



Safeguarding Policy - Children

Approving Authority	SPACE Trustees
Approval Date	11 th March 2024
Effective Date	11 th March 2024
Review Period	1 year
Last Reviewed	February 2023
Document Author	Alan Jones/Lucy Gillgrass/Jemma Gregory
Lead Officer	Lucy Gillgrass

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Date	Version Number	Notes
28/02/2024	v0.1	Drafted Feb 2024 by Lucy Gillgrass

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Name	Position	Signature	Date
Alan Jones	Safeguarding Trustee	<i>A. Jones</i>	19/3/2024
Jemma Gregory	Charity Manager	<i>Jemma Gregory</i>	14/3/2024

Contents

	Section	Page Number
1.0	Purpose	3
2.0	Policy Statement	3
3.0	Policy Detail	5
4.0	Roles & Responsibilities	8
5.0	Approval Process	10
6.0	Training & Dissemination	10
7.0	Links to other Policies & Procedures	10
8.0	Appendices	11

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach, methods, and related arrangements in relation to the safeguarding of children and child protection concerns.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to promote good practice, and to allow staff and volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific safeguarding issues.

2.0 Policy Statement

2.1 Principles

- 2.1.1 We are committed to ensuring that safeguarding concerns and referrals are monitored and handled sensitively, professionally, and in ways which support the needs of the child. This will be achieved by:
 - Ensuring the practice of Safer Recruitment processes, in line with national legislation.
 - Establishing a whole setting Safeguarding culture, using a child-centred approach and acting in the best interests of the children that we support.
 - Ensuring staff are trained and supported to recognise and respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns.
 - Ensuring that there are robust Safeguarding procedures in place to report and monitor child protection concerns.
 - Ensuring effective allegation management procedures.
 - Ensuring the trustee board has effective oversight of all safeguarding procedures and practice at SPACE.
- 2.1.2 By nature of the children and families supported, we recognise that children with disabilities have additional vulnerabilities to abuse, and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. We provide and deliver this policy with strong consideration of this.
- 2.1.3 We are committed to maintaining strong relationships with the Local Authority Children Safeguarding Partnership, ensuring we have training relevant to safeguarding children with disabilities, and the pragmatic aspects of service delivery in relation to safeguarding such as personal care, medication, consent, and the like.
- 2.1.4 This policy applies to anyone working for SPACE. This includes staff, volunteers and trustees.

2.2 Definitions

- **Child protection** refers to the processes undertaken to meet statutory obligations laid out in the Children Act (1989) and associated guidance (see Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023) in respect of those children who have been identified as suffering or being at risk of suffering harm.

- **Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s Mental and Physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), states that ‘safeguarding children and protecting them from harm’ is everyone’s responsibility. Everyone who meets with children and families has a role to play.
- **Abuse** is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- **Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of SPACE, full time or part time, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.
- **Children** includes everyone under the age of 18.
- **Parent** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example stepparents, foster carers and adoptive parents.
- **Additional needs** - children may have that could mean they are more vulnerable to abuse and/or less able to speak out due to additional communication needs, not understanding what is happening to them is abuse, being isolated, needing intimate personal care or being dependent on adults.

2.3 Legal & Regulatory Framework

- 2.3.1 Working together to safeguard children: a guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children (DfE, 2023), Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice (DfE, 2020), and The Children Act (DfE 1989, 2004) set out the general child protection duties that we ‘so far as is reasonably practicable’ must comply with.
- 2.3.2 This policy should be read, considered and delivered in conjunction with Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures.
- 2.3.3 We are committed to following the Charity Commission Guidance ‘Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees’ (2022).

3.0 Policy Detail

3.1 Safer Recruitment

- 3.1.1 We are committed to ensuring the recruitment process is robust in seeking to establish the commitment of candidates. This supports our measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to identify, deter, or reject people who might pose a risk of harm to children or are otherwise unsuited to work with them.

