

Lee Hub Independent Community Library

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The Trustees of Lee Hub – Independent Community Library (hereafter referred to as ‘Lee Hub’) acknowledge their duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of everyone who uses its services. The organisation is committed to upholding safeguarding practice and ensure that it reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance, and complies with best practice as set out by: -

- The Charity Commission’s Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees – 17 November 2021.
- Gosport Borough Council Safeguarding Children and Adults.

The principal laws and legislation guiding this policy are:

- No Secrets Guidance 2000
- The Children Act 1989, 2004
- Mental Capacity Act, 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- Mental Health Act, 1983, 2007
- Care Act, 2014

2. COMMITMENT AND SCOPE

2.1 STATEMENTS OF COMMITMENT

- Lee Hub recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults when they are engaged in services and activities organised by Lee Hub.
- Lee Hub will always take any concern about a child or vulnerable adult seriously and will not tolerate harassment of anyone who raises concerns.
- Lee Hub will work to the best of its ability through its recruitment and selection policy to ensure suitable trustees and volunteers are selected for working with children and vulnerable adults.
- Lee Hub commit to carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all trustees and volunteers.
- Lee Hub will work in cooperation with relevant local authorities and will comply with the relevant guidance from the local safeguarding boards on best practice and procedures.
- Safeguarding concerns raised by a member, visitor, contractor trustee or volunteer cannot be anonymous and should be made in the knowledge that during enquiries they may be asked to provide further information.

2.2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Lee Hub trustees and volunteers, and anyone who represents Lee Hub or undertakes work on our behalf.

The policy applies to any engagement with children and vulnerable adults in all the different environments Lee Hub offers. This includes all physical environments and virtual ones, e.g., social media and websites.

Any deviation of these procedures will be taken extremely seriously. Where necessary, information and evidence regarding a suspected failure to adhere to this policy will be passed to the appropriate authorities.

PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

2.3 PRINCIPLES

Lee Hub firmly believes in the following principles:

- The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount.
- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to participate in a library and community hub environment which is safe and free from violence, fear, abuse, bullying and discrimination.
- Working in partnership with children, their parents, carers, and vulnerable adults, and other agencies, is essential in promoting children and vulnerable people's welfare.
- Lee Hub is responsible for establishing appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that its activities promote the safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults, e.g. safe recruitment policies, safe volunteering / working practices etc.
- Lee Hub will work to uphold the principles of the national *Prevent* strategy which aims to stop people participating in extremist activities.
- **Safeguarding is everyone's business and responsibility.**

2.4 DEFINITIONS

The following are the legal definitions of a child and a vulnerable adult:

- *Child: A person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adult age younger*
- *Adult: Any person aged 18 or over and at the risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support*

Lee Hub recognises that abuse can take many forms including, but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological and emotional abuse
- Exploitation
- Financial abuse
- Neglect and self-neglect
- Discrimination
- Institutional abuse
- Trafficking
- Radicalisation/extremism

2.5 WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT?

Every trustee, volunteer, and member of the community is required to engage with Lee Hub in an environment that promotes dignity, equality and respect for all. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, no form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated against a trustee, volunteer, or member of the community, because of protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including ethnic origin, colour, nationality and national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

2.6 DIVERSITY

Our charity belongs to all individuals associated with Lee Hub. We aim to organise a range of events and activities to suit the interests and meet the needs of a wide variety of people. For example, Lee Hub is accessible to wheelchair users and we provide for individuals, children and families considered vulnerable in our community. The Lee Hub is open to new ideas, and is committed to serving the community, and seeking grants for new opportunities. We are committed to regularly accessing requirements to ensure they meet the on-going needs of individuals associated with Lee Hub. In addition, that all recruitment activities, for both trustees and volunteers, adhere to this policy.

3. SAFEGUARDING AIMS

Lee Hub aims to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are at the forefront of our collective agenda and that we continue to develop innovative and effective ways of engaging groups and individuals with protected characteristics. Additionally, to develop a space which benefits individuals in whichever capacity they may choose, e.g., library services, workshops, or community cafe. Specifically, we aim to treat every person, trustee, volunteer, and members of our community equally. In adopting this policy, Lee Hub is also making an unequivocal commitment to implementing it, to ensure that equal opportunity becomes a reality.

