



Safeguarding Policy



This policy was adopted on 26th September 2019

Signatures of Trustees: signed & accepted by the Board

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Review Date : September 2020



Safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs

LEAP is committed to safeguarding the rights, well-being and safety of children and adults with care and support needs who come into contact with LEAP. This policy outlines the steps LEAP will take to ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are protected. It will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Safeguarding Officers and Trustees.

Definitions (for this document)

Safeguarding: LEAP follows the Charity Commission that defines Safeguarding as:

- protecting from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of health or development
- ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Students / Adults with care and support needs:

A person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation¹.

Students / Adults with care and support needs are entitled to: privacy; be treated with dignity; lead an independent life and to be enabled to do so; be able to choose how they lead their lives; the protection of the law; have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.

Child:

Describes a child aged 0-17 years old.



Types of abuse

Physical abuse is an act of another party involving contact intended to cause feelings of physical pain, injury, or other physical suffering or bodily harm.

Sexual abuse is forcing undesired sexual behaviour by one person onto another.

Emotional abuse is any kind of abuse that is emotional rather than physical in nature. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics, such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased.

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a person's basic needs

¹ March 2000. 'No secrets: guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse', Department of Health. (The broad definition of a 'vulnerable adult' referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper *Who decides?* issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department.



Financial abuse is the misuse of a person's money, property or assets through theft or fraud.

Spiritual abuse takes place when leaders to whom people look for guidance and spiritual nurture use their positions of authority to manipulate, control, and dominate.

Policy Statement

We are concerned with individuals and their circumstances and actively encourage an inclusive environment throughout all our programmes.

We seek to ensure that all our team members are aware of what is required from them under the children and adults with care and support needs protection policy and make sure that it is practised at all times.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to play our part in preventing the physical, sexual, spiritual, financial or emotional abuse and neglect of children and adults with care and support needs.

We commit ourselves to co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting official investigation into the abuse and neglect of children and adults with care and support needs or young people (by an adult or young person).

This statement is to be brought to the attention of all Trustees and volunteers when they join, as part of their induction programme. Any amendments will be brought to the attention of all volunteers. The statement will be available at all locations in which LEAP operates and all volunteers will be advised.

Implementation

LEAP SHALL:

Plan its work so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children and adults with care and support needs might occur.

Although the number of people who actively seek to abuse children and adults with care and support needs is very small, LEAP can reduce opportunities for abuse in various ways. We will, for instance:

- Ensure that there is adequate supervision for all children and adults with care and support needs.
- Ensure that any child or adult with care and support needs working with LEAP are aware of who they can talk to if they have concerns.
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- Ensure all Trustees are subject to all DBS checks, and continued to be validated and renewed when needed.
- Ensure that all trustees and volunteers know where the nearest telephone is in case of emergencies and that internal telephones are clearly labelled with directions for how to make external calls.
- Arrange that an adult is not left alone with a child where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the child.
- Make sure the Safeguarding Officers receive correct and up-to-date training.
- Ensure that the Local Authority is informed of any safeguarding allegations, incidents or concerns.
- Ensure that the Charity Commission is informed of any suspicions, allegations and incidents of abuse or mistreatment of vulnerable beneficiaries. The Charity Commission's 'Serious Incident' guidance will be followed: <http://bit.ly/1vpfv4B> It would be appropriate to inform the LEAP team about any allegations, incidents or concerns where there is a risk of negative publicity occurring as a result.
- Ensure the Disclosure and Barring Service is informed if the Trustees have dismissed or ceased using an employer or volunteer because they think they have harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or adult with care and support needs.
- Ensure trustees and volunteers who may come into contact with a child or adult with care and support needs at LEAP are suitably trained, including understanding what to do in the event that a disclosure of abuse is made.
- Encourage a culture of transparency, ensuring that volunteers and staff feel able and empowered to report any suspicious or concerning behaviour.

Volunteers should be aware that wherever they are located when volunteering for LEAP, they are legally governed by LEAP, even if the place in which they are working is their school. This means that any allegations or concerns of abuse must be reported to LEAP's Designated Safeguarding Officers. However, there may be times when LEAP's Safeguarding Officers deem it necessary and appropriate to share information with the Safeguarding Officers of the buildings in which LEAP operates. The Safeguarding Officers will ensure they have the contact information of the Safeguarding Officers and the Safeguarding policies of all the buildings in which they operate and that they in turn know how to contact the LEAP Safeguarding Officers.



Designated officers and their roles

LEAP has appointed a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children and adults with care and support needs.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer for LEAP is **Donna Booth**, she can be contacted at: donna@leapenterprise.co.uk or **0744 3925 311**.

LEAP also has a Secondary Safeguarding Officer (SSO) who is responsible for dealing with any related concerns in the event that the DSO is ill, on holiday or an allegation of abuse is made about him/her.

