

## POLICY FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

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## **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to describe how Reading Community Learning Centre (RCLC) is organised to ensure the protection and well-being of children and vulnerable adults who use or visit the centre.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

The main purpose of the RCLC is the provision of adult education, including family learning, and information, advice and support services to adults. The need for a Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults arises because:

- RCLC offers on-site childcare, provided by employed staff, to the parents/guardians/carers who use our services.
- Some courses involve adults and children working together.
- Some courses may be held off-site, in institutions where children are regularly present.
- A small minority of learners may be between the ages of 16 and 18.
- Vulnerable adults may attend our courses or use our services.

## **3. RCLC PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS STATEMENT**

The RCLC is committed to protect all children up to the age of 18 who use RCLC directly and whose parents/carers attend our courses or use the facilities at the centre, and any vulnerable adult who uses the organisation's services. This Policy is designed to meet all legal requirements and is supportive of our commitment to Equality and Diversity reflected in our policies on this.

The RCLC recognises its responsibility for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, in particular for those with whom its teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers come into contact.

The RCLC works in partnership with many organisations whose primary function is the support of vulnerable families. Such organisations will have established policies and procedures which enable them to discharge their responsibilities towards these families. The RCLC respects the knowledge and expertise within such organisations and will always seek to work co-operatively in matters relating to the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults.

It is the duty of every staff member, trustee or volunteer to safeguard to the best of his or her ability, the welfare and safety of all children, the elderly, persons with disability or otherwise vulnerable persons with whom they come into contact during their work for RCLC, and prevent assault, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse and neglect of persons within these groups. Protection issues are regarded as an essential part of the RCLC's activities and events. The policy applies to all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of class, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic.

This policy takes account of and complies, where necessary, with:-

- Children Act 1989
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- National standards for under 8s provision day care and child minding
- Crèches (DfES/0650/2003)
- Sessional Care (DfES/0653/2003)
- DoH document “Working Together 2000”
- DfES Guidelines on CRB checks (DfES/0708/2002)
- DfES/1568/2005 - Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings
- Anti terrorist legislation
- Equality Act (2010)
- General data protection regulations (GDPR)

#### **4. ORGANISATION ARRANGEMENTS**

Overall responsibility for the implementation and maintenance of this policy lies with the Centre Manager of the Reading Community Learning Centre who shall report on it to the RCLC’s Board of Trustees.

#### **5. DEFINITIONS**

##### **Child**

For the purposes of this policy a child is defined as any person aged from 0 - 18 years.

##### **Vulnerable Adult**

Although there is no clear definition in law, a vulnerable adult for the purpose of this policy is defined as an adult whose special requirements have been notified to the organiser(s) or course leader(s) by the carer.

##### **Abuse**

Abuse is “the violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons”. It can result from “action or inaction by a carer or any other person”.

Abuse includes: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, financial or material abuse, emotional or psychological abuse and discriminatory abuse. Historical abuse also falls within the scope of this policy statement. This is because an adult may disclose abuse which occurred in the past, or in

their childhood. The abuser may still represent a risk to children, or to vulnerable adults, now, and so must be reported.

Different types of abuse may happen at the same time. It can happen in any setting.

## **6. DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROVISION**

### **6.1. Childcare Provided Directly by the RCLC**

**6.1.1.** Where the facilities run for more than two hours a day, the provision will conform to the National Standards for under 8s provision day care and childminding and other relevant regulations and guidance. All sessions shall have a minimum of two adults on duty, one of whom will be appropriately qualified.

**6.1.2.** All staff and volunteers employed to work in childcare will require Enhanced and barring DBS checks. Their attention will be drawn to the Department of Health publication 31553 - “What to do if you are worried a child is being abused”.

