

Wolverhampton LGBT+

Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults' policy

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Wolverhampton LGBT+ (WLGBT+) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

The management team have adopted this safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults' policy and expects every adult working or volunteering to support and comply with it. Consequently, this policy shall apply to all staff, managers, volunteers, or anyone working on behalf of WLGBT+.

WLGBT+ considers the safety and wellbeing of young people and vulnerable adults as central to its values. We accept our responsibility for providing guidance and support to all. We require risk assessments on all people looking to take a role in providing guidance and support to young people and vulnerable adults and take seriously all concerns regarding their wellbeing or protection from abuse.

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults, and this is no less the case for WLGBT+. Some concerns may relate to a young person or vulnerable adult's general wellbeing, rather than due to them being subject to abuse. WLGBT+ accepts its role in supporting communities with offering assistance to those individuals.

What is Abuse?

Abuse is a term used to describe the ways in which young people and vulnerable adults may be harmed by others.

It can happen inside and outside the home, but wherever it happens, everyone has a responsibility to act to protect the young person or vulnerable adult from harm. Abuse results in harm to a young person or vulnerable adults' physical, mental or emotional health and/or development.

It can be committed by an adult or another child and be by the way of the act or as failure to act. You don't have to decide whether there has been any form of abuse, but you need to report the concern so that others can make the necessary decisions.

Types of abuse

In the United Kingdom, there are various forms of abuse, including but not limited to:

1. Domestic Abuse: It involves controlling, coercive, threatening, or violent behavior within an intimate or family relationship. It can include physical, emotional, sexual, or financial abuse as well as so-called 'honour' based abuse.
2. Child Abuse: This refers to the maltreatment of a child, which can include physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or exposure to harmful situations, including female genital mutilation (FGM).

3. Elder Abuse: It involves any form of mistreatment or neglect of an older person, including physical, emotional, financial, or sexual abuse, or abandonment.
4. Physical Abuse: This may include slapping, kicking, hitting, pushing, biting, burning, misuse of restraint, misuse of medication or sanctions that are inappropriate.
5. Sexual Abuse: This refers to any non-consensual sexual activity, including rape, assault, harassment, or exploitation.
6. Financial Abuse: It involves controlling or exploiting someone's financial resources without their consent, often by restricting access to money, stealing, or pressuring them into financial decisions.
7. Psychological or Emotional Abuse: This form of abuse includes behaviors that manipulate, intimidate, humiliate, or isolate an individual, causing emotional distress or mental harm.
8. Online Abuse: With the increasing use of digital platforms, online abuse has become a significant concern. It includes cyberbullying, harassment, stalking, or any form of harmful communication online.
9. Modern slavery: Includes slavery, human trafficking, forced labour, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and forced marriage.
10. Discriminatory abuse: May include homophobic, transphobic, racist, ageist, sexist remarks, or comments based on a person's disability or impairment, and other forms of slurs, harassment or similar treatment.
11. Organisational abuse: Involves the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to adults or children. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour that amounts to discrimination through prejudice, ignorance, stereotypes and thoughtlessness. It includes the failure to ensure necessary safeguards are in place to protect children and adults and maintain good standards of support in accordance with individual needs, including training for staff and volunteers, record keeping and liaising with other providers of support.
12. Neglect or acts of omission: Includes ignoring medical, physical, emotional or psychological needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social or educational services, the withholding of necessities such as medication, food and drink and heating.
13. Self-neglect: Involves an extreme lack of self-care which can include hoarding, threatens personal health and safety, neglect to care for personal hygiene, health or surroundings, inability to avoid harm, failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs, inability or unwillingness to manage own personal affairs.

Signs of abuse may vary depending on the type, but some common indicators can include:

- Physical injuries such as bruises, cuts, or unexplained marks.
- Changes in behaviour or personality, such as withdrawal, anxiety, or fearfulness.
- Frequent absences from work, school, or social activities.
- Sudden changes in financial circumstances, such as unexplained depletion of savings or assets.
- Social isolation or limited contact with family and friends.
- Unexplained changes in mood or appearance.
- Fear of a particular person or reluctance to talk about certain topics.
- Signs of distress in children, such as behavioural problems, aggression, or excessive fear.
- Inappropriate or unusual sexual behaviour or knowledge in children.

