

# SG01 Transilience SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY AND PROCEDURES

### A.Policy

The policy and procedures outlined in this document comply with guidance contained in Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department for Schools, Children and Families (DSCF) in 2010.

This policy and procedures document has been developed in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18 years with whom Transilience works, as well as to protect Transilience staff and volunteers.

Transilience believes that it is the duty of all those employed by, working on behalf of, or in conjunction with Transilience to protect and prevent the young people with whom they come into contact from becoming the victims of abuse.

Transilience recognises that abuse can be physical, sexual and emotional and that it includes neglect of a young person.

This duty involves more than non-participation in abuse, it includes a duty to act where abuse is seen to be, or suspected to be, taking place.

Transilience recognises that many current and potential abusers do not possess criminal records and that the best way to prevent the abuse of children is through good management practice and the continuous provision of support, guidance and supervision of staff and volunteers.

Procedures are produced on the following issues:

1. Recruitment, screening and support of staff and volunteers;
2. Guidance on working with young people for staff and volunteers;
3. Abuse – suspicions and allegations;

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will deal with all child protection matters and is the named person to contact in the first instance of a disclosure.

Transilience is committed to developing best practice in this area and will review this policy annually.

### B. Procedures

**1. Recruitment, screening and support of staff and volunteers**

1.1 Recruitment and screening of staff

When recruiting staff that, through their work, will regularly be in contact with children or young people, the following procedures will be adhered to:

* All shortlisted candidates will be interviewed. This will provide an opportunity to explore an applicant’s experience of working or contact with children as a means of preventing abuse.
* Two references will be taken. Where an applicant has worked, paid or voluntary, with children, one reference must be from a person who can comment upon their suitability for such work. Where an applicant has no experience of paid or voluntary work with children references will be sought from people who can comment on the applicant’s character and relationships with others.
* In accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Transilience will complete an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check with all individuals who want to work with children and young people unless a relevant portable DBS check is held.
* The enhanced DBS check will be requested prior to the applicant taking up post.
* Transilience is committed to fair, responsible and effective policy and practice for recruiting and retaining staff with a criminal record based on a full assessment of the risks involved, depending upon the nature of the conviction.
* Appointments are conditional upon the successful completion of a probationary period.

1.2 Recruitment and screening of volunteers

* Volunteers will complete a standardised application form.
* Volunteers will be interviewed.
* Two references will be taken and referees will be asked to comment on their suitability for working with young people.
* In accordance with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, where an appropriate and valid enhanced DBS check does not already exist, Transilience will complete an enhanced DBS check through the Disclosure and Barring Service with all individuals who want to volunteer with children and young people. The enhanced DBS check will be requested prior to the volunteer taking up their role.
* Transilience is committed to fair, responsible and effective policy and practice for recruiting volunteers with a criminal record based on a full assessment of the risks involved and the nature of the conviction.
* Volunteers will attend an induction-training programme that will form part of the screening process.
* Volunteers will be issued with a photo identity badge which should only be worn during their volunteering duties.

### 1.3 Volunteer Management

* Volunteers will be supervised regularly.
* Volunteers will receive training on the definitions of abuse, appropriate ways of working with young people, confidentiality and the procedures for dealing with disclosures of abuse.
* Training will be refreshed at least every 3 years.

#### 2. Guidance for working with young people for staff and volunteers

This document is designed to provide staff and volunteers with guidelines about how best to conduct relationships with the young people they will be working with, in order to safeguard their welfare and to protect staff and volunteers from allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

2.1 General guidelines.

These are general principles to be followed at all times when working with young people.

* Meetings with young people will, as far as possible, be held in an appropriate public place. If it is not practical to do so, meetings will take place at a location where other adults are at hand.
* When meeting in a setting such as the family home of a young person, school or youth building, staff and volunteers should ensure other adults are aware of the meeting and its purpose. Where it is necessary to offer the young person privacy from being overheard, staff and volunteers must ensure they are visible to other adults, e.g. through an open or glass door.
* Home visits must be made with prior arrangement with the family. Staff and volunteers must never remain alone with a young person in their home or visit private areas such as a bedroom.
* When arranging meetings, consideration should be given to the safety of the journey to the meeting point.
* If it is necessary to transport a young person in the car of a staff member or volunteer, this should only be undertaken with a specific purpose relevant to the work of the project, by prior arrangement and with the permission of the young person and their parent/carer.
* Staff and volunteers must make a record as soon as possible afterwards of why you were alone with a young person.
* Young people should never visit the home of Transilience staff or volunteers
* The guidance given on appropriate behaviour with young people as outlined in the training must be followed.
* The Directors should be consulted if there is any doubt about their work with young people.

