



Tang Hall Community Centre

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Safeguarding policy

1. Policy statement

Tang Hall Community Centre (THCC) is firmly committed to the belief that all children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and fully recognises its responsibility for child and adult protection.

THCC aims to provide for people of all ages to use its facilities to carry out a range of activities where they will feel welcome and safe, and where children using the facilities can benefit from being with each other and developing their potential. THCC Safeguarding procedures must be in line with all current legislation (Mental Capacity Act 2005 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents>) and with the government inter-agency statutory guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children" (July 2018). By having safeguards in place within the organisation, Tang Hall Community Centre aims not only to protect and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults, but also to enhance the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents or carers and the general public.

2. Introduction and Scope

In support of the above statement, this document sets out the current agreed policy and procedures for Safeguarding. This policy applies to the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of THCC or any of its user groups.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Overall Responsibility

Overall responsibility for Safeguarding falls with the Board of Trustees, and ultimately with the Chair. They may delegate their responsibility to an individual who must be supported by the Chair and Trustees. The Responsible Person must ensure the effective and appropriate day-to-day implementation of policy and procedure and must be given access to appropriate training and support. They should lead on any reviews of the policy as necessary.

3.2 Responsible Person

The Board nominates the Centre Manager as the Responsible Person to undertake the day-to-day implementation of the Safeguarding Policy.

3.3 Employees, Volunteers, Tenants and Centre Users

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and all individuals connected to the organisation must have awareness of this policy and of their responsibilities in upholding it. This policy must form part of employee and volunteer induction and training and must be included in all sub-leases and hire agreements to ensure everyone has the relevant information.

4. Purpose

The purpose of this policy:

To provide protection for the children, young people and vulnerable adults who access services at Tang Hall Community Centre, including the children of adult members or users.

To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they must adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

5. Policy Detail and Procedures

5.1 Safeguarding Principles

We believe that the welfare of children / vulnerable adults are paramount, and that they have a right to be listened to and protected from all forms of abuse.

We recognise the personal dignity and rights of vulnerable adults, and that we have the responsibility to help prevent abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults, including following the correct procedures for any such abuse we discover or suspect.

Our aim is to create a safe environment for every individual who is part of Tang Hall Community Centre or comes into contact with the organisation in any way, including children, young people, vulnerable adults, volunteers and employees.

We must treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults as individuals and with equal concern.

We must ensure that all those working regularly with children and/or vulnerable adults, or those with primary key holder status are aware of their responsibilities and where direct, unsupervised contact takes place that a relevant Disclosure check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is carried out and relevant safeguarding training is made available.

We must ensure that all groups who use the Centre to run classes, activities or open sessions have the appropriate Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and have access to the appropriate level of safeguarding training to suit their role/purpose.

5.2 Safeguarding Awareness and Training

All Tang Hall Community Centre staff and volunteers working with children or vulnerable adults must receive appropriate safeguarding awareness training and a safeguarding induction prior to starting in their role.

Training must be organised and delivered in accordance with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018. This may be provided by the Centre Manager or outsourced to City of York Council as appropriate to the level of training required.

All staff and volunteers must adhere to Tang Hall Community Centre's Safe Working Practices, which will form part of their induction and training.

Definitions:

Children -means everyone under the age of 18.

Adult –means a person aged 18 years or over.

Vulnerable Adults -Adults are no longer deemed vulnerable because of their personal attributes, characteristics or abilities. An adult is considered 'vulnerable' if they are, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

All staff and volunteers should have access to information on the definitions and indicators of types of abuse, as set out below:

Note: Organisations and individuals should not limit their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect, as they can take many forms and the circumstances of the individual case should always be considered)

Abuse / harm is a form of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, by another person or persons in a way that causes significant harm, or affects health, development or wellbeing. Somebody may abuse or neglect a

child or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or vulnerable adults may be abused from within their family and/or from individuals they come across in their day to day lives.

There are four main categories of abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to an individual or the threat of physical abuse.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to an individual they are looking after. Physical abuse as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of an individual such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a person's emotional development. It may involve making an individual feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of an individual although it may occur alone.

Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure and often children / vulnerable adults who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. They may receive little or no love, affection or attention from their parents or carers.

Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix or play with others.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the individual is aware of or consents to what is happening.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children and vulnerable adults in looking at or in the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activities or encouraging individuals to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Individuals can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other children and by people from all different walks of life.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet an individual's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in a serious impairment of the individual's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child or vulnerable adult home alone or the failure to ensure an individual gets the appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of or unresponsiveness to an individual's basic emotional needs.

