

## Tendring District Local History Recorders (TDLHR) - Safeguarding Policy

In addition to the normal Health & Safety risk assessment processes, TDLHR recognise that, when involved in making provision for children and vulnerable adults, they have a responsibility to ensure that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is always paramount. All children and vulnerable adults have the right of protection from abuse.

**A child** is defined as, under 18 years of age, by the Children Act 1989.

**A vulnerable adult** is defined (by the Law Commission) as a person over 18 years, who is or maybe in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is unable to take care of him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

All TDLHR members have a responsibility to report any concerns to Committee members and the Nominated Person leading an event in the name of TDLHR. Such concerns will be responded to swiftly and appropriately.

A copy of the following policy details will be drawn to the attention of all those leading and organising TDLHR events and activities and a printed copy available on the day.

### **Policy aims**

The aim of this TDLHR policy is to promote good practice to:

1. Provide children and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in events organised or co-organised by TDLHR; and
2. Ensure that informed and confident responses are made to Specific child or vulnerable adult protection issues.

Appendix A provides a code of guidance for members and volunteers.

### **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

TDLHR recognises that anyone may have the potential to abuse children and vulnerable adults in some way and that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from having contact with them. TDLHR will ensure that all current and future legislation and guidelines will be observed and adhered to, based on appropriate professional advice.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) statement.**

It is TDLHR's policy to ensure that all children and vulnerable adults are kept safe at any events arranged and held by TDLHR.

It is policy that all children and young people attending events will be accompanied by a parent, guardian or designated adult who will be responsible for them. In practice, no child or vulnerable adult has, or will be left alone. Because of this policy there is no requirement for TDLHR members to have DBS checks.

### **RESPONDING TO SUSPICIONS OR ALLEGATIONS**

If a members or volunteer has any concerns about possible abuse or inappropriate behaviour, they have a responsibility to report them. They do not have to decide whether or not abuse or inappropriate behaviour has actually taken place. In the event of any concerns, the steps to be taken are:

1. Concerns reported to Chairman or The Nominated Person leading an event. In the unlikely event that they are not available, contact should be made direct to the Social Care and Health Directorate (First Response line - 0800 1313126 (or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000, or Childline on 0800 1111)
2. A Written Record will be made at once of what has been said or seen, which will include the location, time and date, (See Appendix B).
3. The Written Record will be handed to the Committee at the first opportunity, who will act on it immediately. Where appropriate, the Chairman or The Nominated Person will refer the allegation to County Council, Social Care and Health Directorate (First Response line), with a copy of record (a copy to be kept by the individual reporting the concerns,) who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
4. The parents or carers of the child or young person involved will be contacted as soon as possible, following the advice from the social services department.

**Remember an individual may be at risk of further harm.**

### **Concerns about conduct of committee member or volunteer**

Where the concern relates to a TDLHR representative or volunteer it should be reported to the Committee, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of a child (ren) or adult(s) Who may be at risk. The allegation will be referred to social services for advice. There may be three types of investigation:

A criminal investigation;

A safeguarding investigation;

A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and safeguarding investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily. If, following consideration, the concerns have arisen as a result of “poor practice” the Committee may deal with it as a misconduct issue.

TDLHR will fully support and protect any member or volunteer who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adult.

### **Allegations of Previous Abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event (e.g. by an adult who was abused as a child or by a member who is still currently working with children or vulnerable adults). Where such an allegation is made, members and volunteers should follow the procedures as detailed above and report the matter to the social services or the police.

### **Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following people:

The Committee of TDLHR;

The parents or carer of the person who is alleged to have been abused;

The person making the allegation;

Social services / police

The alleged abuser, (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child or vulnerable adult).

The record of the concerns will be retained in safe storage in accordance with data protection policy and “need to know” requirements.

### **Guidelines for use of photographic or other imaging equipment.**

The taking of photographs, film or other images of children or vulnerable adults is not appropriate without consent from parents or nominated guardians or carers. All persons at TDLHR events must ensure that such consent is in place before making any such image of a child or vulnerable adult. When such images are properly obtained then they must be used only for the purpose consented to. Special care must be taken, when using any image in general publicity or in publications such as annual reports or press promotions. If there is doubt about the appropriate use of an image then TDLHR must not be tempted to use it.

**Appendix A:** Code of guidance for members and volunteers on protection of children and vulnerable adults .

**Appendix B:** How to record concerns

Date approved by: TDLHR Committee:

Date:

## **APPENDIX A : CODE OF GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS ON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **Introduction.**

Abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and the caring support environment. It is a fact of life that some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

A paid worker or volunteer may have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to TDLHR line manager and or relevant authorities following the guidelines in this document. When an individual, who has been subjected to abuse outside TDLHR environment, comes into contact with TDLHR at organised events or at any other time, we must and will work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the individual receives the required support.

### **Good Practice Guidelines.**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate within TDLHR activities.

#### **Good practice means:**

Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).

Treating all children and vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.

Always putting the welfare of each person first, e.g. before partners or ourselves.

Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with clients (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a client or to share a room with them).

Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers individuals to share in the decision-making process;

Involving parents/carers wherever possible (e.g. for the responsibility of their children when travelling in a volunteer's car).

Being an excellent role model - this includes not smoking, using inappropriate language or drinking alcohol in the company of clients.

Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.

Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults.

Securing carer consent in writing to act in loco parentis, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.

Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

Requesting written parental/carers consent if TDLHR members or volunteers are required to transport children or vulnerable adults in their cars. This consent will be obtained at the time of taking the bookings for the voluntary transport or community transport schemes.

#### **Practice to be avoided:**

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of the clients carers. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to arrive to pick a child up at the end of a session.

Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children or vulnerable adults away from others

Avoid taking children or vulnerable adults to your home where they will be alone with you.

#### **Practices never to occur:**

Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.

Share a room with a child or vulnerable adult.

Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.

Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.

Make sexually suggestive comments to an individual, even in fun.

Reduce anyone to tears as a form of control.

Allow allegations made by a child or vulnerable adult to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults that they can do for themselves.

Invite or allow clients to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

**NB.** It may sometimes be necessary for members or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for an individual, e.g. if they are young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents or carers. If a person is fully dependent on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing or where there is physical contact, lifting/assisting to carry out particular activities.

**Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.**

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to a committee member or other appropriate colleague, and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents or carers of the child or vulnerable adult are told:

If you accidentally injure or cause discomfort to a client;

If he/she seems distressed in any manner;

If a client appears to be sexually aroused by your actions;

If a client misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

#### **APPENDIX B : HOW TO RECORD CONCERNS**

Information passed to the social services or the police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making a detailed record at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should include the following:

- The name of the child or vulnerable adult.
- Age of individual and date of birth.
- Home address and telephone number.
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else?
- What is the nature of the allegation? Include dates, times, any special factors and other relevant information. Make a clear distinction between what is fact, opinion or hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries.
- Are behavioural signs or indirect signs evident?
- Witnesses to the incidents.
- The child or vulnerable adults account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents/carer been contacted? If so what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.
- If it is not the child or vulnerable adult making the report has the individual concerned been spoken to? If so what was said?
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? If yes, record details of the allegation made, including the identity of the alleged abuser, the person making the allegation and the time and date.