3.1 SAFEGUARDING OBLIGATIONS

Lee Hub will meet its legal obligations and reassure its users through the following:

- Committing to trustees and volunteers to provide the appropriate level of training and support if they suspect a child or vulnerable adult is experiencing or at risk of harm.
- Lee Hub will provide opportunities for training to all trustees and volunteers on safeguarding procedures and practice. The training will ensure trustees and volunteers know where to go if they have a concern and the appropriate way to report it. This training will be given a continuing high profile to promote it.
- Lee Hub has a Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DSM) as set out in the Care Act (2014) and Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance (2015). This person will be known to the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults and Hampshire Safeguarding Children's boards.
- Ensuring trustees and volunteers can voice any concerns they may have through an established procedure, and there are effective recording systems in place.
 - Lee Hub will actively maintain appropriate procedures and forms for reporting concerns which will be regularly monitored and updated, and includes any changes in legislation which may affect this.
 - Lee Hub will implement and maintain effective procedures for recording and reporting to the responsible local authority (Gosport Borough Council) concerning any allegations or suspicions of harm or abuse
- To respect the rights, wishes, feelings and privacy of children and vulnerable adults by listening to them and minimising risks that may affect them.
 - Ensure that the training package takes account of the rights and personal feelings of Lee Hub's users.
 - Lee Hub will safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults during their contact with library services. The forward planning of services will ensure that this is accounted for.
- To ensure that contracted services have safeguarding policies and procedures commensurate with the level of involvement they have with children and vulnerable adults

Lee Hub will maintain a good level of safe working practice at all times to minimise risk to children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with trustees, volunteers, visitors and contractors, by

- Ensuring that there are at least two adults present/on duty when a child is in the building
- To complete the appropriate risk assessments forms for children and vulnerable adults when engaging in Lee Hub activities (see Appendix A)
- to ensure any contractors entering the building are aware of our safeguarding policy and adhere to its contents (see Appendix B)

4. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Lee Hub Trustees are responsible for a robust recruitment policy. This includes the following:

- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be sought for all volunteers as part of their normal duties and responsibilities. This will be undertaken via a Government approved umbrella company (agreed by the Board) on behalf of Lee Hub, even if the volunteer holds a valid DBS certificate obtained elsewhere.
- DBS checks and references will be taken up in writing prior to any formal offer of appointment as a trustee.
- All trustee appointments will be conditional until the following are completed and satisfied:
 - o Written application including, CV submitted and on file
 - o A face-to-face interview with comprehensive interview notes filed
 - o Two references checked
 - o Enhanced DBS check

Theoretically a DBS check never expires. This is because the information contained in the check was true at the time of issue. However, best practice dictates that a DBS check should be renewed every three years or less as part of the organisation's risk management policy although it is up to the organisation to determine how regularly their employees / volunteers DBS checks should be renewed.

Where a trustee or volunteer is suspended from duties as a result of gross misconduct involving abuse or a safeguarding allegation, the Chair of trustees will make a referral to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

Visitors, contractors or sub-contractors funded by or on behalf of Lee Hub are responsible for applying for appropriate checks on their employees/volunteers and that their staff comply with

their own safeguarding procedures and are made aware of the Lee Hub policy. They are also responsible for informing relevant Lee Hub Trustees of any concerns they encounter in relation to safeguarding issues.

5. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING

All Lee Hub Trustees and volunteers who have concerns are responsible for implementing these policies & procedures, and every allegation will be taken seriously. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee will not investigate the allegations but will talk through the concerns with a professional advisor at Gosport Borough Council.

5.1 HEADLINE REPORTING PROCEDURES

If volunteers have a concern, they should undertake the following action:

- Volunteers who have such concerns or who have witnessed abuse should report this as quickly as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee. If the Designated Safeguarding Trustee is not available, the incident should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.
- If the volunteer has significant concerns for the immediate safety of a child or vulnerable adult they should contact the police using 999 and then follow this up with the Designated Safeguarding Trustee (or Chair of Trustees).
- Customers who have reported or alleged an incident should have their details written into the contact form and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee.
- All those alleging or expressing concern about abuse should be re-assured that their concerns will be taken seriously and that they will be informed of the outcome.
- All alleged incidents will be followed-up by the Designated Safeguarding Trustee who will work with the relevant authorities.

5.2 SPECIFIC REPORTING PROCEDURES

Where the disclosure to a trustee or volunteer is from a child (under 18 years of age) the following procedure must be followed:

- **Do Not** interview the child or young person. However, you may ask them to clarify what they have told you to ensure you have clear information and understand the concern.
- Reassure them that by coming forward they have done the right thing.
- Inform them that we must pass the information on, but only to those who need to know..

