

Hitchin Youth Trust – SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Charity Registration Number: 302398

Company Number: 00399872

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Hitchin Youth Trust (HYT) is committed to making a positive contribution to a strong and safe community.

Trustees and Employee(s) do not come into regular direct contact with young people and vulnerable adults. HYT does have activities in the building for young people and vulnerable adults. These are run by other organisations and on occasions the Trustees and Employee(s) may visit youth organisations in other premises. Trustees or Employee(s) do not have any regular unaccompanied direct contact with young people or vulnerable adults.

HYT is not and cannot be expert in child protection, but we wish to promote best practice in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. Good child protection and safeguarding is achieved through establishing a positive organisational culture and number of complementary procedures and checks.

We advise all organisations using our premises to refer to the NSPCC website for the latest advice on safeguarding children in the voluntary and community sector, paying particular attention to the safeguarding tool and the Safe Network Standards.

All organisations that apply to us for financial support and who use our building are required to have a Safeguarding Policy with specific reference to online/virtual sessions if appropriate. These organisations are our beneficiaries.

HYT recognises that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989, 2004 and Childcare Act 2006.
- all children & young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children & young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

1. Definitions

In the UK, Safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

At HYT we aim to help young people under the age of 26 who live within our area or organisations for young people that operate within our area. This policy aims to give an overview of our expectations of all beneficiaries. It is not a detailed policy specifically applying to one organisation. Each group will need to tailor their policy to address specific needs of the group to protect the children and vulnerable adults within the group. We all have a responsibility to promote good practice.

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults wherever possible and responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture. It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence and Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Child trafficking
- Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Extremism

Definition of Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or abuse. This **may** include a person who: -

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless or financially disadvantaged

2. Responsibilities

All organisations using the building, Trustees and employee(s) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all organisations using the building and benefiting from our funds, Trustees and employee(s) to promote good practice by being excellent role models, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional specific responsibilities

Organisations using the building and/or receiving funding from us have responsibility to ensure: -

- They have a policy in place, and it is appropriate
- Sufficient resources (time and money) are allocated to ensure that the policy can be effectively implemented
- The policy is accessible
- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed
- Promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults where applicable
- Ensure staff (paid and unpaid) have access to appropriate training/information
- Receive staff/volunteer concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately

- Keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks
- Develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies
- Take forward concerns about responses

The scope of this Safeguarding Policy is broad ranging due to the variety of groups that benefit from use of the building or financial help from HYT. In practice, this policy will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures within each beneficiary organisation.

These include: -

- Whistleblowing
- Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Volunteer Induction and Training

The Prevent Duty

In order to comply with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, everyone should promote the 4 British Values (Democracy, Rule of Law, Respect and Tolerance, Individual Liberty) that are designed to keep children and young people safe and promotes their welfare. It is the duty of all groups to raise awareness, recognise and support both children and adults. This includes awareness of the expression of extremist views. There is no single way to identify an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology, but we ask that all organisations manage risks, notice changes and patterns in behavior and if you are concerned, you act proportionately, by referring through TAS and the Channel Panel. You should use the Notice (recognise), check and share method. Staff at beneficiary organisations should be trained to identify children and young people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and how to build resilience. By promoting fundamental British Values and debating controversial issues in a safe environment you allow children and young people to understand how they can influence and participate in safe decision making, recognise pressures, know how to manage difficult situations and where to get help. Groups should provide opportunities to converse with the children and young people and listen to them. The rapport and trust that is built in a safe haven is essential in safeguarding effectively.

Safe recruitment

All beneficiary organisations should ensure safe recruitment through the following processes: -

- Providing the following safeguarding statement in recruitment adverts or application details – ‘recruitment is done in line with safe recruitment practices.’
- Job or role descriptions for all roles involving contact with children and/or vulnerable adults will contain reference to safeguarding responsibilities.
- There are person specifications for roles which contain a statement on core competency with regard to children and/or vulnerable adult protection/ safeguarding
- Shortlisting is based on formal application processes/forms and not on provision of CVs
- Interviews are conducted according to equal opportunity principles and interview questions are based on the relevant job description and person specification
- DBS checks will be conducted for specific roles for all staff (paid or unpaid) working with children and/or vulnerable adults. It is a criminal offence for individuals barred by the ISA (Independent Safeguarding Authority) to work or apply to work with children or vulnerable adults in a wide range of posts.
- No formal job offers are made until after checks for suitability are completed (including DBS and 2 references).
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Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Recruitment

Trustees and employees at HYT do not have direct unaccompanied contact with children and young people who use our premises. We therefore do not require them to have a DBS check.

All users of the building are required to have the relevant DBS checks according to their role within their organisation.

3. Communications training and support for staff

All beneficiary organisations should commit resources for induction, training of staff (paid and unpaid), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding Induction should include: -

- Discussion of the Safeguarding Policy (and confirmation of understanding)
- Discussion of other relevant policies
- Ensure familiarity with reporting processes, the roles of line manager and Designated Senior Manager (and who acts in their absence)
- Safe working practices, safe recruitment, understanding of the alerter guide for adult safeguarding
- Assessment of new members of staff's competence in applying safe practices during probation

4. Online/Virtual working and meetings

With the increase of online/virtual meetings and fewer face to face meetings it is important that steps are put in place and guidelines followed to protect everyone.

Principles that must be followed: -

- Participants to virtual meetings should be dressed appropriately (as should anyone else in the household if visible during the meeting)
- Devices used for the meeting should be in an appropriate place and where possible against a neutral background.
- Meetings should ideally not be recorded and if they are, all participants must have been informed and agreed.

Video conferencing specific guidelines: -

- Meetings should be locked so that no one else can enter
- Screen sharing should only be allowed by the Administrator/Chair of the meeting or by specific request
- Invites with meeting URLs should be sent directly to required attendees and not published on social media.
- Links should not be used unless from a known source.
- The person administrating/chairing the meeting should be the only persons allowing people to enter.
- All attendees should join through the video conferencing platform.

5. Useful contact details:

Individual Groups/Organisations should have their own 'Designated Safeguarding Person/Officer'

Local police: **01707 354000** or **999**

Hertfordshire County Council Children's Services: **0300 123 4043**

NSPCC Helpline: **0808 800 5000** or help@nspcc.org.uk

ChildLine: **0800 1111** or www.childline.org.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): **01992 555420**

ECP (Education Child Protection) Resource Centre www.ecplimited.com/resources

UK Safer Internet Centre – online safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe online www.saferinternet.org.uk

CEOP Education – The National Crime Agency’s CEOP Education team who aim to help protect children and young people from online child sexual abuse www.ceopeducation.co.uk

Review Date of the Policy:

Policy reviewed by: 
(Signature)

A.S. HARDY
(Print Name)

V. CHAIR
(Position)

2/10/2024
(Date)


(Signature)

SUSAN WATKINSON
(Print Name)

HON. SECRETARY
(Position)

2-10-24
(Date)