This person is **Steve Webber** he can be contacted at: steve@leapenterprise.co.uk or **0777 5526 316**.

The Safeguarding Officers will never be related to each other.

The Safeguarding Officers will be available for children and adults with care and support needs, as well as trustees and volunteers, to speak with should they feel the need to talk with someone about an incident which has happened either within or outside of LEAP, particularly if they feel that a child or adult with care and support needs has been physically, sexually, spiritually, financially or emotionally abused or neglected by an adult or another young person. The Safeguarding Officers will treat all concerns with the utmost importance.

Where trustees or volunteers have a concern about the safety or well-being of a child or adult with care and support needs and the Safeguarding Officers are unavailable or acting inappropriately they should contact the Chair of Trustees should be informed and contact the Police or Social Services. Local contact telephone numbers are:

Police Safeguarding Unit: 0113 385 9590;

Children's Social Work Services: 0113 222 4403

Adult Social Care: 0113 222 4401

Recording

The Safeguarding Officers will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they or another trustees/team member has and seek advice from the relevant Social Services Department or the Police if appropriate.

Trustees and volunteers must ensure that their recording of disclosures, incidents, assessments, referrals and case discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, dated, and factual. When recording details it is important not to jump to conclusions or judge the situation and to remember that the role of the safeguarding officer is to refer to appropriate agencies, not to undertake an investigation. Suspicions should be noted carefully and backed up with factual evidence. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence. These records must be stored in an individual file and held securely in a manner that safeguards the individual's right to privacy and security. These records are available to authorised individuals on request (not third party information) and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.



Note: once trustees and volunteers have passed on their records, they have no right to know what happens next. They will only receive more information about the case if they are required to be part of civil or criminal proceedings e.g. as a witness. Trustees and volunteers must refrain from talking to other team members or outside persons about the safeguarding concern (with the exception of the Safeguarding Officers, the Police or Social Services).

Disclosure of Abuse

Where a member of the LEAP team receives a disclosure of abuse from a child or adult with care and support needs they must:

1. Ensure they **do not promise confidentiality** to anyone wishing to share a secret. This is important in case information needs to be shared with the Safeguarding Officers or the Police/Social Services.
2. **Listen**-if the disclosure is particularly complicated and the person is not very young, this may mean asking permission to make notes as the disclosure is made to ensure nothing is missed. The Trustee member hearing the disclosure can ask the child or adult with care and support needs to repeat something if it has not been said clearly but must not ask leading questions.
3. **Reassure**-making a disclosure of abuse can be a frightening process and often the child or adult with care and support needs is afraid that they won't be believed. Reassuring them that they have been brave and that the information will be passed on is vitally important.
4. **Record**-notes should be made as soon after the disclosure as possible. The notes should reflect what the child or adult with care and support needs has said in their own words. The record should be signed and dated.
5. **Report**-the record must be passed on to a Safeguarding Officer at the earliest possible opportunity and the child or adult with care and support needs told what will happen next.

The Safeguarding Officers will ensure that the Trustees are informed of any incident, concern or allegation of abuse. The Trustees must also notify the Charity Commission, following the Commission's 'Serious Incident' guidelines in the event of an incident, or suspected incident, during or resulting from a LEAP activity.

Where a child or adult with care and support needs makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of LEAP they must **never**:

1. Trivialise, play down or ignore allegations of abuse'
2. Assume that somebody else will take responsibility for reporting/addressing concerns and making referrals'



Whistleblowing

Trustees and volunteers are encouraged to take action when suspicious that abuse is occurring at work - no matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is. LEAP will respect and not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused.

Trustees have a responsibility to report any occurrences or suspicions of child or adult abuse. Trustees who report abuse are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

Use of Images

LEAP recognises that protecting and upholding the rights of children and adults with care and support needs is of paramount importance and this includes on the internet and other promotional materials. LEAP endeavours to present children and adults with care and support needs in a positive, empowering and dignified manner. Furthermore, images will only be used where the child or adults with care and support needs and their parents/guardians give their informed consent. The following principles will be adhered to:

- Images will not be taken without consent from the subject or their parent/guardian.
- Consent will be acquired from all schools on an annual basis in-line with LEAP & the individual schools Child safety policy.
- LEAP will explain to the subject and/or their parent/guardian how and where the images will be used and will adhere to this.
- Images used on the LEAP website and social media pages will not be used on personal social media pages.

NB: External media, television crews and journalists are usually responsible for obtaining their own informed consent from clients.

Remember

It is important that everyone in LEAP is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional adult with care and support needs and child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about someone.