# 3. Abuse - suspicions and allegations

### 3.1 The role of the designated member of staff

* The role of the designated member of staff is to make a decision about the action to be taken when a volunteer or member of staff reports suspicions/ allegations or a disclosure.
* The designated member of staff must make the report as soon as is practically possible to either the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Social Services Emergency Duty Team, the police or the Local Authority Designated Officer (if the allegation involves a member of staff or volunteer).
* The designated member of staff will be responsible for liaising with the MASH, attending any case conferences or child protection strategy meetings that emerge as a result from the referral.
* Where appropriate the designated member of staff will respond to requests for assistance from the Investigating Officers.
* The designated member of staff will keep up to date documentation of all reports from a volunteer or member of staff and agreed action points with the MASH from planning meetings.
* The designated member of staff will keep the volunteer or member of staff informed throughout the process and provide support.

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## 3.2 The role of staff and volunteers in the case of suspicion of abuse

* Contact the designated member of staff and discuss the issue further. The staff member or volunteer has a duty to report suspicion as well as certainty.
* The designated member of staff will agree an action plan with the reporting person.
* The staff member or volunteer should keep detailed notes on their suspicions and any details that they feel are relevant, sign and date them.
* If a young person is in immediate danger and the designated member of staff cannot be contacted, the staff member or volunteer should contact the police or MASH on 0345 1551071. If it is after office hours the Social Services Emergency Duty Team should be contacted 0845 6000388.
* Volunteers and staff members must report that this action has been taken to the designated member of staff
* Consideration should be given as to whether there is a need to explain to the young person’s parent(s) or guardian(s) what action you have taken. This will be discussed with the designated member of staff.
  1. The role of staff and volunteers in the case of a disclosure

#### The staff member or volunteer should:

#### Always take the young person seriously; remembering that they may be the first person that the young person has confided in.

#### Try not to look shocked or disgusted if a young person reports something that they feel uncomfortable with.

#### Reassure the young person that disclosure was the right thing to do.

* Not agree to keep secrets. The young person’s disclosure should be seen as a clear indication that they want help.
* Be comforting and sympathetic and emphasis to the young person that they are not responsible for what is happening to them.
* Ask minimal questions and keep these open and direct.
* Not make the young person tell anyone else, as they may have to make a formal statement later.

#### Explain to the young person that they will need to share this information with the designated member of staff who may need to take further action. Explain what the process will be and reassure them that you will keep them informed.

* Write down all of the details of what was seen, heard and done (but not thoughts) on an incident form and make sure they are signed and dated.
* Contact the designated member of staff immediately.
* Only contact the police or MASH if the young person is at immediate risk and the designated member of staff cannot be contacted.

#### An allegation of abuse made against a staff member or a volunteer

In the incidence of an allegation being made by a child or young person against a staff member or volunteer the following steps will be taken:

* The person receiving the allegation must take it seriously and immediately inform the designated safe guarding lead, or an alternative Director in their absence.
* In the incidence of an allegation against the designated safeguarding lead, an alternative director should be contacted immediately.
* The DSL (or alternative director) will assess the allegation and take appropriate action. This could include a referral to the MASH and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
* The DSL (or alternative director) will write down all of the details of what was seen, heard and done (but not thoughts) on an incident form and make sure they are signed and dated.
* During the time that the accusation is being investigated, either internally or by an external agency, the member of staff or volunteer will have no contact with the person who has made the allegation or the child or young person whom they are alleged to have abused if these are different.
* The staff member or volunteer will have no further contact with children and may be suspended pending an investigation.
* The investigation process will operate within the Transilience Volunteer Management Policy and Disciplinary policy and procedure.
* Transilience has a duty to refer information to the Disclosure and Barring Service where permission for a staff member or volunteer to engage with the client group has been withdrawn or refused or where TTVS thinks that the staff member or volunteer has engaged in relevant conduct that has harmed, or put at risk of harm, a young person.

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