

Preston Road Community Centre Safeguarding Vulnerable Beneficiaries

Introduction

This policy concerns trustees and volunteers at the Community Centre. PRCC recognises that in its work with children and vulnerable beneficiaries it has a responsibility always to act in their best interests and ensure reasonable steps are taken to protect them from harm.

The safety and protection of vulnerable beneficiaries are the responsibility of trustees and volunteers at the Community Centre.

Where vulnerable beneficiaries are believed to have suffered abuse, or alleged to be at risk of abuse, trustees and volunteers will take responsibility for ensuring that appropriate action is taken.

Definitions

Children - are defined as being someone under the age of 18. The centre does not currently work directly with children. (Other organisations that use the centre and work with children will have their own safeguarding policies.)

Vulnerable Adults - are defined as someone '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 protect themselves from harm'

Beneficiaries – all those who benefit from our services, including currently users of Bingo and trustees and volunteers who help at the centre.

Abuse – is a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to a vulnerable beneficiary who needs our care or support.

Abuse includes:

- physical abuse, hitting, slapping, punching, burning
- sexual abuse, rape, indecent assault, inappropriate touching
- emotional abuse, belittling, name calling,
- financial or material abuse, stealing, selling assets
- neglect and acts of omission, leaving in soiled clothes, failing to feed properly
- discriminatory abuse (including racist, sexist, based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment)
- institutional Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly.

It is important to remember that abuse is defined by the impact on the individual, not the intention of the abuser; in other words, if someone does not have their needs cared for, this can be just as damaging as when abuse is carried out deliberately. People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life.

Responsibilities

All trustees and volunteers

All trustees and volunteers represent the charity and have a responsibility to safeguard from harm all those who need care and support in all the areas of the charities work. Trustees and volunteers are inducted into this policy and procedure to ensure they have an understanding of what forms abuse can take and how to report any concerns. All trustees and volunteers must share information on abuse or potential abuse.

Trustees

Trustees of PRCC have a collective duty of care to take the necessary steps to safeguard all beneficiaries who use our centre. They must always act in the best interests of these beneficiaries and ensure they take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm coming to them. The Trustees of PRCC have a responsibility for the general control, management and administration of the centre. It is therefore vital that Trustees assess the risks that arise from the charity's activities and operations involving all beneficiaries and develop and put in place appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures to protect them. They must also undertake on-going monitoring activity to ensure that these safeguards are being effectively implemented in practice. Trustees will ensure that safeguarding is included, where appropriate, in the strategic plans, risk assessments, communications and quality assurance processes of the charity.

Procedure

1. The following information will be sought from potential new Trustees or Volunteers undertaking regular projects on behalf of the charity. • the names and contact information of two individuals prepared to give references • photo identification e.g. passport • a recent utility bill giving the present address of the individual • a signed trustee eligibility declaration (Appendix 1 for trustees only). Trustees or Volunteers (as described above) will not undertake any duties on behalf of the charity until references and security information have been received.
2. All beneficiaries will be treated with respect, tact, understanding and genuine concern.
3. Inappropriate behaviour by any trustee or volunteer will be recorded promptly and immediately reported to the Chair of Trustees, who will take appropriate action. If the inappropriate behaviour involves the Chair of Trustees then it will be reported to another trustee.

4. If a trustee or volunteer believes that a beneficiary is being abused outside the confines of the charity this will be reported to Trustees.

5. Appropriate action may include:

- Further clarification discussions with the perpetrator
- Further training
- Reporting to the police
- Advising social services
- Serious incident reporting to the Charity Commission

6. It is often very difficult to identify abuse. If a trustee or volunteer has a “nagging doubt” that something is wrong, then even if there is no plan to report the incident outside the charity it must be recorded and must be brought to the attention of the trustees. Something that appears trivial at the time may prove vital later and may help to build up a pattern of abuse.

Reviewed at the meeting: 26th Feb 2024

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