

COMBE READING ROOM (2005) TRUST

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

1. Introduction

The law requires any organisation that has contact with young people and/or vulnerable adults to take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to their welfare are minimised, and where there are concerns, to share them with other local agencies.

The relevant legal requirements arise from:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Combe Reading Room (2005) Trust recognises that the safety and welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is the responsibility of everyone.

Trustees and other volunteers mainly come into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults at coffee mornings and annual cream tea events organised by the Trust. General contact takes place in the public spaces of the Reading Room and garden facilities.

Independent organisations and private individuals hiring the Reading Room may organise events for children and/or vulnerable adults. The responsibility for ensuring the safety of children or vulnerable adults at these events rests with the individual or organisation hiring the facilities. The trustees will endeavour to keep the premises safe for use by children and vulnerable adults.

The Trust recognise that it is not the role of our organisation to decide whether or not a child or vulnerable adult has been abused. This is the role of the Social Services department, who have legal responsibility, or the NSPCC, who have powers to investigate child protection concerns under the Children Act. However, we are committed to undertaking responsibility, within our remit, to maintaining a safe environment for volunteers and users, and to responding to concerns appropriately. This policy applies to all users of the Reading Room and garden facilities.

2. Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding good practice in an organisation to ensure the protection of children and/or vulnerable adults wherever possible.

Abuse involves inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Trustees and volunteers should respond to any concerns they may have regarding the physical, sexual, emotional or psychological safety of a vulnerable person, or concerns relating to discriminatory or financial violation, or exploitation/harassment of a vulnerable person.

A child is defined as someone under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who: is elderly and frail; has a mental illness, including dementia; has a physical or sensory disability; has a learning disability; has a severe physical illness; is a substance misuser; is homeless.

3. Responsibilities and reporting procedures

Combe Reading Room (2005) Trust is a registered charity, and all trustees are volunteers. There are no volunteers who are charged with the care of others. The trustees do not organise activities for children, although children may attend family events with parents/carers.

We expect all trustees to provide an environment where vulnerable adults and children can be safe, and to promote good safeguarding practice.

The Trust recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against trustees, volunteers and other users of the Reading Room. All trustees have responsibility, in the first instance, to pass on any welfare concerns to the Secretary of the Combe Reading Room (2005) Trust (the Designated Person for Safeguarding), or, if appropriate, another trustee.

If an incident is reported, the following procedure applies:

- Obtain and record information from the person expressing the concern;
- Assess the information quickly and carefully, and ask for further clarification as appropriate;
- Seek medical attention if necessary, and/or make a referral to a statutory child protection agency or the police without delay, depending on the particular circumstances;
- If in any doubt as to what to do, seek advice from Social Services;
- Maintain confidentiality as far as possible, subject to the principle that the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult is paramount. This means that information may have to be shared (but only with people who need to know about it).

A permanent confidential record will be kept of any report by the Secretary to the Combe Reading Room (2005) Trust.

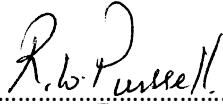
Reports of suspicions or allegations of abuse or a serious incident are to be sent to the appropriate contact as soon as possible, either: Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board, or the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, as appropriate.

This safeguarding policy and procedure will be brought to the attention of trustees, volunteers and users at each AGM, and reviewed annually at the first committee meeting of the trustees following the AGM.

4. Approach to be taken in event of a complaint

The Trust recognises the importance of being alert to signs of abuse and the difficulty individuals may have in reporting it. To assist in responding appropriately to a complaint, we suggest the following strategy for anyone who is made aware of a concern:

- Listen carefully;
- Reassure the child or person involved that this matter will be disclosed only to those who need to know about it, and that they are doing the right thing in telling you;
- Avoid asking leading questions;
- Write down what has been said, with date and time and any names mentioned;
- Tell the child/person what you are going to do next, i.e. in the first instance, report the matter to the appropriate person concerned with safeguarding.

Chair, on behalf of the trustees: 

Date: 13. 01. 2019