 975 104**

**and**

**Paul Gray (Chair of Trustees and Deputy DSO)**

**Contactable on 07850 712 195**

### **Recording details of a concern or disclosure**

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in the Youth Arts and Health Trust has concerns, a record should be made as soon as possible. Do not ask leading questions. **Write down verbatim what was said to you.**

Details must include, as far as practical:

Name of adult, age, home address (if known), date of birth (if known), , telephone numbers if available

If the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or is passing on



those of somebody, record details:

What has prompted the concerns?

Include dates and times of any specific incidents.

Has the person been spoken to, or spoken up? If so, what was said?

**(record exactly what has been said and avoid interpretations)**

Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser?

If so, record details

Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. other agencies, social services etc.

Has anyone else been consulted?

If so, record details

## **10. HANDLING DISCLOSURES**

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Safeguarding will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Listen to the vulnerable adult, rather than question him or her directly.
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what the person says seriously.
- Allow the adult to speak without interruption.
- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.

- Explain what you must do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately (verbatim as much as possible) as soon as possible after the event.
- Use the adult's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child / adult was trying to say.
- Contact one of the Youth Arts and Health Trust's Designated Persons for advice / guidance.

The Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral. If Designated Person is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer / member of staff with the concern should make direct contact with the relevant organisation themselves.

Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours and store securely.

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## **Vulnerable Adults**

Vulnerable adults have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. We will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, Youth Arts and Health Trust's personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding of the people with whom they are sharing.

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## **Staff and Volunteers**

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is imperative that each member of the Youth Arts and Health Trust staff is aware of their responsibilities under the legislation and has a working knowledge of our procedures. Each member of staff will receive updated training in Adult Safeguarding every three years.

## **Other Bodies**

A copy of our Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be made available to any other appropriate body.

## **Designated Persons**

The Safeguarding Lead for the Youth Arts and Health Trust will then consult with other senior staff or Trustees as required and as soon as possible inform the relevant Local Authority department by telephone and complete a referral if advised to do so.

The telephone referral to the relevant Local Authority team will be confirmed in writing within a maximum of 48 hours, within 24 hours, with a copy stored secured by the designated person.

Essential information will include name, address, date of birth, family composition, and reason for referral, name of person receiving the referral and any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.

Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual people shared with staff on a strictly need-to-know basis.

## **Alleged Abuse by Staff, Managers, Volunteer or Trustees**

When an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then the allegation must be passed to your designated person for adult protection (as named in this policy) or a trustee, or, if the allegation concerns them directly, direct to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Your designated person for child protection should contact the Local Authority for consultation. The designated officer contacted will record a note of the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken.

If it is suspected that a staff member or volunteer is guilty of misconduct, then they will be required to cease working with us with immediately effect whilst an investigation takes place. This will be in line with employment law and in discussion with your line manager.

## **Training**

The designated persons and his/her deputy must receive training every 2 years in adult safeguarding (to Level 5 Safeguarding with a local authority approved provider). All staff and volunteers shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis and before vulnerable adults. This includes a minimum of a Level 2 Safeguarding certificate for all staff and volunteers who work with vulnerable adults. All Arts Therapists must have completed a Masters degree in Arts Therapy and be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

## **Recruitment**

All staff and volunteers who work with vulnerable adults must have an Enhanced DBS check in advance of working with clients/service users. DBS checks will be repeated in line with our DBS Policy. Recruitment will also be subject to:

- 2 references
- A satisfactory ID check to check identity and eligibility to work in the UK.
- For Arts Therapists: A HCPC current registration check and confirmation of clinical supervision in place, self-employment status and relevant business insurance.

## **Risk assessments**

A risk assessment is to be completed, and signed off by management, for any new programmes of work to ensure all aspects of our safeguarding vulnerable adults policies have been fully considered. This is also to ensure the safety of staff and volunteers and should consider risks such as lone working and professional boundaries and staff and volunteer well-being.

## **Record keeping**

All records, information and confidential notes will be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet. All arts therapists and registered professionals must adhere to the code of conduct of their registration body. Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

## **Further information**

For further information about what to do if you are worried a child is being abused, please contact your Local Authority and/or Police departments.

You can also contact us through our telephone number and email address as displayed on our website.

**If for any reason you are unable to contact a Safeguarding Lead, or if you would prefer to do so, you can report a concern through the agencies below:**

### **Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership**

If you are reporting concerns because you suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, or you are being abused yourself and live within Devon, Torbay or Plymouth.

<https://www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/reporting-a-concern/>

You may also wish to consider contacting a named social worker who is working with a child/young person/vulnerable adult you have concerns about or the duty social worker.

**Please remember: If you believe someone is in immediate danger please call 999 and ask for the police.**

This policy is to be reviewed annually.  
Last reviewed 30 1 2024