Handling People's Money Policy and Procedure

Date: August 2026

Date for review: August 2027

Author: Jenny Mills

Important contacts

ROLE / ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Director / Designated Safeguarding Lead	Jenny Mills	jenny.mills@thelearningsanctuary.co.uk

This Policy defines the arrangements and procedures in place within The Learning Sanctuary for the safe, respectful and transparent handling of service users' money. It is intended to protect each person's rights, choice, dignity and independence while reducing the risk of financial abuse, theft, exploitation or poor practice.

This policy should be read alongside The Learning Sanctuary Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure and Mental Capacity Act 2005 Policy and Procedure. Financial or material abuse is recognised within adult safeguarding and any concern must be responded to under the safeguarding procedure.

1. POLICY PRINCIPLES

The Learning Sanctuary recognises that a person's money and possessions belong to them. Staff must respect the person's right to make decisions about how their money is used and must promote independence wherever possible.

Staff will only support a service user with money where this is necessary and appropriate to their individual needs, support plan, risk assessment and any agreed arrangements with the person, family, representative, social worker or placing authority.

Staff must act honestly, transparently and in the service user's best interests. A service user's money must never be used for the benefit of a member of staff, volunteer, another service user or The Learning Sanctuary.

2. SUPPORTING SERVICE USERS TO MANAGE THEIR OWN MONEY

Service users will be encouraged and supported to manage their own money as independently as possible. Support may include helping a person understand prices, count money, make a purchase, check change or keep a receipt.

Staff should provide the minimum level of assistance necessary and should not take over a task that the person can complete themselves with appropriate support.

Where there is a genuine reason to doubt a person's capacity to make a particular financial decision, staff must follow The Learning Sanctuary Mental Capacity Act 2005 Policy. Capacity is decision-specific and must not be assumed to be absent because a person has a disability, communication difficulty or makes a decision that others consider unwise.

3. HANDLING CASH AND PURCHASES

Where a member of staff handles money on behalf of a service user, the amount received must be clear and the transaction must be capable of being accounted for.

Receipts must be obtained wherever reasonably possible. Any change must be returned directly to the service user or dealt with in accordance with an agreed individual arrangement.

Service users' money must not be mixed with staff money, another service user's money or general Learning Sanctuary funds.

Any missing money, discrepancy, lost receipt or concern regarding a transaction must be reported to the Director as soon as it is identified.

4. BANK CARDS, PIN NUMBERS AND ONLINE BANKING

Staff must not ask a service user to disclose a PIN number, password or online banking security information for staff convenience.

Staff must not use a service user’s bank card, withdraw cash, make an online payment or access online banking unless there is a clearly documented, lawful and individually agreed arrangement authorising that specific support.

Where support with banking is required, the least restrictive and safest method should be used and the service user should remain involved as far as possible.

5. GIFTS, LOANS AND PERSONAL BENEFIT

Staff and volunteers must maintain clear professional boundaries. They must not borrow money from, lend money to, exchange money with, sell personal belongings to, or purchase personal belongings from a service user.

Staff must not ask for or accept cash gifts, tips or financial favours. Any gift offered by a service user must be discussed with the Director and managed in accordance with The Learning Sanctuary’s professional boundaries and safeguarding expectations.

6. FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE

Financial or material abuse may include theft, fraud, internet scamming, misuse of benefits or property, pressure to give away or spend money, coercion in relation to financial arrangements or transactions, misuse of bank cards, or controlling a person’s access to their own money.

Possible indicators may include unexplained missing money or possessions, sudden financial difficulty, unusual withdrawals or purchases, a person appearing frightened or pressured about money, or another person exercising unexplained control over their finances.

Any staff member who suspects, witnesses or receives a disclosure of financial abuse must report the concern immediately to Jenny Mills, Director and Designated Safeguarding Lead, and follow The Learning Sanctuary Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure. Where immediate danger or suspected crime exists, appropriate emergency or police action must be considered.

7. RECORDING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Any record involving a service user’s money must be accurate, factual, dated and completed promptly. Receipts and supporting records must be retained where required.

Financial information is confidential and must only be shared with people who have a legitimate reason to receive it, subject to safeguarding and legal information-sharing requirements.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Directors are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, concerns are acted upon and relevant financial records or arrangements are reviewed where necessary.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for following this policy, maintaining professional boundaries, promoting service user independence and reporting any concern, discrepancy or suspected financial abuse promptly.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Learning Sanctuary will review this policy annually and sooner where legislation, safeguarding procedures, commissioning requirements or service arrangements change.

Any financial incident or safeguarding concern will be reviewed to identify whether changes to practice, staff guidance, risk assessment or individual support arrangements are required.

10. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The Learning Sanctuary Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure (August 2026).

The Learning Sanctuary Mental Capacity Act 2005 Policy and Procedure (August 2026).

Care Act 2014 and Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Code of Practice.

Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

Current West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and City of York Joint Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

Policy alignment note – August 2026

This policy is aligned with The Learning Sanctuary's Safeguarding Adults and Mental Capacity Act policies. Where current legislation, North Yorkshire safeguarding arrangements or a commissioning requirement sets a higher or different standard, the current legal or local requirement will take precedence.