

# Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2023

The Designated Child Protection Officer for Wild City Collective is: Kathryn Clark (Director) and Annie Wilmot (Director)



## Policy statement

At Wild City Collective CIC we will work with children, parents and the community to ensure the rights and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

## Child Protection Summary

All our staff and volunteers are DBS checked and applicants for posts within our Forest School are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Candidates are informed of the need to carry out checks before posts can be confirmed. Where applications are rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.

- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- We abide by the Protection of Children Act requirements in respect of any person who is dismissed from our employment, or resigns in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of child protection concern.
- We have procedures for recording the details of visitors to our Forest School and take steps to ensure that that no unauthorized person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is dismissed from our Forest School or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child, we notify the Department of Health administrators so that the name may be included on the List for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.
- Our policy in a situation where we feel that a child may be suffering from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse is that at all times the child's wellbeing and safety is of paramount importance.
- We will follow a setting's policy. Should we then feel a situation arises where we need to contact local child Services then we have an obligation to protect the child.

## **Wild City Collective and Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures**

We carry out the following procedures to ensure that we meet our three key commitments:

### **1 - A Culture of Safety**

We are committed to building a 'culture of safety' in which children are protected from abuse and harm in all areas of our service delivery. We do this by implementing the following procedures;

- Our designated officers who deal with any safeguarding concerns are: Kathryn Clark and Annie Wilmot. One of them are always available at any one time.
- We ensure all staff are trained to understand our safeguarding policies and procedures and that parents, volunteers and contractors are made aware of them too.
- All staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, are alert to the signs and symptoms of abuse, and understand their professional duty to ensure safeguarding concerns are reported to either the school/s we are operating within, the local authority children's social work team or the regional MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub). When working with a school, we will operate within their policy, familiarise ourselves with it and ensure all staff and volunteers understand how to report within the framework of it.
- All staff are confident to ask questions in relation to any safeguarding concerns and know not to just take things at face value but can be respectfully sceptical.
- Adequate and appropriate staffing resources are provided to meet the needs of children.
- Applicants for posts within the setting are clearly informed that the positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks and other suitability checks are carried out for staff and volunteers prior to their post being confirmed, to ensure that no disqualified person or unsuitable person works at the setting or has access to the children.
- Where applications are rejected based on information disclosed, applicants have the right to know and to challenge incorrect information.
- Enhanced criminal records and barred lists checks are carried out on anyone working on the premises.
- Volunteers do not work unsupervised.
- In a situation where a child requires intimate care (ie. toileting) Wild City Collective CIC staff and contractors will liaise with the child's school and follow their relevant policy as well as our own policy.
- Information is recorded about staff qualifications, and the identity checks and vetting processes that have been completed including:
  - the DBS reference number;
  - the date the disclosure was obtained; and
  - details of who obtained it.
- All staff and volunteers are informed that they are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders or reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment with us).

- We notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of any person who is dismissed from our employment or resigns any position in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a child protection concern.
- Procedures are in place to record the details of visitors who engage in any of our regular sessions. They will be included in the register.
- Security steps are taken to ensure that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the children.
- Steps are taken to ensure children are not photographed or filmed on video for any other purpose than to record their participation in events organised by us. Parents sign a consent form to allow us to share any such media for marketing purposes. Parents can have access to records holding visual images of their child upon request.
- Any personal information is held securely and in line with data protection requirements and guidance from the ICO.
- We keep a written record of all complaints and concerns including details of how they were responded to.
- We ensure that robust risk assessments are completed, that they are seen and signed by all relevant staff and that they are regularly reviewed and updated, in line with our health and safety policy and our policies register.
- All staff will inform the designated officer at the first opportunity of every significant safeguarding concern.

## **2. We respond promptly to any concerns**

We are committed to responding promptly and appropriately to all incidents, allegations or concerns of abuse that may occur and to work with statutory agencies in accordance with the procedures that are set down in ['What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' \(HMG 2015\)](#).

### *Responding to suspicions of abuse*

- We acknowledge that abuse of children can take different forms - physical, emotional, and sexual, as well as neglect.
- When children are suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, or experiencing neglect, this may be demonstrated through:
  - significant changes in their behaviour;
  - deterioration in their general wellbeing;
  - their comments which may give cause for concern, or the things they say (direct or indirect disclosure);
  - changes in their appearance, their behaviour, or their play;
  - unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; and
  - any reason to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting.
- We consider factors affecting parental capacity and risk, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, parent's drug or alcohol abuse, mental or physical illness or parent's learning disability.
- We are aware that children's vulnerability is potentially increased when they are privately fostered and

when we know that a child is being cared for under a private fostering arrangement, we inform our local authority children's social care department.