- Make a detailed note of the full date e.g. 5th June 2012, time, place, what the child said and did and the questions asked of the child using the contact form.
- Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Trustee who will follow-up the disclosure with the appropriate authority.
- Where there is immediate danger or physical injury emergency services (999) should be contacted immediately.

Where the disclosure or suspicion is by a vulnerable adult the following procedure must be followed:

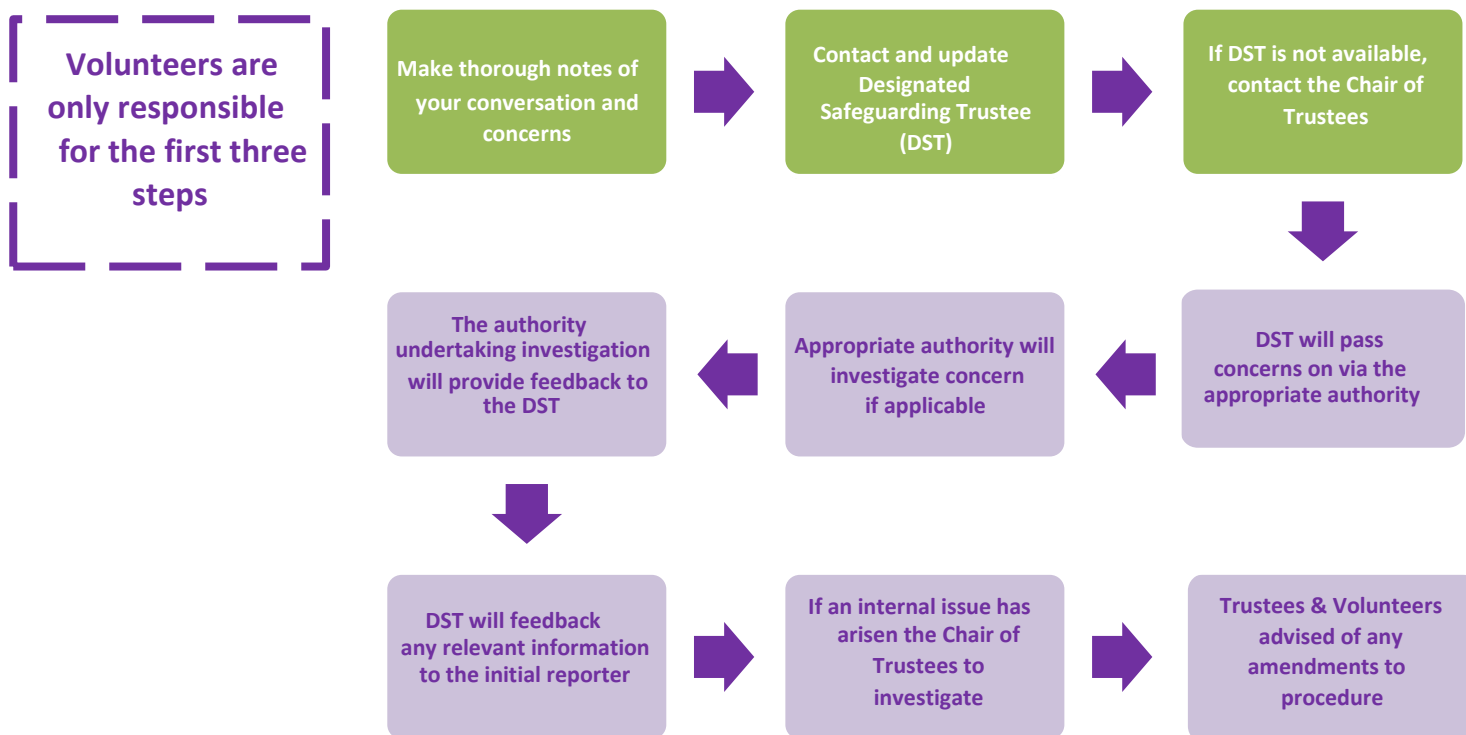
- Talk to the person and **gain their consent** to take action to protect them from further risk. Where consent is not given, this will need to be approached sensitively. It will need to be explained to them that the information will be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee but that their objection to the referral will be conveyed.
- **Do Not** interview the person. However, you may ask them to clarify what they have told you to ensure you have clear information and understand the concern.
- Make a detailed note of the full date eg 5th June 2012, time, place, what the person said and did and the questions asked of the person using the contact form.
- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Trustee as quickly as possible who will follow-up the disclosure with the appropriate authority.
- Where there is immediate danger or physical injury emergency services (999) should be contacted immediately.

Where the disclosure of an alleged abuse of a child or a vulnerable adult is made by a third party to a Trustee or volunteer of Lee Hub, they must report the allegation to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible.

