

READING COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTRE

POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS



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Date Approved by Board 18.06.2014

Review Date 18.06.2017

Signed on behalf of the
Board of Trustees

Dated

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe how our organisation is organised to ensure the protection and well-being of children and vulnerable adults who use or visit the centre.

2. BACKGROUND

The main purpose of the RCLC is the provision of adult education, including family learning, and information and advice services to adults. The need for a Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults arises because:

- RCLC offers on-site childcare, provided by employed staff, to the parents/guardians/carers who use our services.
- Some courses involve adults and children working together.
- Some courses may be held off-site, in institutions where children are regularly present.
- A small minority of learners may be between the ages of 16 and 18.
- Vulnerable adults may attend our courses or use our services.

3. RCLC PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS STATEMENT

The RCLC is committed to protect all children up to the age of 18 who use RCLC directly and whose parents/carers attend our courses or use the facilities at the centre, and any vulnerable adult who uses the organisation's services. This Policy is designed to meet all legal requirements and is supportive of our commitment to Equality and Diversity reflected in our policies on this.

The RCLC recognises its responsibility for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, in particular for those with whom its teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers come into contact.

The RCLC works in partnership with many organisations whose primary function is the support of vulnerable families. Such organisations will have established policies and procedures which enable them to discharge their responsibilities towards these families. The RCLC respects the knowledge and expertise within such organisations and will always seek to work co-operatively in matters relating to the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

It is the duty of every staff member, trustee or volunteer to safeguard to the best of his or her ability, the welfare and safety of all children, the

elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact during their work for RCLC, and prevent assault, physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of persons within these groups. Protection issues are regarded as an essential part of the RCLC's activities and events. The policy applies to all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of class, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

This policy takes account of and complies, where necessary, with:-

- Children Act 1989
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- National standards for under 8s provision day care and child minding
 - Crèches (DfES/0650/2003)
 - Sessional Care (DfES/0653/2003)
- DoH document "Working Together 2000"
- DfES Guidelines on CRB checks (DfES/0708/2002)
- DfES/1568/2005 - Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings

4. ORGANISATION ARRANGEMENTS

Overall responsibility for the implementation and maintenance of this policy lies with the Centre Manager of the Reading Community Learning Centre who shall report on it to the RCLC's Board of Trustees.

5. DEFINITIONS

Child

For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as any person aged from 0 - 18 years.

Vulnerable Adult

Although there is no clear definition in law, a vulnerable adult for the purpose of this policy is defined as an adult whose special requirements have been notified to the organiser(s) or course leader(s) by the carer.

Abuse

Abuse is "the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons". It can result from "action or inaction by a carer or any other person".

Abuse includes: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, financial or material abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and discriminatory abuse.

Historical abuse also falls within the scope of this policy statement. This is because an adult may disclose abuse which occurred in the past, or in their childhood. The abuser may still represent a risk to children, or to vulnerable adults, now, and so must be reported.

Different types of abuse may happen at the same time. It can happen in any setting.

6. DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROVISION

6.1. Childcare Provided Directly by the RCLC

6.1.1. Where the facilities run for more than two hours a day, the provision will conform to the National Standards for under 8s provision day care and childminding and other relevant regulations and guidance. All sessions shall have a minimum of two adults on duty, one of whom will be appropriately qualified.

6.1.2. All staff employed to work in childcare will require an Enhanced Disclosure. Their attention will be drawn to the Department of Health publication 31553 - "What to do if you are worried a child is being abused".

6.2 Courses where adults and children learn or work together

Some RCLC programmes, such as in the area of family literacy or numeracy may involve adults and children (usually their own) learning together during the guided learning hours. Tutors teaching on these courses will need a Standard Disclosure.

6.3 Courses held in settings where children are regularly present

6.3.1. Some RCLC courses may be run in schools, children's centres or other similar institutions or settings where children are normally present. Although contact with children is not part of the programme, tutors may come into contact with them, i.e. in corridors or the playground. Where, because of their subject area, tutors are likely to be working in such situations on a regular basis, they will need a Standard Disclosure, where it is clear that a tutor is likely to be working in such a situation only on a one-off basis a list 99 check will be sufficient unless RCLC feels there is good reason to ask for a Standard Disclosure.

6.3.2. In accordance with DfES/0780/2002 Criminal Records Bureau: Managing the demand for Disclosures, courses which are held in schools, etc. outside the hours that children are regularly present will not require the tutor to be checked for child protection purposes.

6.4 Learners attending RCLC courses aged under 18

Where an individual learner aged 16-18 joins an RCLC course, the tutor will not need to be checked for child protection purposes unless RCLC has good reason for requiring this.

6.5 Vulnerable adults attending RCLC courses or using its services

It is not standard practice for RCLC to require a Disclosure for tutors working with vulnerable adults where those adults are in a group with others not identified as vulnerable. However, where the whole group is identified as vulnerable, tutors will need a Standard Disclosure.

7. DISCLOSURES

7.1 Staff members needing an Enhanced Disclosure will be employed only when that Disclosure has been obtained.

7.2 Where time factors prevent the obtaining of a Disclosure prior to employment, a tutor needing a Standard Disclosure can be employed once a satisfactory list 99 check has been carried out. Such tutors will need to be informed that employment will be terminated forthwith should the Disclosure give the RCLC good reason.

7.3 Where the RCLC has carried out the necessary checks on a crèche worker or tutor on a short-term contract, no further check needs to be carried out on subsequent re-employment on a new contract unless there has been a gap of one or more academic years or the RCLC has good reason to believe that such a check is necessary.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

The RCLC ethos includes a non-expert, non-judgemental and supportive approach to work with parents. Building trust within the group is important and confidentiality is part of this. Tutors and other staff members or volunteers working with groups need to make clear that there is a limit to confidentiality in exceptional circumstances.

