

**SAFEGUARDING  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
& VULNERABLE  
ADULTS  
POLICY**

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# INTRODUCTION

This document is the Safeguarding Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy for The Sororum, a dedicated international social impact environment owned and operated by the Sororum CIC.

This policy is to be followed by all directors, staff, and instructors, and promoted by those in the position of leadership within the The Sororum.

The Sororum CIC will endeavour to ensure that all young people and vulnerable adults being supported within the The Sororum programmes will always be safe and protected. If we have any concerns that any individual or group of individuals are at risk of harm, with us or outside of the Sororum, it is the responsibility of every Sororum member and instructor to intervene appropriately.

It is accepted that as an organisation the Sororum CIC may at times be working directly with young people and vulnerable adults around the world within a partner environment, we are responsible for ensuring that staff are competent and confident in carrying out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting welfare.

# PURPOSE

The purpose of the Sororum is to provide people aged 16 years upwards with the opportunity to advance in the building their skills to enhance their working experience through networking and education.

We know that being a young person makes them vulnerable to abuse by adults or other young people. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work carried out by the Sororum or partner organisations are transparent, whilst safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults they encounter through learning & development.

This policy is written with reference to the 'Every Child Matters' Document, the Children's Act 2004, Keeping Children Safe in Education and the HM Government document 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and NSPCC guidance.

# PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THIS POLICY IS BASED

The welfare of the young person or vulnerable adult is paramount. All individuals without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or beliefs. The rights wishes and feelings of individuals and their families will be respected and listened to.

Those people in positions of responsibility within the The Sororum will work in accordance with the interests of young people and follow the policies outlined below:

- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding>
- <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/writing-a-safeguarding-policy>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-youngpeople>

# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

## Safe Recruitment & Selection

We have a policy and procedure which ensures that all adult instructors appointed by the organisation to provide youth training within the Sororum, are vetted to ensure that all possible steps are taken to keep the young people safe in our care. All our adult instructors, mentors and coaches will have a folder within which there will be recorded their personal details, any application form, voluntary disclosures, references, record of interview and role review.

All adult instructors will:

- Complete a registration form which includes address, evidence of relevant qualifications, the reasons why they want to work with young people, paid and voluntary work experience and all criminal convictions.
- Undergo an interview: This may be formal or informal and will involve at least two interviewers. This needs to be evidenced and included in the prospective instructor file.
- Provide at least two references: These will be followed up before a post is offered. One reference is from the last employer or an organisation that has knowledge of the applicant's work or volunteering with young people/vulnerable adults. If the applicant has not worked with young people or vulnerable adults before, then they should confirm this and give an alternative referee.

# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

## Safe Recruitment & Selection (cont'd)

All adult instructors will:

- Consent to a 'Disclosure and Barring Service' (DBS) check: This will be at an enhanced level. DBS Disclosure checks should be approved by SEDI's Operations & Logistics Director and updated every 3 years.
- Be supervised until DBS disclosure: New instructors who are awaiting DBS disclosure will be supervised by a senior SESA Community employee who holds an enhanced DBS Disclosure check approved by a Sororum Director.
- Self-disclose': New instructors awaiting a DBS Disclosure will complete a self- disclosure form declaring details of any criminal convictions or convictions pending.

# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

## Safe Recruitment & Selection (cont'd)

- This includes any “spent” convictions. Furthermore, the organisation complies with all other safeguarding regulations in that:
  1. We understand that a person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work or volunteer or try to work or volunteer with these groups.
  2. We understand that an organisation which knowingly recruits someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.
  3. We understand that if a partner organisation dismisses an instructor because they have harmed a young person or vulnerable adult, or would have done so if they had not left, we must tell the Independent Safeguarding Authority:  
<http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/>

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## Management & Support of Instructors

- **Role Profile.** All instructors are provided with a role profile outlining their main responsibilities including ground rules for appropriate behaviour. This includes a requirement to comply with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures.
- **Role Review.** All prospective instructors complete a role review at the end of their induction period before being confirmed in post. Inductions will be completed within 6 months.
- **Mentor and Coach Support.** All instructors are given regular support sessions either formally or informally, on the decision of Sororum Directors (This may include one to one or group support, mentoring or shadowing opportunities).
- **Safeguarding Training.** All directors, instructors and helpers will attend regular ongoing safeguarding training. All instructors will receive an induction, which includes information on all the Unit's policies and procedures.



# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

## Management & Support of Instructors (cont'd)

- Contravention of Policies. Where an instructor/ helper acts in a way that contravenes the safeguarding policy or ground rules for appropriate behaviour, the Directors will take appropriate action at their discretion, which may include any combination of the following: –
- Informal discussion with a fellow director and advice:
  1. Formal discussion with instructor in presence of a Founder or Director.
  2. Dismissal from the organisation
  3. Referral to appropriate authorities (Police, Social Services, etc).

