

The Dan Tien

Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

The Dan Tien will provide a safe and empowering environment for all children, young people and vulnerable adults participating in the organisation's projects.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have rights as individuals and should be treated with dignity and respect.

The Dan Tien has a culture of mutual respect between staff, volunteers, children, young people and vulnerable adults with staff and others involved with The Dan Tien modelling good behaviour.

Children, young people and vulnerable adults have fundamental rights, reflected in laws and guidance. The Dan Tien has a duty to protect those rights and comply with the principles enshrined in laws and the UN convention on the Rights of the Child.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Staff should respect children, young people and vulnerable adults and respond to them as individuals/ a group of individuals.
- Participants who attend activities run by The Dan Tien are 'members' of the organisation and they are expected to conduct themselves accordingly.
- Staff should respect the right to privacy of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that spaces used for the The Dan Tien's work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are safe, clean and tidy.
- Staff should be punctual for all sessions and inform both the office and the participants (if appropriate) if there are any timetable changes.
- No child, young person or vulnerable adult should be asked to perform any task that is potentially dangerous, illegal or otherwise unreasonable.
- In the event of a participant injuring him or herself, staff should administer appropriate first aid, record the incident in the accident book and report to the Principals.

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STAFF REQUIREMENTS

- Workshop staff who are left in sole charge of young people must prove they hold a current police check document prior to commencing work with a group.
- Child Protection References will be taken up where appropriate.
- Where a current police check is not held staff must undertake a full police check procedure.
- All staff working on a regular basis with young people should undertake training in relation to Child Protection Procedures and the wider issue of Child Protection.

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDELINES

Any member of staff who is concerned about the well being of a young person should report this concern immediately to the Amy Lazzerini, who is the designated Child Protection Officer for The Dan Tien.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the conduct of another colleague towards a young person should report this concern immediately to the Amy Lazzerini.

Staff should not enter into any agreements with young people to keep disclosed information secret. If any member of staff becomes aware of any information which may be a threat to a young person's well being, they should inform Amy Lazzerini immediately. Staff can offer reassurance and commitment to help a young person. Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality to a young person in such circumstances.

Staff should not enter into inappropriate relationships with a young person that will bring The Dan Tien into disrepute.

If a young person makes any inappropriate advances to a member of a staff, they should discreetly make the young person aware of their discomfort and inform Amy Lazzerini

If a member of staff thinks that it is appropriate to comfort a young person, who is distraught, they should offer this support in a public area or, if this is not possible, in a designated room with the door left open.

If a young person has no way of getting home after a session, staff should put the young person in a taxi rather than use their own vehicles. If this is not possible and the member of staff has to use a private vehicle, they should inform another person of the situation before leaving. In either case, staff should attempt to contact parents/guardians of the young person to confirm these arrangements. There must be signed permission from parents/guardians/support workers for the taking of images (photographs, videos or films).

Safeguarding vulnerable people

Most staff in the The Dan Tien will have some sort of contact with young people in the building at some point, and it is important that certain **guidelines** are put in place:

- We want to be friendly, but we are not their friends.
- It is about keeping a professional distance, while being approachable and easy to work with.
- It is about a mixture of common sense and keeping aware of the fact that these are young people.
- Avoid one to one situations with young people.
- Don't gossip with young people or participate in their gossip.
- Don't make suggestive comments or sexual jokes.
- Don't socialise with them - birthday parties, going to pub, or meeting up outside of work.
- Don't make appointments to see young people without letting *The Dan Tien* know.
- Don't keep their secrets and never promise to do so (see **Disclosure**).
- Do talk to them and get to know them.
- Do discipline them if appropriate, but if ongoing bad behaviour occurs, these situations should be dealt with by *The Dan Tien* and should therefore be passed on.
- Do have fun with them.
- Do report anything odd, suspicious or just 'funny' and keep a note in the Incident Book (see **Disclosure**)
- Talk. The more people discuss any problems the better protected you are.

Child Protection is about creating strong, confident young people who are not vulnerable to abuse.