



Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy

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Purpose

To state the responsibilities of the centre in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults in response to current legislation and guidance.

Definitions

'Child' – The Children Act 1989 defines a child as “a person under the age of 18”. This could therefore include:

- Any student up to the age of 18
- Any other persons under the age of 18 participating in activities arranged by the Centre and on Centre premises

'Vulnerable Adult' – A person 18 years of age or older who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Key Principles

- All children and Vulnerable Adults whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- The protection of children and vulnerable adults is a shared community responsibility.
- The abuse of children and vulnerable adults is a clear infringement of human rights.

Statement of Policy

1. The Centre recognises the need to co-operate with other agencies and organisations within Essex in performing the duties required by the guidance in “Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education”, DfES 2006 and “Safer Practice, Safer Learning” NIACE/DfES 2007.
2. The Centre will establish and maintain policies and procedures to provide a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults, and to ensure appropriate co-operation takes place. In relation to safeguarding children the Centre will operate according to the Essex Safeguarding Children Board and S.E.T procedures. In relation to safeguarding adults within the procedures established by the Essex Safeguarding Adults Board.
3. The Centre Manager will co-ordinate and manage the procedures related to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
4. The Centre will ensure that its employees are fit to work with children and vulnerable adults and will have recruitment policies and procedures in place which follow best practice and have regard for legislation and guidance.
5. The Centre will ensure that all staff understand their role in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable adults and will include an appropriate statement in job descriptions.

6. The Centre will provide training to make the team aware of the signs of abuse and the Centres procedures for recording and reporting suspected abuse or concerns.
7. The Centre will deal with allegations of child or vulnerable adult abuse by staff or Co-Farmers in accordance with the Centres Disciplinary Procedures.
8. The Centre will reserve the right to refuse admission to any person who may pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults.
9. The Centre will ensure that all persons on site in either paid or voluntary capacity will be subject to an enhanced DBS disclosure.

Managing a Disclosure

The Staff at Wellies-On CIC are in a unique position to observe children's / vulnerable adult's behaviour over time and often develop close and trusting relationships with Co-Farmers. If a Co-Farmer discloses directly to a member of staff, the following procedures will be followed:

- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Ask only open questions such as: "How did that happen?" "What was happening at the time?" "Anything else you want to tell me?"
- Do not ask questions that may be considered to suggest what have happened, or who has perpetrated the abuse, e.g. "Did your Dad hit you?"
- Do not force the Co-Farmer to repeat what he/she said in front of another person.
- Make the Co-Farmer aware that you have to share this information with your line manager and cannot keep secrets.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

We recognise that all matters relating to Child Protection are confidential.

The Centre Manager will disclose any information about a Co-Farmer to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child or vulnerable adult to keep secrets.

Record Keeping

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse from a child or vulnerable adult, or noticing signs or symptoms of possible abuse, will make notes (Using the Centres 'Cause for Concern' form) as soon as possible (within the hour if possible) writing down exactly what was said, using the Co-Farmers words as far as possible. All forms should be timed, dated and signed with name printed alongside signature. All 'Cause for Concern' Forms should then be passed on to the Centre Manager as soon as is possible.

Supporting Children and Vulnerable Adults

We recognise that children / vulnerable adults who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The Centre may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of these individuals. When at the Centre their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The Centre will endeavour to support individuals through:

- The content of its courses / sessions
- The Centres beliefs which promote a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives Co-Farmers a sense of being valued.

- Liaison with other agencies that support the Co-Farmers such as Children's Services and Child and Adult Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Notifying the relevant social care team immediately there is significant concern.

Supporting Staff

We recognise that staff working at Wellies-On CIC who have become involved with a child / adult who has suffered significant harm, or appears to be likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with an appropriate person.

Prevention

We recognise that the Centre plays a significant part in the prevention of harm to our Co-Farmers by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted staff, supportive friends and an ethos of protection.

The Centre will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where Co-Farmers feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are always listened to.
- Ensure Co-Farmers know that there are staff in the Centre whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty

Monitoring and Review

Implementation of the policy will be reviewed through the regular team meetings and staff supervisions. The policy itself will be updated annually by the Centre Manager.