

De-Escalation Policy

Responsible Officer	Director	Policy Approved	Trustees
Review Required	Annual	Date	25th February 2025
De-Escalation Policy			

1. Background

SCL's mission is *'to inspire those who are homeless or socially isolated by providing safe creative spaces. SCL offers opportunities for guests to access services that encourage their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. We are a diverse and inclusive community who are learning to reflect on our experiences, that through this, personal lives may be transformed and empowered.*

- 1.1. Ensuring the safety and well-being of all guests, volunteers and helpers is paramount and this policy is intended to support that aim by identifying how situations may be managed; the key lead responsibilities; and appropriate follow-up action.
- 1.2. It is recognised that the very nature of the lives of those supported by SoundCafe are chaotic and challenging and this can lead to differences in opinion between those attending any session or event.

2. Procedure to be Followed

- 2.1. In the event of an incident, subject to location and nature the following will apply:

Scenario A – Removal of Guests Involved from the Room/Location

- Session lead/volunteers immediately diffuse and calm the situation where appropriate. In the event that a guest is considered a risk to themselves or others, then the police will be called by the session lead. Where possible this will be with the agreement of the guest and recognising the policies in place of other partner agencies.
- Session lead to initially remove those involved from the room/location and where possible separate any parties involved.
- An available Trustee or member of staff in the location to take the lead role and maintain the session.
- Wherever possible maintain the calm within the session and follow the proposed plan and organisation of the session. Where this is not appropriate maintain background music pending agreement with the lead person on next steps. Guests to be asked to remain seated.

- Where parties involved need to be escorted from the building; the lead and/or the Director/Services Co-ordinator/Trustee to escort using the entrances/exits available.
- In St Mary de Castro there are two options:
 - Main entrance door used by guests to enter and leave
 - Rear exit door
- At St Margaret's Pastures, if during a training session the player will be asked to leave the pitch. If during lunch, then they will be asked to move outside of the club house or canopy area.
- When a SoundCafe session is being held at an alternative venue the respective Fire Exits will be used wherever possible, ensuring that the parties involved leave the building in opposite directions.

Scenario B – Clear All Guests from the Room

- Session lead to stay in the room with the guests involved and maintain their safety – at all times a minimum of two people must stay in the room in accordance with SCL Safeguarding and Lone Worker policies. In the event that a guest is considered a risk to themselves or others, then the police will be called by the session lead. Where possible this will be with the agreement of the guest and recognising the policies in place of other partner agencies.
- Guests to be advised that the session/training has finished early and to be asked to leave the room as quickly as possible by the safest means.
- Session volunteers to support the respective tables of guests to leave the building out through the nearest and most appropriate exit relative to the incident.
- With the exception of guests' personal belongings, all other items to remain in the room.
- Guests with limited mobility will be supported to exit the building via the main entrance.
- Dependent on the nature of the incident, a judgement will be made by the lead on the need for police involvement.
- Everything will remain on the tables until it is judged safe for any volunteer to return to the building, at this stage the tables will be cleared, boxes packed and the equipment moved to the storage area.

3. Post Incident Requirements

- 3.1. Report the incident to St Mary de Castro/alternative venue bookings manager and advise of any immediate impact on the room/damage.
- 3.2. Session lead to complete an incident and safeguarding report form as appropriate.
- 3.3. Chair of Trustees and Trustees to be advised of an incident within 24 hours. Unless immediate resolution required as a consequence of the incident – all reports to be considered at the next Trustee Meeting. A key aspect will be any future recommendations on how situations can be mitigated; and the need for any changes to the way SCL sessions are provided and organised. Operational delivery will be reviewed by Trustees.
- 3.4. Support to be offered to volunteers and helpers involved in the incident.
- 3.5. Where it is considered that any guest may be in danger or future risk by attending an SCL session, consideration will be given to the necessary action and future communication with 'involved' guests. Any communication will be with a minimum of two people one of whom must be a Trustee.
- 3.6. Where it is recommended that future action is required to manage the safety of guests this will need to be approved by two Trustees; including the timescale required to address this.
- 3.7. Any communication with involved guests will be undertaken as soon as they arrive at a session.

4. Scope

- 4.1. This policy applies to all SoundCafe Leicester employees, volunteers and helpers; casual workers and contractors undertaking work on behalf of the charity.

5. Outcomes

- 5.1. All employees, volunteers and guests will be supported in the event of an incident occurring at SCL; everyone has a role to play in ensuring the safety of their 'co-workers', volunteers and guests.

6. Our Commitment

- 6.1. In accordance with our Equality & Diversity Policy we will, *'create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued'*.
- 6.2. Every employee and volunteer is entitled to a 'working environment' that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.

This policy will be evaluated and reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis.