### **6.2 Courses where adults and children learn or work together**

Some RCLC programmes, such as in the area of family literacy or numeracy may involve adults and children (usually their own) learning together during the guided learning hours. Tutors and volunteers teaching on these courses will need an Enhanced DBS check

### **6.3 Courses held in settings where children are regularly present**

**6.3.1.** Some RCLC courses may be run in schools, children’s centres or other similar institutions or settings where children are normally present. Although contact with children is not part of the programme, tutors and volunteers may come into contact with them, i.e. in corridors or the playground. Where, because of their subject area, tutors are likely to be working in such situations on a regular basis, they will need an Enhanced DBS check

**6.3.2.** In accordance with DfES/0780/2002 Criminal Records Bureau: Managing the demand for Disclosures, courses which are held in schools, etc. outside the hours that children are regularly present will not require the tutor to be checked for child protection purposes.

### **6.4 Learners attending RCLC courses aged under 18**

Where an individual learner aged 16-18 joins an RCLC course, the tutor will not need to be checked for child protection purposes unless RCLC has good reason for requiring this.

### **6.5 Vulnerable adults attending RCLC courses or using its services**

It is not standard practice for RCLC to require an Enhanced DBS check or tutors and volunteers working with vulnerable adults where those adults are in a group with others not identified as vulnerable. However, where the whole group is identified as vulnerable, tutors will need an Enhanced DBS check.

## 7. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION: DISCLOSURE AND BARRING

7.1 Staff members and volunteers (including Trustees) needing an Enhanced DBS check will be employed/ involved only when it has been obtained. If the DBS check is taking more than 6 weeks to complete, a volunteer or tutor can be used if suitably supervised. The decision is with the Centre Manager, who needs to report any such decisions to the Trustees. Enhanced and enhanced and barring DBS checks need updating at least every three years.

7.2 Where the RCLC has carried out the necessary checks on a crèche worker or tutor on a short-term contract, no further check needs to be carried out on subsequent re-employment on a new contract unless there has been a gap of two or more academic years or the RCLC has good reason to believe that such a check is necessary.

## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY

The RCLC ethos includes a non-expert, non-judgemental and supportive approach to work with parents. Building trust within the group is important and confidentiality is part of this. Tutors and other staff members or volunteers working with groups need to make clear that there is a limit to confidentiality in exceptional circumstances.

It is important in establishing ground rules or group agreements that confidentiality is discussed and learners are made aware that confidentiality has the following exceptions:-

- Where a participant gives written permission
- If a tutor, staff member or volunteer has serious concern for the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult
- If a tutor, staff member or volunteer considers someone's life to be at risk

Wherever possible the tutor, staff member or volunteer should tell the parent/guardian/carer of their concern and offer what help and support they can within professional boundaries. However their main responsibility is towards the safety and welfare of the child/vulnerable adult and their concern must be passed on to the relevant named person.

Considerations of confidentiality should not override the right of children/vulnerable adults to be protected from harm. In instances where there is an allegation or suspicion of abuse, confidentiality needs to be broken. It is important that the rights of the victim and the alleged perpetrator are protected by ensuring that only those who need to know are given the relevant information.

## 9. WHISTLEBLOWING

It is vital that RCLC staff notify the Centre Manager about their concerns. It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager to take action, not the individual staff member. If the member of staff is concerned that the manager is not taking sufficient action, then the member of staff should notify the RCLC Chair.

## 10. PREVENT

Prevent is part of the Government's counter terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The CONTEST strategy is made up of 4 work streams:

Protect - strengthening our borders, infrastructures, buildings and public spaces from an attack

Prepare - where an attack cannot be stopped, to reduce its impact by ensuring we respond effectively.

Pursue - to disrupt or stop terrorist activity.

Prevent - designed to tackle the problem at its roots, preventing people from supporting terrorism or becoming terrorists themselves.

The radicalisation of vulnerable adults is abuse. All staff and trustees have a responsibility to report any concerns of this nature.

This is the local procedure, which is to be used in conjunction with the multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB) procedures, of which Reading Borough Council is a member.

