

Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

New Ventures Trust's commitment to safeguarding

Every organisation that works with children needs to have a person who takes the lead on the safeguarding and protection of children. New Ventures Trust's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is Sian Edwards (contact: dso@newventurestrust.co.uk)

Aim of New Ventures Trust

New Ventures Trust's aim is to equip young people under the age of 25 in the United Kingdom with confidence, self-reliance and transferable skills, encouraging them to think independently, take responsibility and make the most of every opportunity. This is achieved, in particular but not exclusively, by delivering and facilitating projects for such young people, in collaboration, where appropriate, with state-maintained educational establishments, charitable institutions, community groups and other voluntary bodies. The projects are principally, but not exclusively, focused on personal development, creativity, community engagement and career awareness.

Introduction

This policy outlines the steps New Ventures Trust will make to safeguard children if they are deemed to be at risk. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of New Ventures Trust in working together with other professionals and agencies, as necessary, in promoting their welfare, the procedures which are to be followed and signposts further guidance and information.

Our policy on safeguarding children

New Ventures Trust's overarching commitment is to keep children safe. We believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them. We will make sure that all children have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. We further recognise that extra steps may be necessary to meet the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.



New Ventures Trust will not tolerate the abuse of children in any of its forms and is committed to safeguarding children from harm.

New Ventures Trust's staff and volunteers should ensure that their work reflects the principles above.

All staff will be made aware of this policy as part of their initial induction process and there will be regular briefings and updates for all staff.

Where necessary or possible, staff will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year, updated with new information as necessary and staff, volunteers and trustees kept informed.

What is safeguarding children?

This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children - and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and - where necessary - to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children. All agencies and professionals should:

- ✓ be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- ✓ be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- ✓ share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- ✓ contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- ✓ take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- ✓ work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.

Procedures

What to do if you have concerns about a child

All staff and volunteers should contact the DSO for any concerns/queries they have about safeguarding children and young people. A log of the concern must be kept

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. Whatever the nature of your concerns, contact the DSO within one working day.

If a child discloses information to you:

- Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information with the DSO who will refer to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB).
- Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is said.
- Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep.
- Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it.
- Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- Do not ask leading questions, but ask open questions such as '*Anything else to tell me?*'
- Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- Keep records about safeguarding concerns confidential and in a location where the alleged abuser will not have access to the record. Access should not be given to any unauthorised personal for accessing confidential information including the sharing of passwords.
<https://newventurestrust.co.uk/privacy-policy>
- Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer

The DSO will ensure that the safeguarding children policies and procedures are in place and up to date, and that they are up to date with their safeguarding children training.

Allegations against those who work with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances.

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children or care for them must be taken seriously. All reports of allegations must be submitted within one working day to the DSO.

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- ✓ Behaved in a way which 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 which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at work, at home or in another setting.

The DSO will discuss the matter to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, whether a referral to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) is required and/or whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

Common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision about what action to take, but it may be appropriate to notify the police in the case of serious allegations.

If the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the DSO will immediately refer the matter to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB). Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation or enquiries by the GSCB. However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation.

Consequently, the DSO should be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and take appropriate action.

Where such allegations are made, consideration must be given to the following three strands:

- 1) The police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- 2) Enquiries and assessment by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) as to whether the child is in need of protection or in need of services;
- 3) Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Definitions of abuse and neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms 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 a stranger. 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. 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 such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child'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 causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child'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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Confidentiality and information sharing

New Ventures Trust expects all staff, volunteers, trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times. In line with Data Protection law, New Ventures Trust does not share information if not required.

It should however be noted that information should be shared with authorities if a child or young person All staff and volunteers should contact the DSO for any concerns/queries they have about safeguarding adults. A log of the concern must be kept

If a child is deemed to be at risk of immediate harm, sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people can make all the difference.

Complaints procedure

New Ventures Trust promotes transparency and honesty when things go wrong. All staff and volunteers should apologise and be honest with service users and other relevant people when things go wrong.

If a staff or volunteer or any other member of the organisation is unhappy with New Ventures Trust's decision about the safeguarding concern, refer them to [NVT Complaints Procedure](#)

New Ventures Trust is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation.