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## Management & Support of Instructors (cont'd)

- Where it is alleged that an instructor/Mentor and Coach has acted in a way that contravenes the above mentioned policies, then a minimum of two (2) directors will consider the above options with an additional option being the removal of the instructor/helper from the role.
- Where the individual under investigation wishes to appeal against any decision made, then a meeting will be called for all directors to consider the appropriate course of action. The burden of proof in such circumstances will be 'upon the balance of probabilities.
- A record of all discussions as described in this section needs to be recorded and retained whilst the instructor is involved in the Sororum.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## Providing Safer Activities

- **Appropriate Training/ Risk Assessments.** All instructors undertaking activities should be suitably trained where necessary. Activities will be risk assessed to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent young people being physically harmed. These will be available for scrutiny upon request. It is expected that Risk Assessments are dynamic documents and respond to needs as they arise.
- **Insurance.** Employer's liability and/or public liability insurance has been taken out to ensure that all activities and services and all people taking part, are covered.
- **Planning.** All activities being provided are carefully planned and organised. Planning ensures that the activities are age-appropriate, appropriately supervised, take account of staff ratio and use qualified instructors.
- **Taking of Photographs/Video.** The organisation has a Photography and Media Policy about taking and using photographs of young people and a consent form for the use of photographs and filming.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## Online Learning

- Internet Access & Canvas. All devices used by young people are operated within their own home environment or via mobile data networks they are signed-up to – a device is assumed to be being operated within a suitably secure wireless network approved by a parent/guardian.
- CEOP Training. The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre training around internet safety is completed

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## Complaints

- By Parents/Carers. Complaints should be directed in the first instance to the SEDI Learning & Development Director via the advised contact details issued upon joining the Sororum.
- By Others. Any complaints regarding the conduct of young people connected to the Sororum should be addressed directly to Sororum Directors – contact details located on the website.

## Individual Protection

- Immediate Action to Ensure Safety Immediate action may be necessary at any stage in involvement with young people and families.
- IN ALL CASES IT IS VITAL TO TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS NEEDED TO SAFEGUARD THE YOUNG PERSON or VULNERABLE ADULT (PERSON) CONCERNED.
- If emergency medical attention is required, this can be secured by calling an ambulance or taking a persona to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a person is in immediate danger the police should be contacted as they alone have the power to intervene for protection is necessary.

# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

Recognition of Abuse or Neglect.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a young person or vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a young person or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may take place in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another young person or group of young people.

- Physical Abuse. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a young person.
- Emotional Abuse. Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a young person or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on mental wellbeing and emotional development. It may involve conveying to young people or vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Recognition of Abuse or Neglect (cont'd).

- It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed and may include interactions that are beyond the young person or vulnerable adult's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing the frequent feeling of fear or danger or the exploitation or corruption of a young person or vulnerable adult.
- Sexual Abuse. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouragement to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Neglect.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a young person or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological need likely to result in the serious impairment of health or development.

Differing origins of abuse.

Individuals within the organisation need to be alert to the potential abuse both within their families and from other sources including abuse by members of the organisation. The organisation should know how to recognise and act upon indicators of abuse or potential abuse where there are concerns about welfare. There is an expected responsibility for all members of the organisation to respond to any suspected or actual abuse in accordance with these procedures.



# SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS

What to do if young people or vulnerable adults talk to you about abuse or neglect.

It is recognised that a young person or vulnerable adult may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect or talk spontaneously individually or in groups when you are present.

In these situations, YOU MUST:

- Listen carefully to the individual. DO NOT directly question the individual.
- Give the time and attention, allow for a spontaneous account; do not stop the process of freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given taking care to record the timing, setting and people present, the individual's presentation as well as what was said.
- Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the individual's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.
- Reassure that:
  - 1.They have done the right thing in telling you;
  - 2.They have not done anything wrong;
  - 3.Tell the individual what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.
- DO NOT ask the child to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

What to do if you have a protection concern or are worried.

Cause for concern? Because of your observations or information received you may become concerned about a Young person or vulnerable adult who has not spoken to you.

The next step will be very much according to the circumstances and will be down to the individual involved. It may be appropriate to ask the individual how they came by a bruise or cut (avoid using closed questioning or asking who caused the injury) or to enquire why the individual is upset or down. This area is addressed in more detail in the Safeguarding training, but such questions can help clarify vague concerns and result in appropriate action.

Remember that an allegation of abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation so do not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegation of abuse.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Reporting your concerns.

If you are concerned you must share your concerns. The Sororum CIC has a designated safeguarding people are:

- Leanne Mair – The Sororum Founder

The designated person will then manage the situation from there onwards and will (if deemed necessary) Make a Referral to the relevant authorities in the country.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Action to be taken following the referral

The Sororum will ensure that it keeps an accurate record of all concern(s) made at the time, accurately recording the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

- Against adults who work with young people or vulnerable adults within the Sororum.
  - 1.If you have information which suggests an adult who works with young people or vulnerable adults within the Sororum has:
  - 2.Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a young person or vulnerable adult;
  - 3.Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a young person or vulnerable adult;
  - 4.Behaved towards a young person or vulnerable adult that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with them.
  - 5.You should speak immediately with a Sororum Director. The relevant Director will consult with/make a referral to the relevant authorities in the country – If in doubt, a referral will be made.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

Action to be taken following the referral (cont'd)

- Against adults/leaders/officers working within another organisation. Where you are aware that a member of staff/volunteer against whom an allegation has been made, works with children/young people for another organisation, you must inform a manager in that organisation of your concerns and actions and make an appropriate referral to a Sororum Director.

# **SAFEGUARDING YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

## Confidentiality

- The Sororum will ensure that any records made in relation to a referral are kept confidential and in a secure place. Information in relation to Safeguarding concerns will only be shared on a “need to know” basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to a child’s need for protection.