- 3.1.2 When recruiting both paid and voluntary staff the following steps are taken:
- Completion of an application form.
 - An interview by senior leadership or line management of the relevant role.
 - Identifying reasons for gaps in employment, and other inconsistencies in the application.
 - Checking of the applicants' identity (passport, driving license, etc).
 - Taking up references digitally or via telephone prior to the person starting work.
 - Ensuring criminal record checks have been carried out through relevant local agencies approved by the Disclosure Barring Service.
 - Taking appropriate advice and consultation with board members before considering employing someone with a criminal record.
 - Allowing no unaccompanied access to children until all the above have been completed.
 - A probationary period of 3 months for new paid staff and volunteers.
 - On-going supervision of paid staff and volunteers.
 - Ensuring good practice is followed in working with children and young people by providing appropriate training and guidance.
 - Ensure that there are robust and clear induction procedures commensurate to the role.
- 3.1.3 All trustees, staff members, and volunteers who may be involved in recruitment must take personal responsibility for observing, upholding, promoting, and applying this policy.
- 3.1.4 DBS checks are recorded on a Single Central Record. The Single Central Record details of staff and other volunteers is current, complete, compliant, and fed back regularly to the trustee board.

3.2 Promoting a Positive Safeguarding Culture

- 3.2.1 We are committed to providing an environment where children feel safe and secure. We strive to ensure staff feel confident to always promote best practice and challenge any practices that do not meet the standards expected of staff and volunteers or contravenes the staff Code of Conduct.
- 3.2.2 We encourage an open and transparent culture; enabling staff to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of SPACE are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of our setting.

3.3 Training

- 3.3.1 Staff, volunteers, and the Board of Trustees must attend and participate in regular mandatory training for the type of work they are undertaking. The board and/or line

management must keep staff informed of relevant courses and staff receive ongoing supervision and support.

- 3.3.2 A record of training courses must be maintained to ensure that staff capability is maximised.
- 3.3.3 Specific training shall be undertaken to ensure understanding across all levels in relation to:
- Safeguarding (level will be commensurate to role but all staff and volunteers shall receive safeguarding training).
 - Disability / additional needs training in relation to safeguarding and specific roles
 - Staff involved in recruiting are safer recruitment trained.
 - Health and Safety compliance by SPACE.
 - Trustees undertake relevant induction and refresher safeguarding and child protection training throughout their term of office as a trustee.
 - Various other training courses as appropriate.
 - Current training arrangements are set out in Appendix E.
- 3.3.4 In addition, regular safeguarding and child protection updates (e.g. via email and staff meetings), are provided to equip staff with the relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

3.4 Logging a Concern

- 3.4.1 All information about the suspected abuse or disclosure, must be recorded on the Logging a Concern form (see Appendix B) as soon as possible after the event. The record must include:
- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern.
 - date and time at which the record was made.
 - name and date of birth of the child involved.
 - a factual report of what happened. If recording a disclosure, you must use the child's own words.
 - name, signature and job title of the person making the record.
- 3.4.2 The record must be given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will decide on the appropriate course of action.
- 3.4.3 The Designated Safeguarding Lead will, where appropriate, follow up referrals to Local Authority within 48 hours (see Appendix A).
- 3.4.4 Where a concern has been reported, no matter how small, a confidential record will be kept in a central record. This is necessary to enable any patterns of concerning behaviour to be identified.

3.5 Allegations against a member of staff

3.5.1 Any allegations against a staff member must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Designated Safeguarding Trustee and the Board.

- 3.5.2 We will follow the Allegations Management Procedure of the local authority (see Appendix C). It is vital that no communication takes place beyond escalating concerns before consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 3.5.3 Any alleged harm of a child is the paramount consideration for staff, and we will ensure that any staff member is treated with respect and dignity during any investigative period, and they will not suffer any detriment unless the concern or allegation is found to be substantiated.
- 3.5.4 All allegations and complaints must remain confidential.

