

DSWA Safeguarding Policy – Protecting Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults

Introduction

This policy is designed to help protect children, young people aged under 18 and vulnerable people of all ages from any form of unacceptable behaviour including sexual misbehaviour, physical acts, inappropriate remarks, suggestive gestures, pictures or other material, physical violence, bullying, or neglect.

Key Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount;
- Those providing services for young people should have a procedure for handling child protection allegations consistent with current practice;
- All allegations should be taken seriously and treated in accordance with child protection procedures;
- The Social Services and the police and (if applicable) relevant school are responsible for any investigation.

Where issues are raised with regards to any child, young person or vulnerable adult direct to DSWA these will be referred to the relevant authority being the school involved, Social Services or the police. DSWA will assist the Social Services, any relevant school and the police in any investigation taking place.

Policy

The person responsible for this policy is the DSWA Chairman as identified in the minutes of the latest AGM.

DSWA will provide advice and guidance in accordance with The Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (www.dhsspsni.gov.uk).

Members who deal with children, young people and vulnerable people of all ages must:

- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child or vulnerable person.
- Ensure that the activities which they direct are appropriate to the age, maturity and ability of children participating.
- Consistently display high standards of personal behaviour and appearance. Remember that children regard adults as role models and ensure your behaviour, language, gestures etc. are appropriate and above reproach.
- Avoid spending time alone with children without another responsible adult being present, including car journeys. Meetings with individual children should take place as openly as possible and always with the full knowledge of another responsible person.
- Not make any unnecessary physical contact with children. If you accidentally hurt a child, or cause distress in any way, report the incident as soon as possible. Parents / carers should also be informed of the occurrence.
- Before administering First Aid, ensure that consent has been granted from the adult who is responsible for the supervision of the child and that they accompany the child throughout any contact.
- Record any allegations.
- Not leave a child or vulnerable person alone.
- Not show favouritism to particular children.
- Not make inappropriate contact with children or vulnerable adults, for example developing relationships outside the DSWA.

To minimise opportunities for children to suffer harm of any kind whilst participating in DSWA events, members should ensure that school/organisation staff and/or parents/carers are given full information about the programme and the supervision arrangements (including ratio of the number of members to children). Groups that include children and/or vulnerable adults should always be supervised by school/organisation staff and/or parents/carers. Parental consent for the child's participation must be obtained.

Members should take appropriate action if they become aware of anyone physically, emotionally or sexually abusing a child/vulnerable adult, and report any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused whether by an adult or another child to the people or agencies whose role is to protect them (e.g. parents, police or social services).

Instructors should familiarise themselves with the terms of the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Protection of Children Act 2003 for Scotland. If training providers run courses which may be attended by children and/or vulnerable adults then the training provider should ensure that there are DBS checked adults supervising the children and/or vulnerable adults at ALL TIMES or ensure that the instructor is DBS checked, to be reviewed on a three yearly basis.

N.B

1. References to 'Child' or 'Children' extend to young people aged under 18 and vulnerable people of all ages.
2. The Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) has replaced the Criminal Records Bureau.
3. The policy will be available on the DSWA website. A copy will be sent to all branches who will be asked to ensure their members are aware of the policy by signing and returning a confirmation pro forma.
4. Any reported matter must not be investigated or discussed with anyone other than the safeguarding officer. If the safeguarding officer is unavailable then the matter should be referred to a relevant authority and the safeguarding officer advised as soon as possible.

L Clarkson, DSWA Training & Education Coordinator
Agreed by DSWA Trustee Board June 2013

DSWA Safeguarding Contacts

Please ensure you have contacted the DSWA Office to report any safeguarding issues as well as one of the contacts below:

DSWSA Training & Education Coordinator	Linda Clarkson	07989 848167
DSWA Chairman	Ray Stockall	07823 774084