Protecting Vulnerable Adults From Abuse (<http://www.reading.gov.uk/adultabuse/>)

SAPB (<http://www.reading.gov.uk/residents/care-and-support-for-adults/protecting-vulnerable-adults-from-abuse/safeguarding-adults-partnership-board/>)

Procedures (<http://www.reading.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/safeguarding-adults-policies-procedures/>)

Berkshire Adults Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guidance Manual (<http://berksadultsg.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>)

## 11. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

### 1 How may abuse be recognised?

Abuse may be voluntarily disclosed or alleged by an individual, but more subtle signs may also indicate that abuse has taken place. Everyone working for or on behalf of RCLC should be alert to these. They may include: changes in physical appearance (signs of injury, pain or self-harm, changes in deportment, lack of attention to personal appearance), changes in behaviour (reluctance to be touched, to discuss certain topics), changes in personality (anxiety, fearfulness, withdrawal, anger, resentment).

### 2 Good practice in protecting children and vulnerable adults

What will RCLC do to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are protected?

- Ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff, volunteers, trustees and users minimise the risk to children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children and vulnerable adults.

- Ensure that action is taken to support and protect children and vulnerable adults where concerns arise regarding possible abuse.
- Abide by the procedures laid down by the local area Social Services and Health Directorate in which the organisation is based or the possible abuse occurred.
- Support children or vulnerable adults, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
- Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation
- Listen to and take seriously the views and wishes of children and vulnerable adults.

### **3 What to do if abuse is suspected**

If any RCLC staff member/ volunteer/ Trustee suspects that an individual with whom they are in contact is the subject of abuse, they must:

- i. Share their concerns immediately and in confidence with the Centre Manager. Information is shared on a need to know basis; agreement must be reached on what is told to whom, and what action is to be taken. A written record of these discussions should be signed and dated by all those involved.
- ii. Advise the person who has disclosed the abuse that the information cannot be kept confidential and must be passed on to the appropriate authorities. The welfare of the individual must always be taken into account.
- iii. Report the circumstances to the Centre Manager who will then ensure that the abuse is reported within 24 hours to Reading Social Services and Health Directorate. When a report, verbal or written is made, a witness/colleague should be present both to verify the report and to support the person who is making the report. A written record of this contact will be placed on file.
- iv. The Centre Manager will ensure that written confirmation of the report is received from Social Services within 48 hours, and will contact them again within 3 days if no confirmation is forthcoming.
- v. Information reported will include:
  - The vulnerable adult, or child's, name and age
  - Where they live and who with
  - Known organisations providing them with help or services
  - Why the person reporting abuse is concerned
  - Details of the person(s) who may be abusing the vulnerable adult, or child.

In the event of an incident or disclosure:

#### DO

- Make sure the individual/child is safe
- Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them
- Listen
- Offer support and reassurance
- Ascertain and establish the basic facts
- Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
- Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
- Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
- Follow correct procedure
- Explain areas of confidentiality; immediately speak to your manager for support and guidance
- Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation if appropriate
- Remember the need for ongoing support.

#### DON'T

- Confront the alleged abuser
- Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
- Be dismissive of the concern
- Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
- Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
- Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
- Ask leading questions
- Assume Information
- Make promises
- Ignore the allegation
- Elaborate in your notes
- Panic

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies.

### **Recruiting, training and supervising staff and volunteers**

Reading Community Learning Centre aims to ensure that all vulnerable people, whether children or vulnerable adults, are protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff and volunteers in this organisation. In order to achieve this we will ensure our staff and volunteers are carefully selected and screened, and appropriately trained and supervised. RCLC complies with the latest data protection legislation.

