



Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

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Purpose

The Adult Literacy Trust may seek to serve the needs of vulnerable adults. In doing so the charity takes seriously the welfare of all vulnerable adults who come onto its premises or who are involved in its activities. The charity aims to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe, caring environment with a positive and friendly atmosphere.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is a part of the wider role of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken at Adult Literacy Trust to protect specific vulnerable adults who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Some of the most vulnerable adults and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need coordinated help from health, education, social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including literacy services.

For those vulnerable adults who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote their welfare and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against them. All agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to vulnerable adults;
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the individual's needs and circumstances;
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the individual's welfare;
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the individual against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents and/or other carers unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the individual's safety.

The charity recognises that it is the responsibility of each one of its staff, paid and unpaid, to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of vulnerable adults and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

Adult Literacy Trust recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and regularly review procedures, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.

The charity is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with vulnerable adults and to providing supervision.

The charity is committed to maintaining good links with the statutory social services authorities.

This policy will be reviewed by the Board annually or following any serious incident.

Procedures

For reasons of consistency and practicality, Adult Literacy Trust's procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults will be the same as those for safeguarding children and young people except where the law, or the specific circumstances of an individual's need require otherwise.

Safeguarding Adult Literacy Trust's ultimate beneficiaries is a part of the wider role of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity and vulnerability risk assessment which is undertaken to protect specific persons ("Vulnerable Persons") who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing significant danger to their safety or wellbeing.

Trustees, volunteers, employees, and anyone doing work on behalf of Adult Literacy Trust which directly or indirectly impacts or may impact Vulnerable Persons ("Responsible Persons") have to safeguard Vulnerable Persons and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding Approach: Education

Adult Literacy Trust will foster awareness of safeguarding and its safeguarding policies and procedures through:

- incorporating awareness of the importance and aims of safeguarding, and the Adult Literacy Trust safeguarding policies in place as a core part of its induction process for both Trustees, employees, and management;
- will ensure that those doing work potentially impacting on Vulnerable Persons on behalf of Adult Literacy Trust (or in collaboration with it) including contractors and partners are equally aware, sensitive and proactive in safeguarding by either:
 - requiring adoption Adult Literacy Trust's own policies (wholly or to the relevant extent, with any necessary adaptations depending on circumstances) in respect of their work for or with Adult Literacy Trust; or
 - ensuring that relevant contractors and partners have safeguarding policies, culture and productivity which ensures the same outcome as Adult Literacy Trust's safeguarding policies in respect of any relevant Vulnerable Persons.

Dealing with an issue if it does arise: Reporting

- Adult Literacy Trust shall maintain a culture where Responsible Persons feel both able (i.e., not obliged to hide, or made to feel blameworthy in respect of any issue) and responsible for reporting any threat or potential threat, or change in risk level, in respect of any Vulnerable Person.
- In addition, Adult Literacy Trust shall ensure that all Vulnerable Persons feel able to safely report any concerns that they may have in respect of any Adult Literacy Trust activity that may impact upon them.
- No Vulnerable Person should feel either that they expose themselves by reporting their concerns to an Adult Literacy Trust Responsible Person, or that their concerns will be dismissed, or that they should not report their concerns because they "probably" lack substance or are imagined.

Reporting Procedure

In the first instance, reports of safeguarding concerns should be made to the appointed safeguarding officer at the venue in question.

A report should also be made to the Adult Literacy Trust. The Volunteer Coordinator shall be designated as the Safeguarding Officer for Adult Literacy Trust. Reports will be accepted via an email address: Volunteers@alt.org.uk

Dealing with an issue if it does arise: Managing and Escalation

In the event that a risk to a Vulnerable Person (including a risk that has not previously been identified) has either become “active” or has become a significant threat, Responsible Persons to report to the Board Chair or reporting Responsible Person immediately. The lead Trustee for safeguarding at ALT is the Vice Chair, Dinah McLeod.

Following this report, the Board Chair or reporting Responsible Person should determine a course of action which would include the following considerations:

- (a) Whether immediate intervention is needed (where relevant implementing mitigation plans as well as any additional steps required);
- (b) Whether further information is required for risk evaluation (and time allows for this);
- (c) Whether the wider Board needs to be consulted (if necessary in an extra-ordinary meeting of the Trustees);
- (d) Whether issue is not at a level requiring immediate intervention, but additional monitoring is required, and any necessary changes to the risk management plan in respect of Vulnerable Persons;
- (e) Whether, after due consideration, the issue reported does not require any of the above intervention or escalation steps.

Recording reporting and handling

Adult Literacy Trust shall ensure:

- a clear, secure and well documented method of recording all reports of issues and concerns relating to Vulnerable Persons, together with of the decision steps and the decision makers in respect of handling those reports is maintained (in accordance with Adult Literacy Trust data protection policy);
- that all Responsible Persons are inducted so as to be aware of the importance of recording reports and decision-making, are informed and trained as to the system used for this recording (as well as the critical importance of compliance with data protection policy), and are kept up to date with any changes that may be made in reporting policy.

Supporting Survivors

It is important that survivors feel supported by Adult Literacy Trust following any safeguarding incidents. Guiding principles on how to achieve this include:

- Ensuring that survivors are central in any decisions and actions taken by Adult Literacy Trust after any incidents.
- Trustees will remain accountable to survivors by sharing information and communicating effectively.
- The dignity of survivors must be upheld by practicing non-judgement and treating survivors with respect and recognition.
- The importance of privacy and confidentiality are important and the relevant procedures should be explained to the survivor.