What to do if someone talks of taking their own life

If someone talks about taking their own life, it is crucial to take their words seriously and respond with care. Here are some steps you can take to help:

1. Stay calm and listen: Give the person your undivided attention and let them express their feelings. Avoid judgmental or dismissive responses.
2. Show empathy: Let the person know that you care and are there to support them. Express your concern for their well-being and reassure them that they are not alone.



3. Ask directly about suicide: Although it may feel uncomfortable, it is important to ask the person if they are thinking about suicide. This can open up a conversation and allow them to share their thoughts and feelings.
4. Encourage professional help: Suggest that the person seeks professional help by contacting their general practitioner (GP) or a mental health helpline. In the UK, they can call the Samaritans helpline at 116 123 or contact the NHS 111 service for urgent assistance. Wolverhampton LGBT+ can arrange counselling for the person if required. If the person accepts then please refer to the counselling referral form on our website www.wolverhamptonlgbt.org, offering support in completing the form should they need it.
5. Involve professionals in emergencies: If you believe the person is in immediate danger or has already taken steps to harm themselves, call emergency services (999).
6. Contact the safeguarding leads immediately expressing your concerns
7. Complete a WLGBT+ safeguarding concern reporting document

Remember, your role is to provide support and encourage professional help. It is essential to take any mention of suicide seriously, as it can be a sign of an underlying mental health issue.

Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults at events / activities

Events and/or sessions are held within a variety of commercial buildings and community settings and include;

- Those open to adults
- Those open to young people accompanied by appropriate adults

Both events and activities are to be defined broadly to include occasions where WLGBT+ will be providing a service

Disclosure and barring

WLGBT+ offers the following activities/services for adults and occasionally young people under the age of 18:

- Group wellbeing, health, education and social sessions or events
- Occasional one to one conversation for young people (supervised) and adults (potentially unsupervised) who require individual advice. Where possible we will endeavour to have two members of staff present to safeguard the wellbeing of the client and the member of staff.

All of the activities therefore require staff (voluntary or paid) to undergo enhanced DBS and/or police checks under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. All staff and volunteers partaking in any arranged activities or those coming into contact with young people or vulnerable adults will be required to undergo enhanced level DBS/police checks prior to taking lead on any event or session.

We also ask that staff and volunteers disclose any matters or conflicts which may affect either their working with the company or with any individuals, groups or establishments (historic or current), this is to include anything which may affect the reputation of WLGBT+ or any of its staff.

The team will review all allegations in confidence (respecting anonymity) and the likely risk to children and adults and, if appropriate, will consider banning the worker/volunteer from future events or revoking their agreement, but only in full accordance with the rules and procedures of WLGBT+.



Whistleblowing

It is good practice and a duty of care to draw attention to poor practice within an organisation. This includes practice that may be abusive and/or neglectful. Staff or volunteers who support adults at risk and children have an individual responsibility to raise concerns with someone who has the responsibility to take action. Sometimes it may be necessary to go outside the immediate organisation, for example social services or police.

It is the responsibility of all organisations to promote a culture which values good practice and encourages whistleblowing. More information is in our whistleblowing policy.

Wolverhampton LGBT+ Safeguarding leads

The team will take very seriously any allegation of impropriety on the part of any member of the WLGBT+ team (voluntary or paid). Any member of WLGBT+ who discovers anything amiss should get in touch immediately with either:

Safeguarding lead - Kelly Walker-Reed 07813664197 kelly@wolverhamptonlgbt.org

Safeguarding officer- Kate Tingle 07470 650823 kate@wolverhamptonlgbt.org

Health and Safety aspects of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Before starting any event for young people and adults, the team will carry out a risk assessment and then take steps to minimise all risks to health and safety. Parents/carers, young people and adults will be made aware of those risks, and of all steps to be taken. The team will keep a record of all risk assessments.

Sufficient staff must be present at any event to enable one member of staff to deal with an emergence while another member of staff supervises others not directly affected by the emergency.

Policy on prevention of bullying

We will not tolerate bullying.

