



Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons Policy Document for Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre

October 2022

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the operational policy and to establish clear procedures for dealing with all aspects in relation to Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse at West Cork Arts Centre.

Our Adult Protection Policy Statement

Working with older people in residential care and people with disabilities is central to our participatory programme. West Cork Arts Centre believes that, regardless of our age and ability, it is our right to participate in the artistic and cultural life of our country in whatever way we may choose.

We at West Cork Arts Centre are committed to practice, which protects vulnerable adults from harm while they are with the staff, visiting artists, facilitators and volunteers in this organisation.

West Cork Arts Centre is committed to supporting the right of adults at risk to be protected from abuse and to making sure all staff, visiting artists and volunteers work together, in line with our and national Policy, and act promptly when dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

We think that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone. We will work together to prevent and minimise abuse. If we have concerns that someone is being abused our loyalty to the vulnerable person is paramount.

Review History

West Cork Arts Centre is committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at regular intervals. WCAC will provide bi-annual Adult Protection training for our artists/facilitators team and staff.

Definitions

Persons affected by this policy include staff, artists, facilitators, volunteers, trainees and Centre users.

The definition of a vulnerable adult is a person over the age of 18 years who:

- Is or may be in need of / eligible for Community Care Services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness
- AND is unable to take care of him / herself
- OR is unable to protect him / herself from significant harm or exploitation.

A vulnerable person may fall into any one of the following groups: older and frail people; people with a mental health need, a learning difficulty, a physical impairment, a sensory impairment; people who are substance or alcohol dependent; or family carers providing assistance to another vulnerable adult.

Definitions of Abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other persons(s) or group of people.

Abuse may be single or repeated acts. It can be:

- Physical: for example, hitting, slapping, burning, pushing, restraining or giving the wrong medication.
- Psychological and emotional: for example, shouting, swearing, frightening, blaming, ignoring or humiliating a person, threats of harm or abandonment, intimidation, verbal abuse.
- Financial: including the illegal or unauthorised use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance.
- Sexual: such as forcing a person to take part in any sexual activity without his or her informed consent – this can occur in any relationship.
- Discriminatory: including racist or sexist remarks or comments based on a person's disability, age or illness, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment. This also includes stopping someone from being involved in religious or cultural activity, services or support networks;
- Institutional: the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to vulnerable people. This includes a failure to ensure the necessary safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable adults and maintain good standards of care in accordance with individual needs, including training of staff, supervision and management, record keeping and liaising with other providers of care.
- Neglect and acts of omission: including ignoring medical or physical care needs. These can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer or self-neglect by the vulnerable person: for example, where a person is deprived of food, heat, clothing, comfort or essential medication, or failing to provide access to appropriate health or social care services.

Concerns about or evidence of abuse can come to us through:

1. A direct disclosure by the vulnerable adult.
2. A complaint or expression of concern by another staff, visiting artist, facilitator or volunteer, another service user, a carer, a member of the public or relative.
3. An observation of the behaviour of the vulnerable adult by staff, visiting artist, facilitator or volunteer

West Cork Arts Centre is committed to:

Adopting protection and best practice guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff, facilitators, artists and volunteers.

- Responding effectively to any circumstances giving grounds for concern, or where formal complaints or expressions of anxiety are expressed.
- Ensuring an inclusive approach to onsite activities
- Working with our health partners to ensure our policies, procedures and practices stay up to date with good practice and the law in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- Following careful procedures for recruitment and selection of staff, facilitators and volunteers.

- Ensuring that artists who are working with vulnerable people are at all times supported by a Carer or other suitably trained person.
- Ensuring that important safety and contact information is available at point of booking and artists, staff read and check this.

NOTE: In this document the term 'staff, visiting artists, facilitators and volunteers, unless otherwise indicated, includes both core WCAC employees and those whose services are engaged on a short-term basis such as artists, practitioners, facilitators.

Code of Behaviour*

***Core staff should refer to General Code of Behaviour for more details**

Partnership and inter-agency working

When working with partners offsite, in an inter-group situation, WCAC will make clear arrangements to ensure a suitable partner policy is in place.

Partnership arrangements will be made in respect of roles and responsibilities of artist, staff, volunteers in healthcare setting, ensuring there is no cross over of roles with care professionals (eg. serving refreshments, moving people, dealing with challenging behaviour)

Supervision

Use of Images/Video Footage of Vulnerable Persons

WCAC is conscious of the responsibility it has for ensuring any images/video footage of Young and vulnerable people are used in a safe and responsible manner that does not put any person at risk. Photographs and visual images are regarded as personal data under the Data Protection Acts 1998/2003. Therefore all images must be obtained fairly and used only for one or more specified legal purpose.

