

St Johns Centre Policy for the protection of Children, Young people and vulnerable adults:

1. Policy Statement

St Johns Centre recognises the importance of protecting vulnerable individuals i.e. children, young people and vulnerable adults who participate in the centre activities, events and projects.

The aim of Centre is to *'be a resource for the local community, a place where groups can meet for social, recreational and educational activities'*

The objectives

- *encourage the development of the local community through outreach and the provision of space where people can meet in a safe and non-threatening environment*
- *provide studio space where individuals and groups can act, dance and play music to develop courses and training sessions for children and young people that can be accessed by local schools and colleges as well as local arts groups*
- *provide social activities for the elderly on a weekly basis, a midday drop in, a lunch club, a tea dance*
- *support the local preschool by providing space alongside a much needed after schools club*
- *encourage small businesses, providing low rent/office/ studio/ workshop space*
- *be open to providing whatever facilities/resources the local community expresses a need for, so maximising the potential of the building and the growth of the local community*

All our efforts are focussed upon a central purpose of managing The St Johns Community Centre

'effectively and efficiently; balancing the responsibility of creating policies to protect users, encourage access and to increase opportunities for enjoyment, education, entertainment and healthy recreation.'

The St Johns Centre wants children, young people and vulnerable adults to enjoy their time here and aims to provide and support learning events and activities in a safe environment.

Implementing this policy and applying it with the 'Code of conduct- Child protection' procedure will enable staff and volunteers to undertake their work with vulnerable individuals knowing that all reasonable precautions to prevent harm occurring have been taken, whilst being prepared to deal with an incident should it occur.

The St Johns Centre believes that

- All children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All Staff (either St Johns direct or Licensee staff) should be clear about their responsibilities and how to respond appropriately.

The St Johns Centre will take every reasonable step to ensure that the children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected where;

- All licensees delivering activities in the building provide confirmation of DBS (Disclosure and Baring Service) checks
- The St Johns Centre staff recruited individuals through a third party or is in partnership with individuals who deliver the services, including contractors or activities to these groups confirm DBS checks.
- If a complaint or allegation is made against any licensee staff or a member of the public or where criminal proceedings are brought against individuals The St Johns Centre will treat the situation with the utmost urgency.

2. Definitions

Children

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as anyone up to and including the age of 18. Extensions of this exist for children who are disabled and those in local authority care settings.

Young people

For the purposes of this policy The St Johns Centre definition of a young person is an individual between the ages of 11 and 18.

Vulnerable adults

There is no standard definition of 'vulnerable adult'. For the purposes of this policy The St Johns Centre defines a vulnerable adult as an individual who may be in need of community care services because of mental or other disability, age or illness and who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves against harm or exploitation.

Abuse

The government guidance 'working together to safeguard children' categorises abuse as;

Physical This includes hitting, shaking and throwing or otherwise causing physical harm

Emotional This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a person which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on that persons emotional development

Sexual This involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child or young person is aware of or consents to what is happening
Abuse of vulnerable adults includes participation in sexual acts to which the person does not consent, cannot consent or is pressured into consenting

Neglect The persistent failure to meet a child's, young persons or vulnerable adults' basic physical and psychological needs likely to result in the severe impairment of the persons health and development

3. Reducing the risks

In planning the services St Johns Centre will employ best practice when considering factors such as recruitment, selection of staff and agencies, the physical environment, physical contact, interpersonal dealings and managing sensitive information.

Recruitment and selection - includes:

- All agencies operating within the St Johns Centre will provide annual confirmation that staff and volunteers have been DBS checked to the appropriate security level confirming.
- St Johns staff and volunteers will have appropriate DBS checks and receive effective and appropriate induction, training and development opportunities.
- The St Johns Centre does not advocate or envisage placing sole responsibility for a child, young person or vulnerable adult with a member of staff (paid or unpaid). Prime responsibility for these groups remains with the person who is supervising them – such as a teacher, parent, licensee staff members or group leaders. However, Staff identified as having intensive short-term access to children, young people or vulnerable adults usually in the absence of the person with legal responsibility will be subject to a full DBS check. Staff (paid and unpaid) will not be permitted to work unaccompanied until a satisfactory Disclosure notification has been received.
- Staff providing services to children, young people and vulnerable adults through a contractor, an agency or on a self-employed or freelance basis will be required to possess appropriate security or DBS clearance.

Physical Environment – Includes;

- Undertaking risk assessments related to services, activities and projects involving vulnerable individuals. For example, agencies licensed by the centre, schools and colleges are required to undertake their own risk assessment for their visit as well as take advantage of any provided by St Johns Centre.
- The St Johns Centre undertakes all risk assessments for activities, events and projects which it will be responsible for
- The Licensees are responsible for carrying out annual risk assessments and submitting them to the St Johns Management Group.
- Each Licensee will identify those who have legal designated protection responsibility for vulnerable individuals and ensure they are available to meet their responsibilities.

Physical contact – includes;

- Seeking appropriate consent from individuals or their carers which physical contact may occur or be required as part of their activity or service.

Interpersonal dealings – includes;

- Treating all children, young people and vulnerable adults equally and with respect and dignity putting the welfare of individuals first.
- Recognising that children or young people with disabilities may be even more open to abuse than those without disabilities.

Managing sensitive information – includes;

- Each Licensee having a procedure for taking and using and storing photographs of children, young people and vulnerable adults – including the obtaining of consent through the use of standard consent forms for taking and use of photographs.
- Monitoring the use of web based materials and activities.
- Agreed procedures for reporting and handling allegations of suspected abuse, including the need to maintain confidentiality.

4. The Role of Staff (paid and unpaid)

- The St Johns Centre legal responsibility for the care and supervision of children and vulnerable adults remains with the person designated with their care and

supervision. These individuals should be in attendance at all times. Staff will not assume sole responsibility for a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

- Appropriate consent will be obtained from individuals with legal responsibility for young people in attendance of sports or events programmes. Staff acting ‘in loco parentis’ will require a DBS check to appropriate levels. No unaccompanied access to children or vulnerable adults will be permitted until a satisfactory disclosure has been received.

Responding to incidents – Staff responsibilities

Suspicion

The St Johns Centre staff (paid or unpaid) who see or suspect abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult will take appropriate action and report their suspicions to an appropriate senior manager. A written record of the incident will be made. The person with legal responsibility for that individual will also be informed unless they are implicated in the suspected abuse.

Hearing a disclosure

In circumstances where children, vulnerable adults disclose details of abuse to a member of The St Johns Centre staff the allegations will be taken seriously, handled without delay in a sensitive manner. The person with legal responsibility for the individual will also be informed unless they have been implicated in the disclosure. Advice on the involvement of the police should be sought from the Vicar of the Parish (Chair of the St Johns Centre management Group) who will consult with the appropriate people.

Staff responsibilities

The responsibility for this policy lies with the St Johns Centre Manager.

The management is responsible for updating The St Johns Management Group of any changes necessary and ensuring the staff teams are trained in accordance with their needs.

The daily administration of the DBS checks for The St Johns Centre will be with the Centre Manager

Each licensee will provide a copy of their organisation a Safeguarding Children policy and a designated liaison person.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every two years .