

Essential Sequential

C r e a t i v e W o r k s h o p s

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD & VULNERABLE PERSON PROTECTION POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of Essential Sequential's safeguarding policy is to ensure every child or vulnerable person at our organisation is safe and protected from harm. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and/or vulnerable people is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:
- Protecting our children and/or vulnerable people from maltreatment
 - Preventing impairment of children's or vulnerable people's mental and physical health or development
 - Ensure that our children and young people grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - Undertake that role so as to enable our children/young people to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.
- 1.2 This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about the expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and/or vulnerable people at our organisation.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Our organisation fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children and/or vulnerable people from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children and vulnerable people. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support.
- 2.2 Our policy applies to all children, vulnerable people, volunteers and visitors.

3. OUR ETHOS

- 3.1 Our organisation will establish and maintain an ethos where our children and vulnerable people feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and are safe. Children and vulnerable people will be able to talk freely to any member of staff or regular visitor to our organisation if they are worried or concerned about something.
- 3.2 All staff, volunteers and regular visitors will, either through training or induction, know how to recognise a disclosure from a child or vulnerable person and will know how to manage this. We will not make promises to any child or vulnerable person and we will not keep secrets. Every child or vulnerable person will know what their chosen adult will have to do with whatever they have been told.

- 3.3 We will provide activities and opportunities that will equip our children and/or vulnerable people with the skills they need to stay safe.
- 3.4 At all times we will work in partnership and endeavour to establish effective working relationships with parents, carers and colleagues from other agencies.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join our organisation they will be informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place. They will be given a copy of our organisation's safeguarding policy and told who our Designated Child Protection Officer for Safeguarding is. They will also be shown the recording format, given information on how to complete it and who to pass it to.
- 4.2 Every new member of staff or volunteer will have an induction period that will include essential safeguarding information. This programme will include basic safeguarding training through the Safer Programme relating to signs and symptoms of abuse, how to manage a disclosure from a child or vulnerable person, how to record and issues of confidentiality. The induction will also remind staff and volunteers of their responsibility to safeguard all children and vulnerable people and the remit of the role of the Designated Child Protection Officer.
- 4.3. All regular visitors and volunteers to our organisation will be told where our policy is kept, they will be given a set of safeguarding procedures, they will be told who our Designated Child Protection Officer and alternate staff members are and what the recording and reporting system is.
- 4.4 All parents and carers will be asked to sign a distribution list confirming they have seen and read our safeguarding policy. Parents and carers will be informed of our legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries and what happens should we have cause to make a referral to Children's Services.
- 4.5 Parents will sign a consent form at the start of their child's involvement with the organisation, which includes any vital health or otherwise notable information. It also requests permission for photographs to be taken for promotional purposes only.

5. TRAINING

- 5.1 Every member of staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding training through the Safer Programme every three years.
- 5.2 We actively encourage all of our staff to keep up to date with the most recent local and national safeguarding advice and guidance. This can be accessed on www.norfolkscb.org.
- 5.3 The Designated Officer should be used as a first point of contact for concerns and queries regarding any safeguarding concern in our organisation.

6. SAFE STAFF

- 6.1 All adults who come into contact with our children and/or vulnerable people have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a legal duty placed upon us to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of our children and/or vulnerable people are competent, confident and safe to do so.
- 6.2 Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well being and very best outcomes for our children and/or vulnerable people. We do recognise that sometimes the behaviour of adults may lead to an allegation of abuse being made.
- 6.3 Allegations sometimes arise from a differing understanding of the same event, but when they occur they are distressing and difficult for all concerned. We also recognise that many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who deliberately seek to harm or abuse children and/or vulnerable people.
- 6.4 We will take all possible steps to safeguard our children or vulnerable people and to ensure that the adults in our organisation are safe to work with our children and/or vulnerable people. We will always ensure that the Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Board protocol *Allegations Against Staff, Carers and Volunteers* is adhered to.
- 6.5 All adults who come into contact with children and/or vulnerable people will be made aware of the steps that will be taken if an allegation is made. We will seek appropriate advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). You can contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service on their direct line: **0344 800 8021**.
- 6.6 Staff will not investigate these matters. We will seek and work with the advice that is provided. Should an allegation be made against the Designated Child Protection Officer or Deputy, this will be reported by the

staff member or volunteer raising the concern who will liaise with the LADO (**Local Authority Designated Officer**).

- 6.7 There are sensible steps that every adult should take in their daily professional conduct with children and/or vulnerable people. This can be found in the *Safer Programme Safer Working Practice* – this guidance is on the NSCB website and also in this pack.

7. RECORDS AND MONITORING

- 7.1 If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child or vulnerable person all adults in our organisation we will record their concern on the agreed report form and give this to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
- 7.2 Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file, in a secure cabinet and not with the child or vulnerable person's file. These files will be the responsibility of the Designated Child Protection Officer and information will only be shared within the organisation on a need to know basis for the protection of the child.
- 7.3 Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file and will be added to. Copies of referrals will be stored in the file.
- 7.4 Reports of a concern to the Designated Child Protection Officer must be made in writing and signed and dated by the person with the concern.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.1 Our Designated Child Protection Officer will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary, and make referrals to Children's Services.
- 8.2 Any concern for a child or vulnerable person's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the Designated Child Protection Officer who will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.
- 8.3 The Designated Child Protection Officer will ensure that all staff, volunteers and regular visitors have received appropriate child & vulnerable person protection information during induction and if necessary have been trained by the Safer Programme.
- 8.4 The Designated Child Protection Officer will ensure that our safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually. The content of our policy has been written following consultation with the Safer Programme.
- 8.5 At all times the Designated Child Protection Officer will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed.
- 8.6 Safer procedures ensure our recruitment practices are safe and compliant with statutory requirements.
- 8.7 We require evidence of any qualifications staff or volunteers hold. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references prior to interview.

We will question the contents of application forms if we unclear about them, we will undertake enhance Criminal Records Bureau checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with our children and/or vulnerable people. We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates.

- 8.8 Our organisation undertakes to remedy without delay any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to their attention.

9. WHAT IS ABUSE AND NEGLECT?

- 9.1 Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable person. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or vulnerable person by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. children and/or vulnerable people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable person. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children and/or vulnerable people that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child or vulnerable person opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children and/or vulnerable people. These may include interactions that are beyond the child or vulnerable person's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children and/or vulnerable people. Some level of emotional

abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or vulnerable person, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable person or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child or vulnerable person is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children and/or vulnerable people in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children and/or vulnerable people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or vulnerable person's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or vulnerable person's basic emotional needs.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity (a) in

exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following can be indicators of CCE:

- children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions;
- children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation;
- children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being;
- children who misuse drugs and alcohol;
- children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late; and
- children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education.

10. OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

10.1 To underpin the values and ethos of our organisation and our intent to ensure our children, vulnerable people & young people are appropriately safeguarded the following policies are also included under our safeguarding umbrella;

- Bullying
- Safer Working Practice
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality
- Health and Safety
- Whistle Blowing
- Complaints
- First aid

11. NAMED DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

11.1 For year 2025/2026 the following designated staff are in post;
Claire Kidman

12. POLICY REVIEW

12.1 This Policy was last reviewed on 4th May 2025

12.2 This policy will next be reviewed by 1st Jun 2026

13. NORFOLK USEFUL CONTACTS

Norfolk County Council Children's Services 24 hours
0344 800 8020

Norfolk Police
101 (In an emergency please call 999)

Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) Team **0344 800 8020**
Always someone available during normal working hours

Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Policies & Procedures
www.norfolkiscb.org