If an incident of bullying should arise at a WLGBT+ event, those involved will be separated immediately and, if appropriate, any supervisors of those involved will be asked to deal with the matter. WLGBT+ staff reserve the right to stop/cancel any event where it is apparent that bullying is taking place.

Photographing participants

No photographs will be taken or published of service users (young people or adults) unless prior written permission is sought from the person or a person with parental responsibility. If any person has any concerns regarding any person taking photos at an event / activity, that person should contact WLGBT+ immediately.

Social media, email and other contact

WLGBT+ hold a presence on the following social media platforms; Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, these are monitored and managed by Kelly Walker-Reed and marketing company Super Digital.

Content posted on any of the above channels is inclusive, non-judgemental and non-threatening. Messages and comments are reviewed daily to ensure that all information is suitable for a wide audience, including young people. Should staff or volunteers notice anything that does not comply with the above then they should contact the social media manager as mentioned above immediately.



Any participants of activities arranged by WLGBT+ should be given official WLGBT+ social media details should they request them. It is not appropriate to give any participants personal social media details. Likewise, should you be contacted by participants via social media then they should be directed to WLGBT+'s official social media channels. We ask that staff/volunteers do not accept "friend" or "follow" requests from anyone who has participated in WLGBT+ activities on their own social media in order to safeguard the staff member/volunteer and the other person (Young person or adult), we also ask that should they continue to make contact then it is reported it to Kelly Walker-Reed or Kate Tingle immediately.

WLGBT+'s email address is info@wolverhamptonlgbt.org, this is the only email address that should be supplied to participants. It is not appropriate to supply personal email addresses.

Our current company telephone number is 07824 031187, this is the only number which should be supplied to participants should they request it. It is not appropriate to supply personal telephone numbers.

Any breaches to the above will be dealt with as a serious matter, this may result in suspension from activities and/or the charity and potential reporting to appropriate agencies should the matter be deemed serious.

Legal Framework

This policy and the guidance which supports it, complies with legislation and will be updated to reflect any changes in law. Statutory guidance takes precedence over WLGBT+'s policy and we will always work within the requirements of the National Safeguarding Children Board and the Police.

The relevant legislation includes:

- The Children's Acts 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Police Acts
- Data Protection Acts 1994 and 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2010
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – Department of Health 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

In cases of concern

Should you have any concerns about those that you are working with you should, in the first instance, make sure that the person is safe, if this means calling emergency services including police then please do so immediately before anything else.

You would then make contact with the safeguarding lead Kelly Walker-Reed or if unavailable safeguarding officer Kate Tingle. Safeguarding officers may ask that you contact Wolverhampton Safeguarding Service as the reporting person.

All safeguarding information should be dealt with in a confidential manner and shared only with safeguarding officers/official agencies. Your concerns would then be documented using the appropriate form and sent to info@wolverhamptonlgbt.org

In Wolverhampton the safeguarding service details can be found at:
www.wolverhamptonsafeguarding.org.uk



REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER 1193696

Concerns about an adult (including yourself)

If you are suffering abuse, or you know or suspect some else is being abused call us on:

- Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm, Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm **01902 551199**
- For emergencies out of hours **01902 552999**
- If immediate action is needed dial **999**

It is better to report abuse over the phone so that our officers can take the necessary information. You can make a report anonymously by telephone.

You can also report abuse using their **E-MARF** form. All fields will need to be completed as they may need to get in touch with you for further details.

All safeguarding concerns are considered by managers and if appropriate they will be uploaded to the secure Guardian system where the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will triage and determine which agencies need to be contacted.

Concerns about a child or young person (including yourself)

If a child is in immediate danger of serious harm or has been left alone dial 999 and let the operator know that it is a possible child protection issue.

If the child **is not** in immediate danger of serious harm but you know or suspect they are being abused or neglected call us:

- Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm, Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm on **01902 555392**
- Outside of the above hours for emergencies on **01902 552999**
- If the child or young person is at **immediate risk of serious harm dial 999**

If you suspect or believe a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, including any form of mistreatment or abuse, you should report your concerns.

Organisations should report their concerns by phone or by completing the **Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF)**. If you work for an organisation, and initially report a concern by phone, you must always complete the online MARF within 1 hour of any phone call preferably after having spoken with your organisation's Named Safeguarding Children Lead.