Safeguarding Policy Statement

Introduction

Gilbert White and the Oates Collections (GWOC) welcomes visitors of all ages throughout the year. Visits, workshops, events and activities are provided for schools, families, community groups and older people as well as the general public and private groups using our facilities.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is

- to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive GWOCs services or assist GWOC by volunteering their time.
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.
- to establish that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that every person has the right to live free from abuse, neglect and fear.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of GWOC, including the board of trustees, senior management and other paid staff, contractors and volunteers.

Legal Framework

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are underpinned by English Law and statutory guidance including:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Children Act of 1989 and 2004
- Child and Social Work Act 2017
- Care Act 2014
- Sexual Offenders Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Supporting Documents and Linked Policies

This policy statement should be read alongside the **Safeguarding Procedures** document and attached appendixes.

The following policies and procedures also form part of safeguarding in our organisation:

- Business Gifts
- Computers and Electronic Communication
- Data Protection
- Disclosures and Disclosure Information
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Harassment and Bullying
- Health and Safety
- Monitoring
- Mobile and Office Telephones
- Public Interest Disclosure
- Risk Assessments
- Safer Recruitment
- Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Social Networking

Definitions

In respect of this policy the term 'Child' means a person under the age of 18 years and an 'Adult' (formerly 'Vulnerable adult' or 'Adult at Risk') means any person of 18 years or over who meets the following criteria:

- Has needs for care and support
- Is experiencing or at risk of abuse, or neglect
- As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

The term 'abuse' covers physical, emotional or sexual abuse as well as neglect. A full explanation of these terms as well as signs to look out for, is covered in Appendix 3 of Safeguarding Procedures document.

We believe that:

- All children and adults have an equal right to protection from abuse and neglect, regardless of age, ability, gender, disability, nationality, racial heritage, faith, sexual orientation, identity or any other additional vulnerability.
- The law requires that 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.
- All staff, trustees, volunteers and contractors have a role to play in safeguarding.
- Concerns or allegations of abuse or neglect should be managed fairly in accordance with relevant policies, legislation and GWOC safeguarding procedures.

We will seek to keep children, young people and adults safe by:

- respecting the rights of all children and adults.

- appointing a nominated safeguarding lead, deputy and nominated Trustee for safeguarding.
- providing an environment which is welcoming for children and adults and ensuring that everyone working for GWOC is aware of the need to protect children and adults and knows how to reduce the risks to them.
- adopting safeguarding procedures which minimise any opportunity for abuse and establish appropriate treatment of children and adults
- ensuring individuals working with children and adults are fully aware of and trained to follow GWOC's safeguarding policy and procedures and that where necessary have been subject to a DBS check (see appendix 2 of Safeguarding Procedures Document)
- providing effective management through supervision, support and training.
- ensuring those accompanying formal learning groups (parents, guardians, teachers etc.) are aware of their own responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving parents/carers as appropriate
- following robust procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers, ensuring individuals who are engaged in regulated activities with children/adults have the appropriate DBS checks in place
- informing staff that not adhering to the policy and procedures will lead to formal disciplinary action.
- reviewing our policy and procedures annually.
- ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are regularly updated in accordance with current Government legislation and best practice
- taking allegations seriously and responding fairly, swiftly and appropriately to allegations of abuse
- storing confidential information securely

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL is responsible for keeping up to date with new legislation and policies. For an outline of the role and responsibilities of the DSL please see Appendix 4 of the Safeguarding Procedures document.

DSL: Fiona Oakley **fsc@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk**

Deputy DSL: Flair Kitching **manager@gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk**

Trustee with responsibility for safeguarding: Mark Patterson
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