

## **DH Associates**

### **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy**

#### **Principles**

DH Associates Ltd is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of children/ young people and vulnerable adults and ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect. The company will strive to provide a safe learning environment for any learners, particularly those who are under the age of 18 years or are identified as vulnerable adults. This policy and procedure are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children/ young people and vulnerable adults is of primary concern.
- All children/young people and vulnerable adults have a right to safeguarding from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the responsibility of the statutory authorities to conduct an investigation.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

#### **Responsibility**

The Managing Director is responsible for the oversight of the company's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult's Policy. Managers are responsible for ensuring all staff are informed of the policy at induction and understand their responsibilities for reporting concerns.

The Learning & Quality Manager is the Designated Safeguarding Officer with responsibility for issues arising under this policy.

Sub contractors will be required to comply with this policy.

All employees of the company and subcontractors and learners are required to take shared responsibility for the safeguarding and safety of children/ young people and vulnerable adults.

#### **Training**

Training for all employees on this policy will be included in the induction for all staff and an annual update on the policy will be included in Senior Manager and Team meetings. Employees working with learners or in services for vulnerable adults or children will be required to attend mandatory training on safeguarding and keep this training up to date.

## **Partnership**

DH Associates will work in partnership with local safeguarding boards and statutory agencies in relation to any investigation under these procedures.

## **Definition of Abuse**

Abuse is any behaviour towards a child/ young person or vulnerable adult that deliberately or unknowingly causes harm, endangers life or violates their rights. Abuse may be physical, sexual, psychological, financial, neglect.

## **Definition of Vulnerable Adult**

A vulnerable adult is defined as 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 or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation” (Department of Health 2000)

## **Definition of a Child**

A child is a person who has not yet reached the age of 18.

## **Employees**

All employees of the company and its subcontractors are in positions of trust with learners and external employers. Staff at all times need to be aware of this and act accordingly.

The company has a process in place to check the suitability of staff to work with learners or to deliver learning in settings where there are children/young people or vulnerable adults. On application employees complete a declaration and disclosure form detailing any offences. Prior to commencing a DBS check is made on new employees. New employees may start employment whilst awaiting clearance but restrictions will apply to direct contact with children of vulnerable adults.

All employees must report any criminal offences subsequent to their employment to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

All subcontractors must demonstrate that they apply the same checks to their employees and make checks available to DH Associates Designated Safeguarding Officer when required.

It should be noted that whilst a young person can consent to sexual activity once they reach the age of 16, the Sexual offences (amendment) Act 2000 makes it a criminal offence for a person to engage in any kind of sexual activity with a person under 18 where the adult is in a position of trust. All employees must consider themselves in a position of trust with learners under the age of 18 years.

## **Safe Learning Environment**

A safe learning environment is one:

- In which the health, safety and welfare of learners has been assessed and any special needs identified and catered for.
- In which staff are alive to the possibility of abuse and take measures to prevent that possibility.
- Where there is a sound and known reporting system for any incident
- Where staff take reasonable and practical precautions to avoid any suspicions of abuse being brought against them.

## **Children/ Young People Safeguarding Procedures**

- DH Associates Limited has a Designated Safeguarding Officer with the lead role for child safeguarding issues. This is Quality Assurance Coordinator and Contracts Manager, Caroline Murphy.
- Subcontractors will have to report any concerns to Caroline Murphy and must have a named lead officer with responsibility for safeguarding.
- Any employee who observes, has a disclosure or suspects abuse of children/ young people within services they are delivering learning in must report their concerns to the manager of that service and to the company's Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Any employee who observes, has a disclosure or suspects abuse of a learner under the age of 18 years must report their concerns to the learner's manager and to the company's Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will be keep a record of all such incidents and will ensure concerns are investigated.
- All staff should be aware that in accordance with statutory requirements where child safeguarding issues are involved, it is not possible to offer confidentiality to a person under 18 as any disclosures must be reported.

## **Vulnerable Adults**

- DH Associates Limited has a Designated Safeguarding Officer with the lead role for vulnerable adult safeguarding issues. This is Quality Assurance Coordinator and Contracts Manager, Caroline Murphy.
- Subcontractors will have to report any concerns to Caroline Murphy and must have a named lead officer with responsibility for safeguarding
- Any employee who observes, has a disclosure or suspects abuse of vulnerable adults within services they are delivering learning in must report their concerns to the manager of that service and to the company's Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Any employee who observes, has a disclosure or suspects abuse of a learner who is a vulnerable adult must report their concerns to the learner's manager and to the company's Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will be keep a record of all such incidents and will ensure concerns are investigated.

- Where possible DH Associates Limited will identify vulnerable adults and ensure that the appropriate support measures in place. This is most likely to be when the candidate presents to, or is referred to and clearly has mental health difficulties or a disability that puts them into the legal definition of 'vulnerable'.
- Any employee of DH Associates Limited with concerns regarding a candidate whom they believe or know to be vulnerable must contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

### **Role of the Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding Officer**

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer and Lead Officer for subcontractors is:

- To receive information from any employees who have child or vulnerable adult safeguarding concerns and record it.
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying and obtaining more information about the matter appropriate.
- Consult initially with the manager of the service where the concerns have occurred to ensure the concern has been reported and clarify the agency responsible for investigation.
- Make a formal referral to a statutory child safeguarding agency or the police.

### **Reporting and Monitoring Procedures**

- All employees' working in services for children and vulnerable adults have to be alert to possibilities of abuse.
- It is the duty of the employees to alert only not to investigate.
- If employees in the course of their work have a safeguarding issue brought to their notice this must be treated as a priority over all other work.
- Guidance with regard to a specific incident may be obtained from the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- An oral, then written report should be provided to the Designated Safety Officer who will keep a confidential record of any such incidents.

### **Allegations of Abuse or Inappropriate Behavior Involving Employees**

- Allegations involving employees of the company or its subcontractors should be reported to the Designated Safety Officer and Lead Officer.
- Abuse of children or vulnerable adults is a disciplinary offence
- Reports of abuse will be made to the relevant statutory agencies responsible for investigations

### **Awareness of Policy**

All employees of DH Associates Ltd ,subcontractors , employers and learners will be given a copy of this policy. The implications for practice will be discussed at team meetings and/or supervision. The following topics must be covered;

Health & Safety issues  
Handling a disclosure  
Reporting an allegation  
Confidentiality  
Code of Practice

The policy will be promoted through the company's marketing and promotional material e.g on the company website. All learners will be informed of the policy at induction and given a copy of this policy in the candidate handbook.

### **Review**

This policy and procedures will be regularly monitored and reviewed:

- In accordance with changes in legislation and guidance on the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.
- Following any issues or concerns raised about the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults within DH Associates Limited.
- In all other circumstances, at least annually.

### **Related Policies**

- Health & Safety Policy
- Safe Learner Policy
- Code of Practice
- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Complaint Procedure
- Recruitment Policy
- Customer Care Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Prevent Policy