### **Allegations of abuse against Reading Community Learning Centre staff or volunteers**

If an allegation of abuse is made against any person working for or on behalf of Reading Community Learning Centre, the person concerned will be suspended from duty immediately until the allegations have been fully investigated. All allegations will be investigated in line with the RCLC Disciplinary Policy and Procedures. The person concerned will be offered the opportunity to make a



statement to the Centre Manager, which will be formally recorded. Where the Centre Manager is the subject of the allegation, this role will be undertaken by the Chair of RCLC's Board of Trustees. RCLC will abide by the procedures laid down by the local area Social Services and Health Directorate at all times

### Other actions

In the absence of the Centre Manager, functions pertaining to this policy will be undertaken by the Chair of RCLC's Board of Trustees and the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

Reading Community Learning Centre will seek to ensure that when appropriate all organisations with which they work have their own Vulnerable Adults or Child Protection Policies. This Policy Statement will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees as required.

### Reporting Procedures

If there is a concern that an adult or child is being harmed or abused the Centre Manager must be informed. She will then follow the reporting procedures in accordance with local council guidelines. RCLC is a contract partner of New Directions, therefore any concerns will also be reported to the Safeguarding lead at New Directions, Lisa Welch (Deputy Principal) on Mobile: **07966189883** or the Landline: **0118 9373605** or email: **[Lisa.Welch@reading.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Welch@reading.gov.uk)**. There is also an online portal: **Online portal:** <https://forms.office.com/r/pHULjx2UTz>

In **urgent cases** you can report them directly to the Reading Borough Council Adult Safeguarding Team Tel: 0118 937 37 47 or email: [safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk) or in **extreme cases** and where people are in immediate danger, dial 999. You should follow this up by contacting your Line Manager and DSO afterwards.

The Council works closely with the other Councils in the west of Berkshire, the police, probation, health and a range of private and voluntary agencies to try and prevent adult abuse occurring and stop it when happens.

Please contact the **Safeguarding Adults Team on 0118 937 3747** or the **Quality Team on 0118 937 2216** if in the case of the following;

- An adult who is vulnerable because of your age, an illness or disability and someone is hurting you, frightening you, stealing from you or neglecting you
- Worried that someone you know is being abused or neglected.

Concerns about a child or young person are first to be reported to the Centre Manager. If you want to talk through your concerns with the Council before making a formal referral, call the Council's **Child Protection Advice line on 0118 937 3770** between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). Access for support can also be through;

- Secure web form: [www.reading.gov.uk/childrensreferralform](http://www.reading.gov.uk/childrensreferralform)
- Secure E-mail: [ChildrensSinglePointofAccess@reading.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensSinglePointofAccess@reading.gcsx.gov.uk)

You may also find the NSPCC information on the weblinks below helpful in deciding the best way to respond to your concerns.

If anyone is concerned that an adult is being harmed or abused in any way please contact the Reading Council Safeguarding Adults Manager 0118 937 3747.

### Local Contacts

- Berkshire Women's Aid 0118 950 4003
- Police 0845 850 5505
- Trust House Reading 0118 950 2835

### NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

- Action on Elder Abuse. (10 - 4:30pm) **080 8808 8141**. The helpline not only provides direct advice and help to people who may be in danger of experiencing abuse but they also provide unique information on the nature, circumstances and dynamics of elder abuse.
- Public Concern at Work or whistleblowing advice call 020 7404 6609
- Carer's UK ☎020 7378 499920 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4LX
- Care Quality Commission 0300 061 6161. They monitor, inspect and regulate health and social care services. They publish what they find, including ratings to help people choose care.

### Raising Concerns About a Child (Reading Borough Council)

#### Reading Council Children's Single Point of Access

The Children's Single Point of Access is Reading's new arrangement to raise concerns about a child (pre-birth to 18 years old - up to 25 years for children and young people with special needs) this includes safeguarding and child protection. Having a Single Point of Access allows us to make timely, informed, evidence based decisions to ensure a child's safety.

#### What is the Children's Single Point of Access?

It is a single point of contact for all early help and children's social care service, including disabled children. The line is open to all practitioners and the general public.