3.6 Trustee Roles & Responsibilities

- 3.6.1 The SPACE trustee board is responsible for ensuring there are statutory policies and procedures for safeguarding, safer recruitment, allegations management and whistleblowing in place.
- 3.6.2 The trustee board must ensure that there is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) from the senior leadership team, who has been trained to the appropriate level and understands their responsibilities with respect to the protection of children and the safeguarding of all children at SPACE.
- 3.6.3 The trustee board must ensure that there is a Safeguarding Trustee who acts as the link between the trustee board and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 3.6.4 The trustee board must ensure that Safeguarding is always an agenda item at trustee board meetings.

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Trustees

- 4.1.1 Trustee Roles and Responsibilities are outlined in Section 3.6.

4.2 Designated Safeguarding Roles

- 4.2.1 Lucy Gillgrass is Designated Safeguarding Lead for SPACE. In the event of the lead person being unavailable, Jemma Gregory is named as Safeguarding Deputy. They are responsible for:
- Ensuring that the policy is being put into practice.
 - Being the first point of contact for safeguarding and child protection issues.
 - Keeping a record of any concerns expressed about child protection issues.
 - Bringing any safeguarding or child protection concerns to the notice of the Charity manager to notify the trustee board and contacting the Local Authority if appropriate.
 - Ensuring that all staff are given appropriate supervision.

- Ensuring that everyone involved with the organisation is aware of the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

4.2.2 The appointed Safeguarding Trustee is Alan Jones, who acts as the link between the trustee board and the setting in relation to Child Protection and Safeguarding. The Safeguarding Trustee must meet with the Designated Safeguarding Lead annually to understand:

- How the relevant policies connected with Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment are being implemented.
- The challenges and issues that the staff are managing to ensure that children are always kept safe.
- How safer recruitment is being practiced and recorded.

4.3 Management and Staff

4.3.1 The Charity Manager must ensure effective management for all staff including supervision, support, and relevant training so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies and procedures, confidently and competently.

4.3.2 The Charity Manager must ensure safe recruitment of staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

4.3.3 The Charity Manager must ensure information is recorded and stored professionally and securely, in line with our policies, data protection legislation and guidance.

4.3.4 The Management Team must consider where staff are best placed to manage projects and activities accordingly (e.g. experienced staff to lead activities and newly recruited staff to be supervised and trained accordingly).

4.3.5 All members of staff have a responsibility to be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so they can identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering or are likely to suffer significant harm. All staff must be aware of the main categories of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. In addition, all staff must be aware that abuse, neglect, and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another (see Types of Abuse in Appendix D).

4.4.6 All members of staff are responsible for their personal safety and must avoid being alone with an individual child where possible and for a long time. If there is a need to be alone with a child or young person (e.g. first aid or he/she is distressed) staff must make sure that another worker or parent knows where they are and why.

4.4.7 All staff are responsible for accurate logging of concerns following the procedure set out in Section 3.5.1.

5.0 Approval Process

5.1 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it is meeting its aims and submitted to board for approval and recommendations / amendments.

6.0 Training & Dissemination

6.1.1 Staff, volunteers and trustees will receive Safeguarding training in line with Section 3 of this policy.

6.1.2 This policy will be formally launched and communicated internally via our website.

7.0 Links to related Policies & Procedures

- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Health & Safety Procedures
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Bullying
- Code of Conduct
- Induction
- Activity Club Specific Policies:
 - Safeguarding Children in SPACE care
 - Intimate Care

8.0 Appendices

Appendix A

List of Addresses, Telephone and Fax numbers

Appendix B

Logging a Concern Form

Appendix C

LADO (Local Authority Designated Officers) Allegation Management Flowchart
(Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership)

Appendix D

Types of Abuse

Appendix E

Safeguarding Training Matrix

Appendix A - List of Addresses & Telephone numbers

The Integrated Access and Referral Team (i-ART) by calling 0300 1237047.

The team can be contacted 8.30am to 5pm from Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday.

If you have an urgent concern outside these hours, or over a bank holiday, please call the **Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) on 01244 977277**

Alternatively call **Cheshire Police: 0845 458 0000/ 01244 350000 (999 in an emergency).**

The NSPCC offers support for victims of abuse and can be contacted via their helpline on 0808 800 5000 or by emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk.

