

## SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Ballymoney u3a recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all involved in the activities of the organisation, particularly children and vulnerable adults. This policy provides advice to those who organise individual activities and specifies *best practice guidance* to be followed by all members.

Children (those under 18) would not normally be involved in any u3a activity. However, they may occasionally attend as guests of members, who must accompany any children at all times. In such cases, that member is responsible for the welfare of the child and this policy also applies.

Ballymoney u3a follows the Third Age Trust governing body policy of providing equality of opportunity to all members and potential members in their third age, regardless of social standing, language, ethnicity, gender, orientation and educational background. All reasonable efforts will be made to facilitate vulnerable people - (as defined in the Home Office document "No Secrets" published 20 March 2000) - who wish to become members. If required, membership will be extended to carers not meeting Third Age criteria.

The *Key Principles* of the **Ballymoney u3a Safeguarding Vulnerable People Policy** are -

- The welfare of the vulnerable adult is and must always be paramount to any other considerations.
- All participants regardless of age, gender, ability or disability, race, faith, culture, size, shape, language or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse or harm.

All allegations or suspicions of abuse, neglect, harm and poor practice will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly, fairly and appropriately.

Any such allegations or suspicions should be reported immediately and in confidence to the Group Administrator or to any Committee Member for formal investigation under the Ballymoney u3a Disciplinary Policy.

Ballymoney u3a requires all its members to comply with the *Best Practice Guidance* below.

The following behaviours are not acceptable, will be treated seriously and will result in action being taken under the Ballymoney u3a Disciplinary Policy:

Working alone with a child, children, vulnerable adult or adults.

- Consuming alcohol whilst responsible for children or vulnerable adults.
- Providing alcohol to children or allowing its supply.
- Humiliating children or vulnerable adults.
- Inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult.
- Participating in, or allowing, contact or physical games with children or vulnerable adults.
- Having an intimate or sexual relationship with any child or vulnerable adult developed as a result of being in a 'position of trust'.
- Making sexually explicit comments or sharing sexually explicit material.

As each of us may be regarded as vulnerable at some time in our lives, all members have a right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

At Ballymoney u3a Meetings and Activities we will -

- Value, listen and respect all members;
- Ensure that all members feel welcomed and respected;
- Recognise and respect equality amongst people and in our relationships with others;
- Do all we can to help members who may be vulnerable, to be and remain active contributors within our u3a and if they are or become unable to participate independently, encourage them to bring a companion/carer with them in order that they can continue to enjoy the benefits of Ballymoney u3a membership.
- Ensure all members are aware of their responsibilities to protect vulnerable adults.
- The Nominated SOVA Officer for Ballymoney u3a is Frances Bach.

**APPROVED BY: BALLYMONEY u3a COMMITTEE ON BEHALF OF BALLYMONEY u3a.**

**DATE REVISED/UPDATED: 28 09 2021**

**SIGNED: CHAIRMAN:**

**John WD Pinkerton**

**NB: Signed copy held on file.**