#### How do I contact the Children's Single point of Access?

There are 3 ways to contact the Council team:

- Using a web form, which is the most secure and effective way of requesting help for a child. The form can be found at: [www.reading.gov.uk/childrensreferralform](http://www.reading.gov.uk/childrensreferralform)
- Calling the team on 0118 937 3641
- Emailing the team on [ChildrensSinglePointofAccess@reading.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ChildrensSinglePointofAccess@reading.gcsx.gov.uk)

## How will I know if I need to contact the Children's Single point of Access?

The Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board (Reading LSCB), have provided a helpful [Threshold Guide](#) that breaks down the decision making process. For full information, advice and guidance please use the [LSCB Threshold webpage](#).

If you are still unsure as to whether or not a contact or call is required, please consider the following:

- What has the child experienced?
- What support is currently in place for the child?
- What would happen to the child if there was no intervention?
- What is going well for the child?

For more advice or information, please look at the [LSCB \(Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board\) Top Tips sheet](#).

<http://www.readinglscb.org.uk/GetAsset.aspx?id=fAAzADgANwAwAHwAfABGAGEAbABzAGUafAB8ADMANgB8AA2>

## What will happen once I've made contact?

If you have contacted the Council using the web form, you will receive an automatic reply acknowledging your enquiry. You may be contacted by the team to provide more information.

If you have completed the Children's Single Point of Access referral form, we will let you know what course of action we intend taking with you within two working days.

### Reading Council Safeguarding Adults Team

Investigates and protects vulnerable adults who are experiencing harm and/or abuse (physical, sexual, emotional, financial, neglect or discrimination).

It is your duty under the Data Protection Act to ensure any personal, identifying information is sent in a secure manner - please report safeguarding concerns:

- online - using our secure form [www.reading.gov.uk/adultsafeguardingreferral](http://www.reading.gov.uk/adultsafeguardingreferral) or
- by email to [safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk). Please note you will need to call us or use the secure online referral form to share documents and information with us in a secure way.

If you believe the matter is urgent please call:

- 0118 937 3747 or our direct line 0118 937 6550 during office hours or
- the Emergency Duty Team 01344 786543 out of hours.

If someone is in danger please call 999 immediately.

## STORING PERSONAL INFORMATION:

The table below outlines how RCLC complies with General Data Protection Regulations ("GDPR") in the context of this policy. Greater details on how the Centre complies with GDPR can be found in our Data Protection Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Privacy Notice.

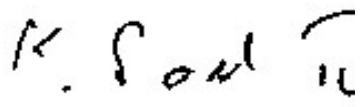
<b>Holding your personal information</b>	RCLC needs to store certain people’s personal information in order to carry out its day to day business.  RCLC’s use of any personal data will be grounded in a legal basis. If there is no clear legal basis, then RCLC will ask the data subject to consent to their information being used.
<b>How your personal information will be stored</b>	All of the personal information that we hold will be stored in a locked cupboard or on a password protected computer.
<b>How long we will store your information for</b>	Personal information will be kept for as long as it is required. Reasonable steps will be taken to make sure that information is kept up to date and data subjects have the right to ask RCLC to delete their data if it is no longer needed.
<b>The type of information that we will store</b>	RCLC needs to store data in relation to staff administration, fundraising, student databases, advice and information work. These types of information are explained in more detail in the Data Protection Policy.
<b>Why we will keep your information</b>	Certain people’s personal information is needed in order for RCLC to conduct its day to day business and it will be kept to the extent that it is relevant to this.
<b>The legitimate reason (or “lawful basis”) for us storing your information</b>	The basis for storing a person’s information will be made clear to the person whose information is being collected and stored. If there is no clear legitimate reason, then the person will need to give their consent for their information to be stored by RCLC.

**Revised Aug 2021**

Date Approved by Board [May 2023](#)

Review Date [May 2025](#)

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees




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