



LEARNING STARS



Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Learning Stars makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

Learning Stars comes into contact with vulnerable adults through the following activities:

Providing regular educational sessions in partnership with the Workers Education Association

Providing regular opportunities for socialising and for development

Organising activities involving external venues or facilities (e.g. educational trips in partnership with the WEA)

Abuse of people who are vulnerable can take a number of different forms, including the following:

Physical abuse

Sexual abuse

Emotional abuse

Bullying

Neglect

Financial (or material) abuse

Victims of abuse may be afraid to tell someone about what has happened to them. They may be wary of discussing their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries.

There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others.



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Aim of Policy

This policy seeks to ensure that Learning Stars undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations

Definition

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 from being exploited.

What is abuse?

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take a number of forms:

Physical abuse e.g. hitting, pushing, shaking, inappropriate restraint, force-feeding, forcible administration of medication, neglect or abandonment

Sexual abuse e.g. involvement in any sexual activity against his/her will, exposure to pornography, voyeurism and exhibitionism

Emotional/psychological abuse e.g. intimidation or humiliation

Financial abuse e.g. theft or exerting improper pressure to sign over money from pensions or savings etc.

Neglect or acts of omission e.g. being left in wet or soiled clothing, or malnutrition

Discriminatory abuse e.g. racial, sexual or religious harassment

Personal exploitation – involves denying an individual his/her rights or forcing him/her to perform tasks that are against his/her will

Violation of rights e.g. preventing an individual speaking his/her thoughts and opinions



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Institutional abuse e.g. failure to provide a choice of meals or failure to ensure privacy or dignity

Reporting Procedures

If the allegation or suspicion of abuse is discovered by a support worker, volunteer, member of Learning Stars, or any other person involved with the group, then they should inform the support manager or Learning Star's committee member as soon as possible.

The person informed should make a written record of the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The Support Manager should carry out a risk assessment immediately.

If a support worker/volunteer has been told about the allegation of abuse in confidence, they should attempt to gain the consent of the person to make a referral to another agency. However, the gaining of the consent is not essential in order for information to be passed on. Consideration needs to be given to:

The scale of the abuse

The risk of harm to others

The capacity of the person to understand the issues of abuse and consent

If there is any doubt about whether or not to report an issue to Social Services, then it should be reported.

In emergency situations (e.g. where there is the risk or occurrence of severe physical injury), where immediate action is needed to safeguard the health or safety of the individual or anyone else who may be at risk, the emergency services must be contacted.

Where a crime is taking place, has just occurred or is suspected, the police must be contacted immediately.

Responsibilities



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All staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all staff (paid or unpaid) to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

All newly recruited staff and volunteers who have contact with members of Learning Stars are DBS checked. Any individuals from other agencies and organisations who have significant contact with members from Learning Stars should have been DBS checked by the agency or organisation concerned.

Professional Boundaries

Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a staff member and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.

Learning Stars expects staff to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the group.

Communicating and Reviewing the Policy

Learning Stars will make clients aware of the Safeguarding Policy through the following means

Discussion at management meetings

Clients, support workers and staff will be referred to the document early in their involvement with the group

The policy will be made available through the website

This policy will be reviewed by Adrian Beardmore (Learning Stars volunteer) annually and when there are changes in legislation



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