

FOREST EQUINE THERAPY

Safeguarding policy
March 2025

Forest Equine Therapy Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction Forest Equine Therapy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, and adults who engage in our equine-assisted therapy services. This policy outlines our approach to safeguarding, protecting individuals from harm, abuse, and neglect, and ensuring compliance with UK legislation and best practice.

2. Legal Framework This policy is informed by the following UK legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2023)
- Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board and Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures
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3. Scope of the Policy This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone engaged by Forest Equine Therapy who comes into contact with children, young people, and adults, particularly those at risk due to mental health needs or other vulnerabilities.

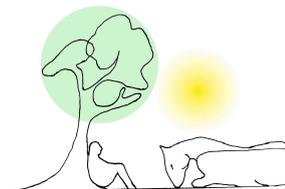
4. Our Commitment to Safeguarding Forest Equine Therapy will:

- Provide a safe and supportive environment for all individuals using our services.
- Promote dignity, respect, and empowerment for service users.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are alert to the signs of abuse.
- Take immediate action on any concerns regarding an individual's welfare.

5. Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns All staff and volunteers must be vigilant in recognising signs of abuse, including:

- Child-on-child abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Violence towards women and girls
- Sexual abuse
- Harassment / bullying
- Financial or material abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse

If a staff member has a safeguarding concern, they must:



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1. Listen carefully and reassure the individual.
2. Avoid making promises about confidentiality.
3. Report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
4. Record the concern factually and securely.
5. Cooperate with external safeguarding agencies as required.

6. Online Safety

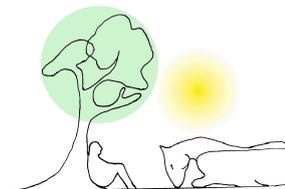
- Use of staff IT equipment will be managed (the use of personal phones and equipment whilst beneficiaries are on-site will be restricted). It is expected that there should be no occasion to use personal IT equipment, apart from in exceptional circumstances e.g. to call a parent / caregiver.
- There will be a dedicated chrome book for use with students and staff will have training on using this responsibly.
- Access to confidential data forms will not be possible as they will be stored on a password secured drive.
- No photos of beneficiaries will be stored online or used in marketing unless explicitly requested and approved by the beneficiary and their caregiver.
- On line activity will be limited to access online training resources (e.g. Equischolars).
- Beneficiaries are also not expected to be on their phones during a session and they will be asked to put them away if they start using them.
- Refusal to put phones could result in an end to the session.
- If staff have any concerns about how children are accessing online services (e.g. mentions of watching films or videos / playing games that are not suitable for their age group) or using other online resources that are not appropriate, this should be reported to the DSL.
- If staff have concerns about how young people are using social media, this needs to be reported. Examples of concerns could include:
 - Not being safe online (talking to unknown people, arranging to meet up with unknown people etc)
 - Supporting or disseminating disinformation, misinformation or conspiracy theories

7. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Forest Equine Therapy has appointed a DSL (Liz Dauncey) responsible for:

- Overseeing all safeguarding matters.
- Providing guidance and training to staff.
- Liaising with local safeguarding authorities and other relevant agencies.
- Keeping detailed, secure records of all concerns and actions taken.

8. Safer Recruitment To ensure the safety of individuals using our services, Forest Equine Therapy will:

- Conduct Enhanced DBS checks for all staff and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults.
- Require at least two references for new staff.
- Provide safeguarding training as part of the induction process.



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- If a DBS check raises a concern, we will assess relevance to the role and make a fair, confidential decision based on safeguarding and risk

9. Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers Staff and volunteers must:

- Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
- Ensure service users are supported to make their own choices and decisions.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately.

10. Managing Allegations An allegation or concern about operation, including behaviour of another adult or abuse of an individual within FET should be reported to Liz Dauncey (0750 3389487). If Liz Dauncey is the subject of an allegation, concerns should be addressed to Emily Jundi (07539 303063).

All allegations will be responded to promptly, will be confidential and if necessary, a disciplinary procedure will be followed depending on the nature of the allegation. Immediate termination may occur if the Code of Conduct rules are breached.

Lessons learnt will be incorporated into training events and LADO will be involved if required.

11. Complaints Procedure. All complaints must be directed to the DSL (Liz Dauncey), who must respond within 5 business days with the aim of resolving complaints within 10 business days.

12. Mental Capacity and Decision Making

- Forest Equine Therapy recognises that adults have the right to make their own decisions unless assessed otherwise under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Where there are concerns about an individual's ability to make decisions, a mental capacity assessment will be sought via the appropriate authorities.
- Where an individual lacks capacity, decisions must be made in their best interests in line with legal guidance.

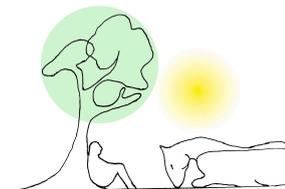
13. Reporting and Escalation Procedures If an immediate risk is identified, staff must contact emergency services (999). For non-urgent concerns, the DSL will liaise with the appropriate safeguarding authority.

- **Children's concerns:** Hampshire Children's Services – 0300 555 1384 (out of hours: 0300 555 1373)
- **Adult concerns:** Hampshire Adult Services – 0300 555 1386

14. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

- All safeguarding records will be kept securely and only shared on a need-to-know basis.
- Information will be stored in compliance with GDPR regulations.

15. Policy Review This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or best practice guidance.



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16. Contact Information Designated Safeguarding Lead: Liz Dauncey 07503 389487
Deputy DSL: Emily Jundi 07539303063 Local Safeguarding Authorities:

- Hampshire Children's Services – 0300 555 1384 (out of hours: 0300 555 1373)
- Hampshire Adult Services – 0300 555 1386 NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Dorset Council Safeguarding Adults - 07341 436764
- Dorset Council Safeguarding Children - 01305 228558
- Dorset Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy:
[final_dbcp_sab_multi_agency_policy_feb_2023.pdf](#)
- IARF- [Inter Agency Referral Form](#)
- HSCP- [Professionals - Hampshire SCP](#)
- LADO form-
<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=tdiBPwfuF0yGnB200QGm6m3Qf9IBmBAjTRUtLZXa5IURTVVMDY2VFhDSUNLTjYzQkpKRlpNRTI1NC4u>
- Children's Services- [Contact Children's Services | Children and Families | Hampshire County Council](#)

Policy reviewed by	Date reviewed	Changes made (Y/N)	Next review date
Liz Dauncey	26/8/25	N	26/8/26