

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership CIC

Child Protection and Safeguarding
Statement

November 2024

Introduction

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is committed to protecting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults who meet its staff and fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding.

This statement sets out everyone's responsibilities to protect young people and vulnerable adults in the course of their normal activities. Dorset LEP staff, employed by Bournemouth University, may encounter young people and vulnerable adults via delivery of core activity including, but not limited to, events, school visits and online, via digital platforms.

As employees of Bournemouth University, all Dorset LEP staff will adhere to Bournemouth University's safeguarding policies and associated procedures when working with young people and vulnerable adults. Failure to comply with this statement and the associated Bournemouth University policies will be taken extremely seriously and may result in action being taken under BU's disciplinary procedure.

For the purposes of this statement the terms 'child(ren)' and 'young people' is used to describe all children and young people under the age of 18. The term 'staff' is used to describe Dorset LEP staff employed by Bournemouth University.

Vulnerable adult(s) is used to describe someone who is 18 years or older who:

- has a dependency upon others, or a requirement for assistance from others, in the performance of basic physical functions or
- is in need of community care services by reason of mental health or other disability, age or illness or
- has a severe impairment in their ability to communicate with others or
- has an impairment in their ability to protect themselves from assault, abuse, neglect, harm or exploitation or
- is detained in lawful custody or
- is being supervised as a result of a court order.

Dorset LEP believes that:

- all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse; and
- the welfare of the child and vulnerable adult is the paramount consideration.

Dorset LEP undertakes to:

- treat children and vulnerable adults with care, respect and dignity;
- ensure that all staff recognise they may be perceived by children and vulnerable adults as trusted representatives of Dorset LEP
- ensure communication with children and vulnerable adults is open and clear and that, where appropriate, records of official communication are kept;
- appropriately identify and assess risks of its activities arranged for children and vulnerable adults where relevant;

- investigate fully any concerns raised by staff in connection with the welfare of children and vulnerable adults encountered by Dorset LEP; and
- provide suitable levels of support and training to staff consistent with their involvement with children and vulnerable adults in the workplace.

Through this statement Dorset LEP will ensure that:

- all staff are able to make informed responses to specific safeguarding issues;
- all staff are able to report any concerns through the appropriate channels;
- any allegations of harm or abuse or concerns over the welfare of children and vulnerable adults are taken seriously and responded to promptly and appropriately.

Good Practice

Dorset LEP staff should refer to the 'Good Practice Guidelines' annexed in Appendix 1 of the Bournemouth University Safeguarding Policy (see below).

Raising a Concern

Dorset LEP staff should remember that they are not formally trained to deal with situations of abuse, concerns over a child's or vulnerable adult's welfare or to decide if abuse has occurred and should therefore immediately report any concerns following the procedures outlined Appendix 2 of the Bournemouth University Safeguarding Policy (see below) Bournemouth University's Safeguarding team can be reached via safeguarding@bournemouth.ac.uk

Working with Partners

Dorset LEP work with external partners and sub-contractors to support delivery of its core programmes. Staff from other organisations have a responsibility to follow their employers' policies and procedures to ensure they are keeping everyone safe.

Ahead of working within schools and education settings, it is important to read and understand the institution's own safeguarding policies and procedures.

Health and Safety

Dorset LEP recognise their duties under health and safety law with respect to assessing the risks to children and managing those risks. Risk Assessments are completed for any event hosted by Dorset LEP where young people or vulnerable adults are present.

PR Events and Photographs:

Dorset LEP's commitment to inspire and prepare young people for the world of work means that images may be taken to capture activity at events, meetings and placements.

For the purpose of this statement, images are all photographs that are taken on film, digital camera and moving pictures.

Dorset LEP will not use any identifiable image of a child for publicity purposes unless we have obtained written consent from a participant's parent or guardian to take and use the image. Parents and guardians should be made aware of when, where and how the images may be used in order to give their informed consent.

