Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

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1. Overview

Safeguarding is at the heart of what we do and fundamental to our existence as a charity. We are all ambassadors for safeguarding. Some of us in the organisation have daily contact with children, whilst others seldom meet the public as part of their work. Whatever your role, from the point of view of the public, we are all Wigtownshire Women's Aid (WWA) and they expect us all to know what to do if they, or we, have concerns about a child.

The purpose of this policy is to set out WWA's approach to safeguarding children and adults at risk or vulnerable adults.

It applies to everyone working and volunteering for WWA or acting for or on our behalf and provides a framework to help us safeguard children and adults at risk with commitment and confidence. It describes responsibilities so that you know who to ask for decisions or advice when you need to.

2. Our approach to safeguarding

WWA has adopted the Child Safe Organisation framework. This enables us to promote a culture of openness and trust and ensures that safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do.

Our Child Safe Organisation framework is based on principles which are informed by the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child, relevant legislation, guidance, and by WWA's values and understanding of best practice.

CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION PRINCIPLES

1. Safeguarding children comes first and is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture – This means the best interests of the child are paramount in all considerations about their welfare and protection, including when to maintain confidentiality and when to share information about them.
2. Children are listened to m informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously – Children have a right to participate in decisions about their lives. Their views, wishes, feelings and experiences are evident in our work with them.
3. Families and communities are informed about and involved in promoting the safeguarding of children – Working together with children, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential to promoting children's welfare/wellbeing and ensuring their protection.
4. Equality is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice – All children have a right to protection from harm and abuse, regardless of age, ability, gender, racial heritage, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, identity or additional vulnerabilities, including protected characteristics.

5. People working for us are suitable and supported to promote the safeguarding of children in their work – All those who work for or on behalf of WWA, staff and volunteers are required to abide by the organisation's Safeguarding policies including the Code of Conduct and Appropriate Professional Boundaries policy.
6. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to safeguard children through ongoing learning and training - All staff and volunteers are required to complete a mandatory e-learning safeguarding module. Additional safeguarding training is undertaken in line with people's roles.
7. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children, physically and online. These are updated every three years.

3. Our safeguarding principles

WWA safeguarding is comprised of the following principles;

CULTURE AND VALUES

Safeguarding is at the heart and culture of WWA. Our culture supports and enables our approach to safeguarding. Our values embody our charity and reflect what we stand for. Our Child Safe Organisation framework acts as a driver to embed a safeguarding culture across the whole organisation.

SAFE RECRUITMENT

We apply a fair and consistent approach to recruitment to draw our workforce from the widest pool and select the best people on merit. As an organisation committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk, we have robust recruitment policies and procedures to ensure we appoint staff and volunteers that are appropriately qualified and have the skills and knowledge to deliver a quality service. It minimises the risk of engaging anyone, as a staff member or volunteer, who may pose a risk to children.

EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

We have safeguarding policies and procedures that set out WWA's expectations of staff and volunteers. These are reviewed and updated every three years. Policies reflect new learning and are consistent with best practice and legislation in Scotland.

COMPETENT AND CONFIDENT WORKFORCE

We provide mandatory safeguarding induction and refresher training and role-specific training. This includes training and developing our workforce within professional regulatory requirements. We ensure that our frontline staff have the skills they require and we support everyone in WWA to trust their judgement and act on safeguarding concerns.

ACTIVELY MANAGING SAFEGUARDING RISK

Managing risk is central to how we safeguard children and vulnerable adults through our local services and helplines. Working within a multi-agency approach we escalate our

concerns as necessary to be satisfied that the child or adult at risk has been protected. The organisation has a Managing Safeguarding Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers procedure for investigating allegations against staff and volunteers and to report significant incidents to the Care Inspectorate and local authority.

SUPERVISION AND ONE TO ONE MEETINGS

There is an expectation that all supervision and one to one meetings include safeguarding, proportionate to the role undertaken by staff.

4. Relevant policies, procedures and guidance

In addition to this policy, all staff and volunteers must read and understand the following safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance:

Child Protection Procedure

Child Protection policy statement

Behaviour Code for Adults working with children

Adult Support and Protection Policy and Procedure

Dignity at Work

Online Safety policy statement

Procedure for Managing Allegations against staff and volunteers

Recruitment and Selection Policy