



333 King St.
Midland ON L4R 1Z8

705-526-ARTS (2787)
Questart.ca

QUEST ART SCHOOL + GALLERY – Abuse Policy

Purpose

- a) To maintain an environment that is free from harassment or abuse
- b) To identify the behaviours that are unacceptable
- c) To establish a mechanism for receiving complaints
- d) To establish a procedure to deal with complaints

Policy Statement

Quest Art School + Gallery will not tolerate any form of physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or psychological abuse, nor any form of neglect or harassment by staff, volunteers, contract instructors, program participants and/or visitors.

Definitions for the following forms of abuse are in Addendum, at the end of this document:

- Physical Abuse.
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Verbal Abuse
- Psychological
- Neglect
- Harassment

Governing Legislation

Quest Art School + Gallery's code of conduct.
Child and Family Services Act, RSO 1990, c C.11
Day Nurseries Act, RSO 1990, c D.2
Human Rights Act, RSO 1990, c H.19
Criminal Code of Canada, RSC 1985, c C-46

Who is Covered by this Policy

This policy covers all employees, volunteers, contract instructors, program participants and their parents/guardians, and visitors.

Abuse Reporting Procedures

Incidents of abuse should be reported to the Director. If the victim is not comfortable approaching the Director, they should speak with another staff member or a board member. Should the Director not be available or if the allegations of abuse are against the Director, the Board President or Vice President should be contact.

In the case where physical or sexual abuse has taken place, the police will be contacted immediately and the victim brought to the hospital for treatment.

In cases involving minors, their parents/guardians will be contacted by the Director.

If a staff member, instructor or volunteer suspect an abuse incident has taken place, they should speak with the Director.

Depending on the situation, Children's Aid Society may be notified. If the abuse has occurred at Quest Art, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. If the abuse occurred at home, parents/guardians might not be notified until after Quest Art has consulted with the police and/or Children's Aid Society. Reports of abuse will be recorded by Quest Art and the appropriate steps will be taken to address the issues.

Quest Art will work with the victim and their families to ensure appropriate treatment and counsel is sought.

Investigative & Disciplinary Procedures

The Director will investigate allegations of abuse. If the allegations are made against the Director, the Board President or Vice President will investigate.

Investigation will include speaking with the individual, or their guardian, who is making the allegation and the individual(s) against whom the allegations are being made. Witnesses to the incident(s) will also be interviewed. Review of video recordings taking place within the Midland Cultural Centre may also take place.

If the allegations of abuse are civil or criminal offences, the investigation will be turned over to the police.

If the allegations of abuse are made toward an employee on Quest Art's payroll, that individual may be suspended without pay, pending the nature of the allegations, during the investigation. If the individual is found guilty, their employment with Quest Art may be terminated. Incidents will be recorded in their employee file.

If the allegations are made toward a Quest Art volunteer, that volunteer may be removed from their volunteer role during the investigation and if found guilty, dismissed as a volunteer. Incidents will be recorded in their volunteer file.

If the allegations are made toward a Quest Art contract instructor, they may be removed from our roster of instructor and no longer offered employment opportunities within the organization.

If the allegations are made toward a program participant, they may not be allowed to register for, or participate in, future programs.

If the allegations are made to a visitor to Quest Art, they may be banned from the Midland Cultural Centre and charged with trespassing should they enter the building.

Each individual charged with alleged abuse will have the opportunity to appeal the charges to Quest Art.

Final determinations will be made by a panel set by the Board of Directors.

In the case of false allegations, the individual making the charge, may lose their access to participating in Quest Art programs. In the case of staff, they may be reprimanded per the decisions of the board of directors.

Copies of all documentation and video recordings will be turned over to the police if the abuse allegations will be followed with civil or criminal proceedings.

Policy Agreement

This policy will be reviewed and signed by new staff and members of the board of directors. A copy will be made available in the communication binder located in the Quest Art Shop for volunteers and new volunteers will be made aware of this policy. New contract instructors will be asked to read and sign this agreement prior to their first employment with Quest Art.

Those currently teaching for Quest Art will read and sign the agreement.

Copies will be made available in Quest Art Classroom 1 for program participants.

Any questions relating to this policy should be brought to the Director or the board of directors.

Financial Liability of the board of directors

Quest Art carries directors' insurance.

Implementation of this Policy

The Director is responsible for implementing this policy under the direction of the board of directors.

The Volunteer Coordinator will ensure that volunteers are aware and have read this policy.

The Education Officer will ensure that all contract instructors have read and signed this policy.

The board of directors will review this policy on a bi-annual basis.

Media

Should an alleged abuse incident reach the media, the Director is appointed as the media representative to respond to all enquiries from any media. In order to maintain a consistent message and to prevent further legal implications, other staff and volunteers approached by the media are prohibited to respond to such enquiries and are to refer all such inquiries to the Director. In the Director's absence, the President of the board of directors will act as the media representative.

Agreement to abide by this policy

I acknowledge that I have received and read the abuse policy and/or have had it explained to me. I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by all the rules contained in this policy and to report any incidents of abuse as set forth in this policy.

Date _____

Signature _____

Witness _____

ADDENDUM

Definitions of the forms of abuse covered by this policy:

Physical Abuse is defined as but not limited to the use of intentional force that can result in physical harm or injury to an individual. It can take the form of slapping, hitting, punching, shaking, pulling, throwing, kicking, biting, choking, strangling or the abusive use of restraints.

Sexual Abuse is defined as but not limited to any unwanted touching, fondling, observations for sexual gratification, any penetration or attempted penetration with a penis, digital or object of the vagina or anus, verbal or written propositions or innuendos, exhibitionism or exploitation for profit including pornography.

Emotional Abuse is defined as but not limited to a chronic attack on an individual's self-esteem. It can take the form of name calling, threatening, ridiculing, berating, intimidating, isolating, hazing, habitual scapegoat, blaming.

Verbal Abuse is defined as but not limited to humiliating remarks, name calling, swearing at, taunting, teasing, continual put downs.

Psychological Abuse is defined as but not limited to communication of an abusive nature, sarcasm, exploitive behaviour, intimidation, manipulation, and insensitivity to race, sexual preference or family dynamics.

Neglect is defined as but not limited to any behaviour that leads to a failure to provide services which are necessary such as withdrawing basic necessities as forms of punishment, failing to assess and respond to changes in health status and refusing or withdrawing physical or emotional support.

Harassment is defined as but not limited to any unwanted physical or verbal conduct that offends or humiliates, including gender-based harassment. It can be a single incident or several incidents over time. It includes threats, intimidation, display of racism, sexism, unnecessary physical contact, suggestive remarks or gestures, offensive pictures or jokes. Harassment will be considered to have taken place if a reasonable person ought to have known that the behaviour was unwelcome.