Dorset LEP commit that;

- images will not be used for anything other than what was initially agreed with the parent/guardian;
- no images will be taken by anyone where a child might be undressed
- photographs will focus on the activity, rather than the child itself;
- where possible photographs will contain groups of children rather than the individual and;

Dorset LEP recognise that;

It is not an offence for someone to take an appropriate photograph on public property even if asked not to do so.

Where we are responsible for events where children are in attendance, alongside exhibitors, media organisations and members of the public we will:

- Ensure that an appropriate and specific risk assessment is carried out
- Ensure that schools and / or parents are made aware that images of the event may be taken and used as publicity by Dorset LEP, exhibitors, attendees and members of the public and that:
 - Individuals can contact Dorset LEP to opt-out (i.e. clearly communicate that they do not give permission for their image to be taken).
 - It may not be possible to prevent photographers from taking and using individual's images and therefore, if they do not want to be captured, to take precautions to avoid inadvertently appearing in the background of images.
 - Exhibitors and media organisations are provided with guidelines on taking / publishing images of children.

APPENDIX 1 - CODE OF PRACTICE ON WORKING WITH VULNERABLE GROUPS

The following code of practice applies to all University staff and students working with children, young people or adults in a vulnerable situation, whether acting in a paid or unpaid capacity:

- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Avoid taking members of vulnerable groups alone in a vehicle on journeys, however short.
- Unless circumstances make it impossible to comply, do not take members of vulnerable groups to the toilet unless either (a) another adult is present or (b) another adult is aware (this may include a parent or group leader).
- If working off campus, enter schools and other organisations through the main entrance and sign in at reception.
- If you find you are in a situation where you are alone with a member of a vulnerable group wherever practicable make sure that others can clearly observe you.
- Avoid close personal relationships with members of vulnerable groups in relation to whom you are in a position of trust.
- Do not take photographs of children unless parental permission has been given in advance. Never take photos on a personal mobile phone
- Do not accept gifts from children or vulnerable adults and do not give gifts unless they are part of an agreed reward scheme.
- When dealing with children in particular, wear clothing that promotes a positive and professional image.
- Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks to or about members of vulnerable groups, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted. Keep all channels of communication professional.
- Avoid using mobile phones in front of children and young people.
- If a member of a vulnerable group accuses a student or member of staff of abuse or inappropriate behaviour, you should report this immediately to the relevant person.
- The duty to report applies equally to complaints or accusations of historic, and not just recent, abuse/inappropriate behaviour.
- If you are the recipient of any complaint or accusation from a member of a vulnerable group, it is important to listen without making or implying any judgement as to the truth of the complaint or accusation. Avoid jumping to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- If a member of a vulnerable group makes a complaint, or if there are other reasons for suspecting abuse, you should not attempt to investigate this yourself, but should report your concerns to the designated individual appointed under the University's policy ("the policy") on the safeguarding of children and other vulnerable groups.
- Participate in the training available to you to support you in your work with vulnerable groups.
- Remember that those who abuse members of vulnerable groups can be of any age (even other members of vulnerable groups), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.

- Good practice includes valuing and respecting members of vulnerable groups as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct – which would exclude bullying, aggressive behaviour and discrimination in any form.
- Those dealing with any allegations of abuse or misconduct should adhere to the principles set out in the policy. Any information received should be acted upon sensitively, effectively and efficiently. Wherever possible, those making allegations should be given information about the outcome.
- Keep details and personal information confidential and ensure they are stored securely.
- Although allegations should be reported only on a “need to know” basis, staff and students making allegations need not be concerned that they will be breaching confidentiality or the Data Protection Act, as complying with the policy overrides such obligations. If the person making the allegation feels they need counselling or other appropriate support from the University, they are encouraged to seek it.
- Ensure that you comply with appropriate licensing laws.

APPENDIX 2 – REPORTING FLOWCHART FOR STAFF WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

