

Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policy Review Committee

Chairman **Mike Burrows**

Secretary **Tracey Crutchley**

Section 1 – Introduction

This policy concerns the protection from abuse of vulnerable adults who may be employees, volunteers or students at the Windmill Hill Forum & Telematics Centre. Section 4 of this document contains a definition of a vulnerable adult and what constitutes abuse.

Employees, volunteers and students are made aware of the existence of this policy and have open access to it:

- On paper in a folder in the Telematics Centre
- Electronically on the Forum website at www.whcf.org.uk/policies

This policy is reviewed annually and may be revised at any time in response to feedback from students, tutors, and external organisations.

Section 2 – Policy Statement

Windmill Hill Forum & Telematics Centre will not tolerate any abuse of vulnerable adults whether they are employees, volunteers or students.

The aims of this policy are:

- To make employees, volunteers and students aware of the kind of behaviour that constitutes abuse, ill treatment, or unfairness. (See Section 4).
- To encourage employees, volunteers or students to speak out against any occasion of such behaviour either experienced or witnessed.
- All suspected or alleged cases of abuse will be thoroughly investigated.
- To set out the procedure to be followed should there be a suspected case of abuse.
- To ensure information about an alleged abuse will be shared only on a 'need to know' basis and treated in the strictest confidence.
- The alleged abuser's right to confidentiality will be upheld.

Section 3 – Procedure

If an employee, volunteer or student believes they have experienced or witnessed abuse of a vulnerable adult at the Windmill Hill Forum & Telematics Centre then they must:

1. Report the incident as soon as possible to a Manager or Tutor who will then report it to the Chairman of Windmill Hill Community Forum.
2. Write down, if possible, an account of the incident to help with the investigation.

The Chairman of Windmill Hill Community Forum will then:

1. Make a preliminary investigation into the incident.
2. Call a meeting of the trustees to discuss the situation and decide what action is necessary.
3. If appropriate, the chairman will pass on the results of his investigation to the relevant and appropriate bodies.
4. Keep the student and alleged abuser informed of all action taken and the conclusion reached.
5. Inform the alleged abuser of their right to appeal.

Section 4 – Definitions

Vulnerable Adult

“A person who is 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 against significant harm or exploitation.”

1997 consultation paper “Who Decides?” issued by the Lord Chancellor’s Department.

Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons. (See also Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights.)

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, sexual, verbal or psychological; it may be an act of neglect, or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to or exploitation of the person subjected to it.

As a result of abuse harm is done which results in psychological, physical, or emotional damage to a person from whom they need care and support to recover.

Physical abuse

Any deliberate act which causes physical harm including, hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication or restraint, or the use of inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual abuse

Includes rape and sexual assault, or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or to which he or she could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Also includes the exposure to and observation of sexual acts without informed consent.

Psychological abuse

Includes the following, emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse

Includes theft, fraud, or exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance, or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Neglect or acts of omission

Includes ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health or social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, nutrition and heating.

Discriminatory abuse

Includes racist, religious and sexist abuse, abuse based on a person’s disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Institutional abuse

Mistreatment or abuse by a regime or the individuals within an institution.

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Reviewed by Mike Burrows

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