It is important in establishing ground rules or group agreements that confidentiality is discussed and learners are made aware that confidentiality has the following exceptions:-

- Where a participant gives written permission

- If a tutor, staff member or volunteer has serious concern for the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult
- If a tutor, staff member or volunteer considers someone's life to be at risk

Wherever possible the tutor, staff member or volunteer should tell the parent/guardian/carer of their concern and offer what help and support they can within professional boundaries. However their main responsibility is towards the safety and welfare of the child/vulnerable adult and their concern must be passed on to the relevant named person.

Considerations of confidentiality should not override the right of children/vulnerable adults to be protected from harm. In instances where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, confidentiality needs to be broken. It is important that the rights of the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information.

9. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

1 How may abuse be recognised?

Abuse may be voluntarily disclosed or alleged by an individual, but more subtle signs may also indicate that abuse has taken place. Everyone working for or on behalf of RCLC should be alert to these. They may include: changes in physical appearance (signs of injury, pain or self-harm, changes in deportment, lack of attention to personal appearance), changes in behavior (reluctance to be touched, to discuss certain topics), changes in personality (anxiety, fearfulness, withdrawal, anger, resentment).

2 Good practice in protecting children and vulnerable adults

What will RCLC do to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected?

- Ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff, volunteers, trustees and users minimise the risk to children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that action is taken to support and protect children and vulnerable adults where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.
- Abide by the procedures laid down by the local area Social Services and Health Directorate in which the organisation is based or the possible abuse occurred.

- Support children or vulnerable adults, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children and vulnerable adults.

3 What to do if abuse is suspected

If any RCLC staff member/ volunteer/ Trustee suspects that an individual with whom they are in contact is the subject of abuse, they must:

1. Share their concerns immediately and in confidence with the Centre Manager. Information is shared on a need to know basis; agreement must be reached on what is told to whom, and what action is to be taken. A written record of these discussions should be signed and dated by all those involved.
2. Advise the person who has disclosed the abuse that the information cannot be kept confidential and must be passed on to the appropriate authorities. The welfare of the individual must always be taken into account.
3. Report the circumstances to the Centre Manager who will then ensure that the abuse is reported within 24 hours to Reading Social Services and Health Directorate. When a report, verbal or written is made, a witness/colleague should be present both to verify the report and to support the person who is making the report. A written record of this contact will be placed on file.
4. The Centre Manager will ensure that written confirmation of the report is received from Social Services within 48 hours, and will contact them again within 3 days if no confirmation is forthcoming.
5. Information reported will include:
 - The vulnerable adult, or child's, name and age
 - Where they live and who with
 - Known organisations providing them with help or services
 - Why the person reporting abuse is concerned
 - Details of the person(s) who may be abusing the vulnerable adult, or child.

Recruiting, training and supervising staff and volunteers

Reading Community Learning Centre aims to ensure that all vulnerable people, whether children or vulnerable adults, are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers in this organisation. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and screened, and appropriately trained and supervised.

Allegations of abuse against Reading Community Learning Centre staff or volunteers

If an allegation of abuse is made against any person working for or on behalf of Reading Community Learning Centre, the person concerned will be suspended from duty immediately until the allegations have been fully investigated. All allegations will be investigated. The person concerned will be offered the opportunity to make a statement to the Centre Manager, which will be formally recorded. Where the Centre Manager is the subject of the allegation, this role will be undertaken by the Chair of RCLC's Board of Trustees. RCLC will abide by the procedures laid down by the local area Social Services and Health Directorate at all times

Other actions

In the absence of the Centre Manager, functions pertaining to this policy will be undertaken by the Chair of RCLC's Board of Trustees.

Reading Community Learning Centre will seek to ensure that when appropriate all organisations with which they work have their own Vulnerable Adults or Child Protection Policies. This Policy Statement will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees as required.

Reporting Procedures

If there is a concern that an adult or child is being harmed or abused the Centre Manager must be informed. She will then follow the reporting procedures in accordance with local council guidelines.

The Council works closely with the other Councils in the west of Berkshire, the police, probation, health and a range of private and voluntary agencies to try and prevent adult abuse occurring and stop it when happens.

Please contact the **Safeguarding Adults Team on 0118 937 47** or the **Quality Team on 0118 937 2216** if in the case of the following;

- An adult who is vulnerable because of your age, an illness or disability and someone is hurting you, frightening you, stealing from you or neglecting you
- Worried that someone you know is being abused or neglected.

Concerns about a child or young person are first to be reported to the Centre Manager. If you want to talk through your concerns with the Council before making a formal referral, call the Council's **Child Protection Advice line on 0118 937 3770** between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

You may also find the NSPCC information on the weblinks below helpful in deciding the best way to respond to your concerns.

[nspcc.org.uk](https://www.nspcc.org.uk) When to Worry About a Child: NSPCC information on when to worry about a child.

[actiononaccess.org](https://www.actiononaccess.org) Are you Worried About the Safety of a Child: NSPCC Leaflet

If anyone is concerned that an adult is being harmed or abused in any way please contact the Reading Council Safeguarding Adults Manager 0118 937 3747

Local Contacts

- Berkshire Women's Aid 0118 950 4003
- Police 0845 850 5505
- Princess Royal Trust Carer's Centre 0118 950 3941

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

- Action on Elder Abuse (10 - 4:30pm) 0808 808
- Public Concern at Work (Mon - Fri 9 - 6pm) 0207 404 6609
- Carer's National Association 0808 808 7777
- Care Quality Commission 0300 061 6161