WCAC has developed the following policy on use of images/footage

Images/footage of young people will only be recorded if there is a valid reason relating to WCAC programme.

- Consent for the use of images/footage is sought from person participating on WCAC events. Notices making aware our use of photography for promotional and publicity purposes are strategically placed throughout the building advising centre users of our policy.
- A refusal of permission will not restrict the participation on a WCAC programme.
- Images taken using mobile phones should be transferred to a WCAC computer as soon as possible and should not be retained on the mobile phone.
- Participants and primary carers are verbally informed in advance as to the specific uses of any images/footage and as to whether they will be provided to third parties. WCAC will only use images/footage for the reasons specified.
- Every precaution will be taken to ensure no image/footage used may expose any participant to

embarrassment or distress.

- WCAC only provides images/footage to third parties when there is a legitimate reason for doing so e.g. distributing images to the media when promoting a programme or WCAC event being featured as part of a wider event such as Skibbereen Arts Festival. We may share images with funders for non-commercial purposes where the funder has adequate policies in place.
- WCAC will only identify/provide names of individual persons to third parties in a situation where they are being publicly acknowledged e.g. a local newspaper. Consent from person and primary carer will be sought.
- When using images/footage WCAC will not provide information that could be used to make contact a vulnerable person.
- Images/footage will only be used in the context in which they were captured.
- Information such as date taken, names, context of images, and whether consent was provided will be stored with images that are retained.
- Any misuse of WCAC images/footage should be reported to the WCAC Designated Person or Director.
- If any individual is unhappy with the manner in which an image/footage is obtained, used or retained by WCAC, they should follow WCAC's Complaints Procedure. Any such complaint will be taken very seriously and procedures will be followed in full.
- While WCAC cannot completely control and regulate the taking of photos or video footage at its events by participants or members of the public, we request that any such images/footage are not made available in the public sphere, are used in a way that is appropriate and are kept within the context in which they were captured.

Procedures and Reporting Concerns

West Cork Arts Centre will designate a person responsible. A confidential record book will be available to make notes of any incidents or accidents. Details should include what was said, when, where it occurred, who was present and what, if any action was taken as a result. This record will be signed and kept confidential, in a secure place with the Designated Person, for safekeeping and access. It is important that facts, not opinions are recorded as soon as possible after the incident. The book will also contain emergency numbers and relevant contacts.

Designated Person:

Justine Foster
Programme Manager, Uillinn: West Cork Arts Centre, Skibbereen, Co. Cork.
Tel: 028 22090 or 086 1937754

Responsibilities:

- a source of advice and information on Safeguarding issues
- co-ordinating action within the West Cork Arts Centre
- for liaising with Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of child abuse and informal consultation
- hold and maintain a record book
- review the policy bi-annually or if legislation changes

Deputy Designated Person:

Board Member Aisling Roche, Spain, Baltimore, Co.Cork Tel: 086 8244584

Responsibilities:

- In the event of Designated not being available the Deputy may act in their place.
- Communicate to the board their responsibilities in relation to the Policy

All staff, facilitators and volunteers hold a collective responsibility for carrying out this policy and for making sure reasonable measures are taken to ensure all vulnerable persons who attend the WCAC are safe.

Review date: October 2024

General Reporting Procedures

- A record should be made by the CP Designated Person
- Consultation with the Deputy CP Designated Person may be required
- The Director would be notified of the report
- If necessary a report would be made by telephone, meeting or writing to Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána by the CP Designated Person/s.
- At this point the Director would notify the Board of Management, Chairperson and Designated board member.
- Liaisons would continue with Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána.
- The WCAC Solicitor would be contacted if relevant.

Contacts:

West Cork Social Work Department 028 40447 (Monday – Friday, 9am to 5pm) Sergeant in charge, Garda Síochána 023 21570 (out of office hours) or 028 23088 Maureen Crowley, Children First Information & Advice Officer 021 4529010

The following examples would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- A specific indication that a person was abused
- A statement from a person who witnessed abuse
- An illness, injury or behaviour consistent with abuse
- Constant signs of neglect over a period of time
- A symptom which may not in itself be totally consistent with abuse, but which is supported by corroborative evidence of deliberate harm or neglect

In the event of a a member of staff, visiting artists, facilitator or volunteer observing signs of abuse the

following procedure will apply:

1. the observer will report to the Designated Person.
2. a record will be made of any incidents or accidents
3. a report will be made if appropriate following the General Reporting Procedure

In the event of a vulnerable person making a disclosure to a member of staff, visiting artist, facilitator or volunteer the following procedure will apply:

1. the observer will report to the Designated Person.
2. a record will be made of any incidents or accidents
3. a report will be made if appropriate following the General Reporting Procedure

If a person discloses it is important to:

- ☐ listen and not question
- ☐ offer reassurance not promises
- ☐ take the person seriously and don't delay in acting
- ☐ not to over react, remain calm
- ☐ explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell

In the event of a complaint or allegation being made against a member of staff, visiting artists, facilitator or volunteer the following procedure will apply:

- Both the alleged abuser and the person who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality.
- ☐ The first priority is to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. Action will be taken proportionate to the level of risk. Appropriate changes should be made to the programme to protect and not penalise the worker financially or otherwise, unless necessary to protect the child.
- ☐ a written report will be requested from the complainant by the Designated Person
- ☐ the Designated Person will inform WCAC Director of the allegation and make a full detailed report
- ☐ the Director is responsible for informing the worker of the allegation and the nature of the allegation
- ☐ the employee has a right to respond. This response should be recorded and passed on in the case of a report being made to the HSE and Garda Síochána
- ☐ the Director is responsible for providing support for the member of staff to avoid victimisation and to give advice on procedure
- ☐ the Centre's solicitor will be contacted and a close liaison with both the HSE and Garda Síochána will be continued
- ☐ appropriate disciplinary procedure would follow if necessary

Complaints procedure for Primary Carer:

- ☐ referred to the Designated Person

- a written complaint would be requested or verbal complaint can be transcribed in the event of the complainant having literacy limitation.
- a record of the complaint would be made

Recruitment and Selection

When recruiting staff and arts facilitators for the programme, West Cork Arts Centre will commit to exploring the candidates' experience and attitude.

Applicants for permanent positions should:

- supply a full current C.V. of past and present work, experience, qualifications or skills relevant to the post
- Attend an interview with a member of staff, Board member and third person
- Give contact details for two referees or written references which can be followed up by a telephone call
- Make a declaration of any, or no, past criminal record
- Supply documentation to confirm identity of the applicant e.g. driving licence
- Write a letter of motivation where appropriate
- All accepted applicants must obtain Garda Clearance. WCAC will fulfil this process

Applicants for temporary or freelance contracts positions should:

- supply a full current C.V. of past and present work, experience, qualifications or skills relevant to the post
- Attend an interview with one or two member of staff
- Give contact details for two referees or written references which can be followed up by a telephone call
- Make a declaration of any, or no, past criminal record
- Supply documentation to confirm identity of the applicant e.g. driving licence
- Write a letter of motivation where appropriate
- All accepted applicants must obtain Garda Clearance. WCAC will fulfil this process

Staff Support and Training

Current staff will be given a copy of the policy documents and relevant training in procedures via staff meetings. The document will be reviewed and updated regularly. Any new members of staff will be given copies of the policy documents as part of an induction process.

WCAC Project Assistant (CE Scheme) will attend training to support the delivery of the policy

The Designated Person will attend training to support and review the policy documents and to disseminate this information.

Sharing Information

West Cork Arts Centre will publicise, and make information available to participants and carer about the type of activities, the facilities available, brief information on facilitators experience, enrolment procedures, the policy documents and members of staff.

For Accidents Procedure

In the event of an accident the following procedures must be undertaken:

- Staff trained in first aid must assess the seriousness of the accident and take appropriate action. Medical centre, hospital and local Garda contact numbers are available from front of house or out of hours in the 5th floor office
- If the accident is serious i.e. cannot be treated by staff and First Aid provisions at Uillinn, primary carers must be notified, and alternative medical attention must be sought.
- An accident report form must be completed by a staff member that witnessed the event.
- The Designated Person, Director and Health and Safety Officer must be briefed of any accidents that occur at the centre.
- An accident log book is available at Front of House
- Events preceding the accident and any other persons involved must be noted along with the actions taken.
- A First Aid box is available in the workspace, Performance space, Front of House and 5th floor office.

The following staff members have completed occupational First Aid training:

See: Stephen Canty (Health and Safety Officer)

I, on behalf of the Board of West Cork Arts Centre, understand the implications of the Adult Protection Policy and agree to its implementation.

Signed: 

Date: 19 October 2022

Name: Aisling Roche

Position Held: Chairperson, West Cork Arts Centre Board