Appendix B – Logging a Concern Form

Action taken by staff member

Reporting Staff Signature **Date.....**

Passed to DSL.....time/date.....

Action Taken by Designated Safeguarding Lead

Response/ outcome

DSL Signature..... Date

Appendix C – LADO Procedure



Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Procedure

A guide to managing allegations against an adult who works with children

If an allegation is made about an employee or a volunteer working with children/young people, it must be reported to the agency/organisations Designated Safeguarding Lead or Senior Manager. This applies to allegations/concerns raised about people in their personal as well as professional lives.

Agency needs to ensure children are safeguarded



Designated Safeguarding Lead or Manager completes the Allegations (LADO) Referral Form which can be found using the link below

[Allegations Management \(LADO\) - Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Children Partnership \(cheshirewestscp.co.uk\)](https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/childrens-services/child-protection/allegations-management-lado), once completed email to SafeguardingLado@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk



The LADO will consider whether the adult may have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children



The LADO will then consider if:



A LADO Process is needed



It is unclear if a LADO process is needed



A LADO process is not needed



If a LADO process is needed the LADO will:

- Consider immediate risks
- Refer to the Police
- Set a date for a strategy meeting, should be convened within five working days of receiving the referral
- Recommend informing regulatory bodies

At the end of the process an outcome will be determined and shared



Identify the further information needed, how this will be sought and confirm the need for a further discussion with the LADO to determine whether a LADO process is needed



Make recommendations regarding any further actions as required

December 2023

Appendix D - Types of Abuse

- Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child which can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- Physical abuse can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment. Signs of child abuse and neglect may include:
 - significant changes in a child's behaviour
 - deterioration in a child's general well-being
 - unexplained bruising or marks
 - comments made by a child which give cause for concern
 - reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, e.g. in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation (FGM), or that the child may have witnessed domestic abuse.
 - inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.
 - Other types of abuse to be considered and for staff to have an awareness of are:
 - Radicalism and Extremism
 - Female Genital Mutilation
 - Child on Child Abuse
 - Child Sexual Exploitation
 - Honour Based Violence
 - Trafficking
 - Cyber Abuse

What you should do if abuse is suspected or disclosed.

1. Listen to the child/young person.
2. Look at them directly and do not promise to keep any secrets before you know what they are, but always let the child/young person know if, and why, you are going to tell anyone (unless there is potential / additional risk in sharing information arising from a disclosure).
3. Take whatever is said to you seriously and help the child to trust his/her own feelings. Take notes of exactly what is said to you avoiding assumptions and conjecture.
4. It is not the role of the worker to investigate any allegations (this may risk contamination of evidence if a situation escalated to subsequent legal procedures / investigations). Any disclosure by a child/young person must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

What you should not do

1. Project workers/volunteers must not begin investigating the matter themselves.
2. Do not discuss the matter with anyone except the appropriate people in authority.
3. Do not form your own opinions and decide to do nothing.

Things to say or do:	Things not to say or do
<p>'What you are telling me is very important'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is not your fault' • 'I am sorry that this has happened/is happening' • 'You were right to tell someone' • What you are telling me should not be happening to you and I will find out the best way to help you' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not ask leading questions – Why? How? What? • Do not say 'Are you sure?' • Do not openly / consciously show your own emotions e.g. shock/disbelief if possible • Do not make false promises

Appendix E - Safeguarding Training Matrix

Position	Safeguarding level 3	Safeguarding level 2	Safer Recruitment	Safeguarding Children with Disabilities	Safeguarding for Trustees
Trustee	no	no	If involved in recruitment	Designated Safeguarding Trustee only	yes
Charity Manager – Deputy DSL	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Operations Manager - DSL	yes	yes	yes	yes	no
Project Coordinator	no	yes	If involved in recruitment	yes	no
Playworkers (inc. Volunteers)	no	yes	no	no	no
Administration Staff	no	yes	no	no	no
Domestic Staff	no	yes	no	no	no