Note: Bullying is not an official category of abuse, but it is damaging, harmful and oppressive. Please also note that individuals from minority ethnic groups, with a disability or learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and may well be targeted.

5.3 Recognising Signs and Indicators of Suspected Abuse

Recognising abuse is not easy, and it is not the responsibility of a THCC volunteer or employee to decide whether or not abuse has taken place or if an individual is at risk. They do, however, have responsibilities to act if there is a concern, in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any necessary action to protect an individual. It must be recognised that THCC employees and volunteers are not experts or professionals in the areas of child and vulnerable adults protection and social work. It is important that no THCC volunteer or employee assumes this role.

5.4 Disclosure Barring Service Checks (DBS)

If deemed relevant to their role, Tang Hall Community Centre employees must have a DBS check and in certain circumstances this may be required prior to their commencement in their role. This is due to the nature of the work of the Centre which involves working or contact, including unsupervised, with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

In the event that the DBS is returned and there are convictions or cautions evident, it is the responsibility of the Manager of Tang Hall Community Centre to inform the Chair of Trustees and to take further specialist advice to ascertain whether the nature of the cautions or convictions will prevent the candidate taking up their position and to ensure the rights of the candidate are protected. This is to be undertaken in line with the centres policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders in which we will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

5.5 External Groups' Safeguarding Requirements

The safety of children and vulnerable adults is the responsibility of all users of Tang Hall Community Centre. Hirer's must ensure that they take all reasonable steps possible to ensure that the activity they operate under their hiring agreement is conducted in such a way that children and vulnerable adults are kept safe from emotional, physical, sexual and other abuse. Hirer's must ensure that their Safeguarding procedures and knowledge are up to date.

Any club, society, organisation or individual undertaking activities at Tang Hall Community Centre involving children aged under 18 and vulnerable adults must be required to either show proof that they have their own robust policies or to agree to adopt this Safeguarding Policy in full. Any club, society, organisation or individual working with children and vulnerable adults who does not have their own Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and refuses to adopt the THCC Safeguarding Policy must be refused permission to hire Tang Hall Community Centre.

5.6 Acting on a Disclosure

All employees and volunteers have a responsibility for the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults that they come in to contact with in their role.

All employees and volunteers have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child and vulnerable adult protection is reported. All Safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Centre Manager (or the Chair of the Trustees where it is in connection with the Centre Manager).

Children who are at risk of abuse may disclose information to those persons that they feel comfortable with and have come to trust. This can happen for many reasons, but largely in the hope that they will help and protect them or stop it happening, even if they ask the trusted person not to do anything with the information. In these circumstances it is important that they are informed that the concern has to be reported to the local children's care authority. It is essential that all disclosures of potential or actual child abuse are reported to childcare authorities as a means of protecting the child.

In disclosing information the child may often feel that they are betraying someone they are close to and whom they love. It is not unusual for a child to love the abuser but want the abuse to stop, especially when that person is a parent or carer. Equally it may be someone they fear e.g. an adult whom they perceive to be able to influence decisions concerning their future. Either way, it takes great courage for a child to talk to an adult about abuse and their response can be crucial.

If an allegation is made, or a concern arises, about a member of staff or volunteer, ensure that the Centre Manager is informed immediately or if the concern relates to the Centre Manager that the Chair of the Trustees is informed. The Centre Manager or Chair will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) if appropriate, according to City of York Council guidelines. If the LADO is unavailable or the concern is raised out of hours you should, in an emergency, contact the police.

If someone tells you that they, or someone they know, is being abused:

Believe what the person is saying and take it seriously.

Reassure the person who has made the disclosure to you that they have done the right thing.

Remain calm—be sensitive and sympathetic. You may feel shocked, angry or upset by what you have been told but if the vulnerable adult or child senses this, it may prevent them from disclosing.

Give the person time to talk and do not probe or ask leading questions. Investigation is not your responsibility.

Do not promise to keep secrets. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.

Explain to the child that you will share this information with a senior member of staff who will ensure the appropriate procedures will be followed.

E-mails or text messages received detailing suspected abuse should be responded to within 24 hours by contacting the young person by phone or face-to-face to obtain further information.

Record the event in accordance with the reporting form at the end of this document.

All allegations, even those that appear less serious, need to be followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation concerned.

