

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding

Dyslexia West Midlands believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, or vulnerable adults by a commitment to a practice which protects them. Its safeguarding practices apply to both children and vulnerable adults.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children and vulnerable adults who receive DWM services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
- Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults, namely:

- Children Act 1989;
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991;
- Data Protection Act 1998;
- Sexual Offences Act 2003;
- Children Act 2004;
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012;
- Other relevant government guidance on safeguarding children.

Safeguarding definitions

A 'child' is defined for the purpose of safeguarding as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This includes the provisions in safeguarding legislation that refers to a young person.

A 'vulnerable adult' is someone who is 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation. Government guidance identifies adults who are at risk due to:

- sensory or physical disability or impairment;
- learning disability;
- physical illness;
- chronic or acute mental ill health (including dementia);
- addiction to alcohol or drugs;
- failing faculties in old age;
- permanent or temporary reduction in physical, mental or emotional capacity through life events such as bereavement, abuse or trauma.

Safeguarding is the promotion of activities to support the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The primary concept in safeguarding is recognising, preventing and minimising the potential for significant harm of children and vulnerable adults. Significant harm is any single or multiple maltreatment or impairment to the health and development of a child or vulnerable adult and is determined by careful assessment. Abuse or mistreatment is a single or repeated act which violates an individual's human and or civil rights. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm or exploitation.

Child protection is part of safeguarding and used for responding to concerns where it appears that a child may have been harmed.

Key principles

DWM accept, endorse, and are implementing the principles enshrined in the Children Act 1989, that the welfare of the child is paramount. The organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people and vulnerable adults can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of DWM's programmes, events or activities.

DWM consultants, assessors and tutors should at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare.

DWM will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Developing child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for contractors and volunteers;
- Providing effective management for consultants through supervision, support and training;
- Committing to principles of safer recruitment for selection, recruitment and vetting of its Consultants, teachers and assessors.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, and staff.
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;
- Taking all concerns and allegations of abuse and/or poor practice seriously and respond appropriately, accepting that this may require a referral to children's services and in emergencies, the police;
- Ensuring that there are appropriate arrangements in place to enable DWM to discharge its duty to provide a safe and secure environment, and to deal with issues concerned with suspected or reported abuse of children or vulnerable adults;
- Supporting and equipping Consultants, assessors and teachers to make informed and confident responses to specific child and vulnerable adult protection issues;
- Ensuring that the policy and procedure complies with current legislation, statutory duties and reflects guidance and good practice in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, whilst keeping arrangements proportionate and based upon common sense;
- Reviewing the policy and its procedure biennially.

Dyslexia west Midlands Safeguarding

DWM Safeguarding Team:

- Suzanne McDowell – Lead Safeguarding Officer

Safeguarding training

Assessors and teachers are advised to undertake training to update and refresh their child protection knowledge every three years. As sole traders this is the responsibility of the individual adult.

Safer recruitment

All Consultants, assessors and tutors undergo a DBS enhanced disclosure check and positions are subject to the receipt of an acceptable disclosure. Again as sole traders this is the responsibility of the individual. We take no responsibility for a fraudulent DBS.

Concerns:

Concerns about a child or vulnerable adult may present themselves in a number of ways. The core actions that should always be taken are:

- Take any emergency action needed to alleviate any immediate risk;
- Discuss your concerns with your Safeguarding officer
- Make a brief factual note of what you have seen, heard or become concerned about (within an hour when possible);
- Listen, don't ask any leading questions and treat all information confidentially
- Ensure the safety and feelings of the child or vulnerable adult at risk are considered throughout the process;
- All situations of actual or suspected abuse should be reported without delay (within 24 hours) to the Safeguarding officer.
- If it is agreed that a referral should be made to the relevant Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO), this will normally be done by the person reporting the incident with the support of the Safeguarding Officer.
- Remember that the child, vulnerable adult and family should, wherever possible, be informed about and consent to the referral unless this would put the welfare of the child, vulnerable adult or another person at further risk or if allegations of a sexual abuse nature have been made. If you have serious concerns, the absence of consent should not prevent a referral;

When making a referral to the LADO the following points should be kept in mind:

- Give the social worker as much detail as possible: descriptions, dates, times, and what was actually said;
- Distinguish between fact and opinion and between what you have seen and what others have told you;
- Follow up your contact with the children's social care by a letter confirming what you have said to them (within 24 hours), copied to the Safeguarding Officer.
- Keep a record;
- Be prepared to have further discussions with the social services and/or a police investigation team;
- Continue to support the child or vulnerable adult;

Allegations against DWM assessor or tutor

The guidance below relates to circumstances where it is alleged that a DWM staff:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or a vulnerable adult;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or vulnerable adult;
- Behaved in a way that indicates that he or she is unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Where there are concerns for the behaviour of or allegations against a DWM staff member these should be directed immediately to Suzanne McDowell

- This may involve: providing advice, supervision and training, the use of disciplinary and statutory processes or a combination of these.
- In England, any allegation against those working with children must be reported to the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

For immediate advice contact the NSPCC 24 hour helpline on 0808 800 5000.

Dyslexia West Midlands

April 2023