If a child or adult with care and support needs begins making a disclosure of abuse to a trustee or volunteer who feels unable to cope with what they are hearing, they should gently halt the conversation and contact a Safeguarding Officer immediately. If both Safeguarding Officers are unavailable, another Trustee should take over the conversation.



The wellbeing of trustees and volunteers is of great importance. If a disclosure has been made which has caused upset to the person hearing it, LEAP will endeavour to offer or facilitate counselling or support if requested.

Additional points

Displaying Information

LEAP will ensure that this policy is available at all locations in which LEAP operates and that any changes to the name and contact details of the Safeguarding Officers are updated.

Applying agreed procedures for protecting children and adults with care and support needs to all paid trustees and volunteers

It is possible to be lulled into a false sense of security, believing that those who work alongside children and adults with care and support needs in LEAP will never be guilty of abuse because they are part of Charity. It is not safe to assume that anyone is automatically safe to be with children and adults with care and support needs.

For this reason, all procedures set in place to protect children and adults with care and support needs apply to all those in contact with them. This is not the same as treating each person who relates to children and adults with care and support needs as being under suspicion, but a matter of taking sensible measures to protect children and adults with care and support needs, which are then observed by everyone. This will involve thought and planning within each group to minimise the risk.

If any trustee or supervising volunteer has concerns, they should raise them with the Safeguarding Officers. If it is brought to the attention of the Safeguarding Officers and not adequately dealt with the next step is to talk to the Trustees of LEAP for advice or contact Social Services/the Police as a private citizen to discuss your concerns.

Disclosure of Information

There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All personal and delicate information disclosed to us is confidential, but may not always be secret.

Personal and delicate information about trustees and volunteers will be:

- Confidential to LEAP and can be shared with trustees and volunteers on a 'need to know basis' *and*
- Can be shared with another agency when:
 - Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held *or*
 - There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent *or*
 - The law requires it.



Give trustees and volunteers clear roles

Abuse of children and adults with care and support needs is most easily concealed where there is confusion among adults about roles and responsibilities. Therefore, all job descriptions, both for trustees and supervising volunteers, will include a statement laying down the behaviour and values expected from all who work as part of this team.

Over and above the written word, expected behaviour towards children and adults with care and support needs will be explained to new workers in LEAP as part of their induction.

It is the LEAP's policy not to engage in regulated activities (close or personal tasks such as washing, dressing, or accompanying to the lavatory) with adults with care and support needs: members of trustees and volunteers are therefore ineligible for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. LEAP will continue to keep abreast of any further legislative changes from the DBS.

Supervision as a means of protection

Regular trustees meetings are held where members meet together to raise issues about their area of work and discuss them. When receiving feedback about the programme, particular attention will be paid to any situation or suggestion that a child or adult with care and support needs is being either highly favoured or harshly treated, as these are signs of abuse.

Within LEAP our main area of concern about protecting people lies with the welfare of any adults with care and support needs volunteers. Where possible, trustees should take opportunities to observe those children and adults with care and support needs for whom they are responsible.

In all recruitment decisions concerning volunteers:

- a) A detailed application form should be completed.
- b) DBS applications will be required prior to beginning with LEAP to check the suitability of the applicant for the post being considered.
- c) An informal interview will provide an extended conversation in which the applicant's experience and motivation for volunteering can be explored in more detail.

Criminal convictions

All volunteers must complete a DBS check before commencing volunteering work at LEAP. Details of criminal convictions (except those 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) must be provided so an adequate risk assessment can be undertaken. (LEAP reserves the right to dismiss a volunteer and/or ban them from the property should they feel it is necessary).



Training

Training in the prevention of abuse and the action to take if abuse occurs will be included as part of a Training Programme for LEAP. Trustees of LEAP will monitor whether such training is available free of charge via the local authority, advise relevant LEAP personnel, and facilitate attendance. Further guidelines concerning the safeguarding policies of the local council have been obtained free of charge and a copy is kept in the office at **6 Carlton Court, Brown Lane West, Leeds. LS12 6LT** as a reference.

LEAP recognises that it is insufficient to give workers guidelines without equipping them with the skills and knowledge to carry them out. Therefore, regular updates and training will be provided to all volunteers and the Safeguarding Officers will be encouraged to attend external training in order to remain up-to-date with legislation and good practice.

Supported Volunteers

LEAP will ensure that all volunteers, including young people or volunteers with additional needs understand the safeguarding policy. If the volunteers are likely to struggle to absorb the information contained within this policy by reading it, the volunteer coordinator, supervisor or a Safeguarding Officer will talk through the policy verbally. In addition to this, one or more of the below resources, or other alternative developed locally, will be used to aid learning:

Easy read information about keeping safe: <http://bit.ly/1bKoh6l>

Leeds Safeguarding Board have produced some resources for safeguarding adults including leaflets and posters: <http://bit.ly/1bKokiV>