Below (page 8) – A copy of the reporting flow chart.

5.3 REPORTING FLOWCHART

The referral flowchart and follow-up procedure:



6. DATA AND INFORMATION

6.1 DATA PROTECTION AND INFORMATION STORAGE

All copies of the Safeguarding contact referral form and any other relevant documents or records (e.g. telephone calls, CCTV information, etc.) relating to the incident will be securely stored within Lee Hub systems. This information will be retained in accordance with data protection periods and retention guidelines. Lee Hub Data Protection Policy is available to Lee Hub trustees and volunteers.

Information relating to a trustee or volunteer will be retained in electronic personal files, overseen by the Trustee Secretary.

Access to safeguarding records will be on a needs-only basis.

6.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Confidentiality is a key issue in Safeguarding but a person's safety is more important than the privacy of another person. Sometimes sharing information is necessary to establish the level of risk to a child or vulnerable adult. Information that needs to be shared will be done sensitively with relevant agencies only.

Lee Hub is signed-up to the principles of the local Safeguarding Boards in Hampshire.

6.3 SHARING CONCERNS WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

Information obtained about individuals should usually be shared with them unless sharing the information would likely result in serious harm to the individual, a child or another person, or the information relates to a third party who expressly indicated the information should not be disclosed. For example, where a parent/carer may be responsible for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately.

In all cases, decisions about withholding information will be made by the Designated Safeguarding Trustee after receiving guidance from professionals.

6.4 COMPLAINTS: DEALING WITH DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT

If an individual associated with Lee Hub feels they have been discriminated against or harassed while attending a Lee Hub event, they should raise this immediately with the Chair of Trustees. (Unless the complaint is against the Chair, in which case a complaint can be taken to any other Trustee, who will share the complaint with one other Trustee, who they are not related to, in the first instance).

An independent committee, appointed by the Chair of Trustees will investigate the complaint, listening to all the parties involved. If the complaint is against a trustee, they will be excluded from the committee. If the complaint is against the Chair, the committee will be jointly appointed by the Trustees who initially received the complaint, and a similar process followed.

If the complaint is against a particular individual, they will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a representative. Likewise, the person making the complaint will have this opportunity. If a proved complaint is against Lee Hub as a whole, the Committee/and or Trustees will carry out a full investigation and work to ensure it is not repeated. A full report, setting out the investigation and mitigation (if necessary) will be made available.

Any decision to exclude a person from the organisation due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to Lee Hub's constitution. Lee Hub will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against without prejudice.

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Appendix A (i)

Risk assessment questions for elderly or vulnerable community members such as those joining the Over 60s lunch club or Veterans group.

1. Do they have any mobility issues?
2. Do they have any supervision requirements?
3. Will they have a carer present with them?
4. Do they have any dietary requirements or allergies?
5. Do they have any medical issues we need to know about?
6. Do they have hearing loss or visual impairment issues?
7. Who will drop off and collect?
8. Do we have emergency contact numbers for next of kin?

Appendix A (ii)

Risk assessment questions for volunteers under 18 years of age.

1. Do they have any dietary requirements or allergies?
2. Do they have any medical issues we need to know about?
3. Do they have learning difficulties?
4. Do they have any mobility issues?
5. Do they have any supervision requirements?
6. Will they have a carer present with them?
7. Who will drop off and collect?
8. Do we have emergency contact numbers for next of kin?

Appendix A (iii)

Risk assessment questions for volunteers:

1. Have they completed a DBS check and received a certificate?
2. Do they have any dietary requirements or allergies?
3. Do they have any medical issues we need to know about?
4. Do they have hearing loss or visual impairment issues?
5. Do they have any mobility issues?
6. Do they have any learning issues?
7. Do they have any supervision requirements?
8. Do we have emergency contact numbers for next of kin?

Appendix B

Safeguarding information for Contractors/Visitors

- Please report to reception on arrival at the building where you will be asked to sign the contractors' book / sheet (example below) and enter your time of arrival. You will be given a lanyard to wear while you are visiting and accompanied by a volunteer to your place of work. Please return your lanyard to reception when leaving and record your departure time.
- Lee Hub operates a no smoking policy
- Please carry out all your activities with a mind to the health and safety of our volunteers and customers. You will need to be supervised if working in the Children's Library.
- Should it be required, the first aid box is available at reception
- In the event of a fire, the alarm will sound and our assembly point is Salisbury Terrace

Name of Contractor/Company	Time of Arrival	Time of Departure	Lanyard returned

Version Control

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