

The Arts Society Fylde Policy: Working with Vulnerable Adults

Background

Our National Society (Nadfas), The Arts Society encourages all Member Societies to inspire a lasting enthusiasm for the arts and an awareness of our arts heritage. Our shared vision is for equality of opportunity for all to learn through participation in the arts. The Arts Society Fylde are keen, therefore, in addition to our Young Arts work, to reach out to those excluded groups who may lack access to the arts. These objectives may involve us in working with vulnerable adults. The Arts Society Fylde has a duty of care to safeguard all vulnerable adults involved in its activities and will seek to do that through adherence to policies on safeguarding and protection guidelines from our National Society, relevant legislation, and accepted good practice.

Definitions

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18. (*The Children Act 1989*)

Vulnerable adults are people who are over 18 years of age and are getting or may need help and services to live in the community. Vulnerable adults may be unable to take care of themselves and unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation by other people.

(*Department of Health 2002*)

A vulnerable adult may have specific needs or requirements that The Arts Society Fylde members and volunteers need to be sensitive to. This may be because they have a mental health problem; a physical or learning disability; a sensory impairment; are elderly and frail, or have some form of illness.

The issues around working with vulnerable adults are not the same as working with children and young people. [See The Arts Society Fylde Policies: Child Protection Statement, and Child Protection Procedures, and The Arts Society Young Arts Handbook.] Vulnerable adults, for example, should, like any adults, be able to make choices and decisions about their own lives, under the terms of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. On a practical level, however, working with these two groups raises issues of good practice and concerns about safeguarding.

Role of Partner Organisation

Situations where The Arts Society Fylde volunteers work directly with vulnerable adults are most likely to be on partnership projects with colleges, organisations supporting adults with specific needs, and care homes. These organisations will have their own established policies and procedures in place and will have expertise in their specialist area, it is important therefore that: effective liaison between The Arts Society Fylde project organiser and the partner organisation takes place. The role of the volunteer in this situation is clearly defined and discussed with the appropriate partner organisation. The volunteer is made aware of all relevant policies and procedures in use by the partner organisation. The volunteer undergoes any mandatory training required by the partner organisation. Any DBS checks, references, or other checks on the volunteer as required by the organisation or The Arts Society Fylde are undertaken before volunteering takes place.

DBS Checks

Currently, DBS checks are required for what is described as 'regulated activity' with vulnerable adults. This is defined by the Home Office as any activity that involves contact with vulnerable adults frequently, intensively and /or overnight. Examples would include teaching, training, care, supervision, advice, treatment and transportation. Any activity allowing contact with vulnerable adults that is in a specified place frequently or intensively. Examples would include colleges, organisations supporting adults with specific needs, and care homes.

Working with the Public

Some situations may involve The Arts Society Fylde Committee members and volunteers working with the general public. These situations may bring members and volunteers in contact with vulnerable adults.

When Members / volunteers have contact with vulnerable adults on behalf of The Arts Society Fylde they should, whenever practicable, ensure that they are always in the company of another appropriately qualified adult (e.g. parent, guardian, teacher, carer/ support worker, DBS checked adult).

Risk Assessments

Before any activity that might involve vulnerable adults takes place there should be a risk assessment which should include:

- Assessing whether DBS checks are required for volunteers taking part, and if necessary, ensuring that they have been undertaken.
- Ensuring that the environment is safe and appropriate
- Ensuring that materials involved, for example in workshop sessions, are safe and appropriate.
- Ensuring that any potential hazards are identified and dealt with.

The Arts Society activity organiser will take responsibility for ensuring that all these steps are in place. Risk Assessment Forms are available in The Arts Society Fylde's Committee Handbook or on request from the Secretary.

Good Practice

Good practice in delivering arts activities with vulnerable adults would include:

- Always working in an open environment.
- Treating vulnerable adults with respect and dignity.
- Valuing the wishes of vulnerable adults.
- Making arts activities fun and enjoyable.
- Involving parents / carers where appropriate.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the needs and capacity of vulnerable adults.

Reporting any situations of hazard or suspected abuse [See page 4, Appendix 2-TB 39/18. Attached to The Arts Society Fylde Policy: Safeguarding. April 2021.]

Photos, videos and artwork

The Arts Society Fylde are aware that photographs/videos/artwork can, in certain circumstances, pose direct or indirect risks to their subjects. Photographs and videos of vulnerable adults will only be used by The Arts Society Fylde where appropriate permissions have been obtained. Any use of photographs/videos/artwork of vulnerable adults by The Arts Society Fylde must comply with our 'Consent Form for permission to use photographs, videos, artwork of Children, Young Adults and Vulnerable Adults.' The form is available on The Arts Society Fylde website. www.theartsocietyfylde.org.uk the form includes guidelines on the taking and use of images and sets out in detail the situations in which written consent is required and must be evidenced.

Related Policies and Procedures are available on www.theartsocietyfylde.org.uk

- The Arts Society Fylde Policy: Child Protection Procedures. [April 2021]
- The Arts Society Fylde Policy: Child Protection Statement. [April 2021]
- The Arts Society Fylde Policy: Equality and Diversity. [2009/2019]
- The Arts Society Fylde Policy: Safeguarding. [April 2021]
- Consent Form – Permission to use photographs, videos and artwork of children and vulnerable adults. [April 2021]
- Risk Assessment Form. [April 2021] [Available in The Arts Society Fylde Committee Handbook and from the Secretary]

Review of Policy

This policy is compliant with current legislation.

2009/2010/2012/2021