5.7 Reporting or Whistle-Blowing

Concerns for the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults could arise in a number of different ways and in a range of settings. It is essential to act quickly and effectively if an allegation is made, or if there is suspicion or concern about a professional or volunteer's relationship with a child, young person or group of children/young people, particularly if they have:

Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child or vulnerable adult;

Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to, a child / vulnerable adult; or

Behaved towards a child or vulnerable adult in a way that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with children / vulnerable adults.

Records must be stored in a secured place and access to them will be strictly limited to relevant staff and external professionals on a need to know basis. However, in order to ensure that individuals are safeguarded on the basis of proper evidence, by law the source of the referral cannot be kept anonymous.

If you have any concerns about an adult's behaviour towards children or young people:

Do not ignore it – THCC will take any concerns very seriously.

You must discuss your concerns with the Centre Manager and/or Chair of Trustees who will support you in liaising with the statutory agencies should any child protection matter arise.

Under no circumstances should you speak to or confront the suspected abuser. Do not share suspicions or information with any other person other than the Centre Manager, Chair, LADO, and the Police.

5.8 Unaccompanied Children and vulnerable adults in Public Settings

There will be situations when young children / vulnerable adults visit public settings unaccompanied by their parent or carer. Whilst not wishing to discourage individuals from visiting places such as Tang Hall Community Centre, staff and volunteers must take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the individual and to inform parents / carers of their responsibilities. The way in which staff deal with individuals must be based on awareness of the responsibility of the parent or the loco parentis carer (i.e., the one taking the responsibility

of parent), and the duty of care of the service to all individuals on the premises. In no instance would staff be expected to take on parental responsibilities for individuals at Tang Hall Community Centre.

A good practice response on discovering an unaccompanied child / vulnerable adult on the premises is to:

Try to avoid being left alone with a child / vulnerable adult. Try to ensure colleagues are present when you are dealing with unaccompanied children / vulnerable adults.

Try to establish whether the child / vulnerable adult is allowed by the parent / carer to come and go alone.

If you are satisfied that the child / vulnerable adult is allowed to come and go alone, then allow the child / vulnerable adult to leave. If you gather this information only from the child / vulnerable adult then you will need to use your judgment to ascertain whether the child / vulnerable adult is competent to leave alone.

Ask the child / vulnerable adult if s/he is expecting to be collected by an adult. Even if the child / vulnerable adult is expecting to be collected soon, do not wait until closing time before taking the next step. Try to contact the parent or carer. Ask the child / vulnerable adult for an address or telephone number.

Relevant factors may be:

Whether the individual exhibits signs of nervousness

Whether the individual appears to clearly understand your questions

Whether the individual seems physically capable

Whether the individual appears to know clearly and readily where he or she lives

How far the journey is

Whether you know of any particular hazards on the journey

The individual's age and vulnerability

If you are in doubt, encourage the child / vulnerable adult to remain on the premises until you have been able to contact a parent or carer. Children under 10 years of age should not normally be allowed to leave alone unless you know that in the particular case the parent / carer allows it.

6. Related Documents

Working Together to Safeguard Children, JULY 2018

City of York Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Service: Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers Practice Guidance

7. Authorisation

Approved by the Board of Trustees, Tang Hall Community Centre on:

Signed on behalf and in the presence of the Board of Trustees:

Appendix One

Tang Hall Community Centre

Acceptance of Safeguarding Policy and Related Documents

Name: _____

I have completed my safeguarding induction and training at Tang Hall Community Centre and have understood the information provided. I accept my responsibilities as set out in this Safeguarding Policy and agree to comply with requirements at all times. I understand that if I do not follow procedure I may not be allowed to continue in my role and/or my hire agreement may be terminated.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix Two

Reporting child abuse

If you're concerned about a child or young person, you must contact the MASH team. If there are immediate concerns about the safety of a child, you should contact North Yorkshire Police on 999

Contact MASH Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm:

- telephone - 01904 551900
- email - mash@york.gov.uk

Contact MASH Early Help Team to make an early help referral or access advice:

- telephone - 01904 551900
- email - earlyhelp@york.gov.uk

Outside office hours, at weekends and on public holidays, contact the emergency duty team

- telephone - 01609 780780
- email - edt@northyorks.gov.uk

More information can be found on the City of York Safeguarding Children partnership website.

Children's Services Team

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Team

West Offices, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA

Telephone: 01904 551900

Email: mash@york.gov.uk