- We are aware of other factors that affect children's vulnerability such as, abuse of disabled children; fabricated or induced illness; child abuse linked to beliefs in spirit possession; sexual exploitation of children, such as through internet abuse; Female Genital Mutilation and radicalisation; that may affect, or may have affected, children and young people using our provision.
- We also make ourselves aware that some children and young people are affected by gang activity, by complex, multiple or organised abuse, through forced marriage or honour-based violence or may be victims of child trafficking. While this may be less likely to affect young children in our care, we may become aware of any of these factors affecting older children and young people who we may come into contact with.
- Where we believe that a child in our care or that is known to us may be affected by any of these factors we follow the procedures below for reporting child protection concerns and partner organisation (such as school or council) procedures.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is unhappy with the decision made of the designated person in relation to whether to make a safeguarding referral they must follow escalation procedures.
- We refer concerns to the local authority children's social care department and co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation. In some cases this may mean the police or another agency identified by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- We take care not to influence the outcome either through the way we speak to children or by asking questions of children.
- We take account of the need to protect young people aged 16-19 as defined by the Children Act 1989. This may include students or school children on work placement, young employees or young parents. Where abuse is suspected we follow the procedure for reporting any other child protection concerns. The views of the young person will always be taken into account, but the setting may override the young person's refusal to consent to share information if it feels that it is necessary to prevent a crime from being committed or intervene where one may have been, or to prevent harm to a child or adult. Sharing confidential information without consent is done only where not sharing it could be worse than the outcome of having shared it.

#### *Recording suspicions of abuse and disclosures*

- Where a child makes comments to a member of staff or a volunteer that give cause for concern (disclosure), or a member of staff observes signs or signals that give cause for concern, such as significant changes in behaviour; deterioration in general well-being; unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect; that member of staff:
  - listens to the child, offers reassurance and gives assurance that she or he will take action;
  - does not question the child;
  - makes a written record that forms an objective record of the observation or disclosure that includes:

**the date and time** of the observation or the disclosure; **the exact words spoken** by the child as far as possible; **the name of the person** to whom the concern was reported, **with the date and time**; and **the names** of any other person present at the time.

- These records are signed and dated and kept securely and confidentially off site.
- The member of staff acting as the 'designated officer' is informed of the issue immediately, they will alert social services or the partner organisation if necessary and will file a written report within 48hrs.
- Where the Local Safeguarding Children Board stipulates the process for recording and sharing concerns, we include those procedures alongside this procedure and follow the steps set down by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### Making a referral to a partner School

The key contacts for Safeguarding in Westwood Farm schools are:-

	Name	Telephone	Email
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Geraldine Ross	01189426113	geraldiner@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Adam Abery	01189426113	<a href="mailto:AAbery2@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk">AAbery2@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
	Anna De Oliveira		<a href="mailto:ADeOliveira@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk">ADeOliveira@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
	Maggie Dutton		<a href="mailto:mdutton@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk">mdutton@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
	Sam Wall		<a href="mailto:samwall@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk">samwall@westwoodfarmschools.w-berks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>	Barry Tucker	01189426113	btucker@WestwoodFarmSchools.w-berks.sch.uk

The key contacts for Safeguarding in Brookefields SEN School are:-

	Name	Telephone	Email
<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Catherine Bernie	0118 9421382	headteacher@brookfields.w-berks.sch.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Eleanor Bukht Deputy Head	0118 9421382	ebukht@brookfields.w-berks.sch.uk
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Ash Sayer (Senior FSW)	0118 9421382	asayer@brookfields.w-berks.sch.uk
<b>Safeguarding Governor</b>	Tom McAuslin	0118 9421382	tmcauslin@brookfields.w-berks.sch.uk

Key Contacts within the Local Authority  
Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Procedures: <http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

Where a referral is made to any schools, their procedures will be followed.

Key Contacts within the Local Authority Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Procedures:

<http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

*Making a referral to the local authority children's social care team see LADO referral Process document in Appendix.*

*Escalation process*

- If we feel that a referral made has not been dealt with properly or that concerns are not being addressed or responded to, we will follow the [West Berkshire](#) or [Reading Single Point of Access](#) to make a direct concern ourselves.
- We will ensure that staff are aware of how to escalate concerns.

#### *Informing parents*

- Parents are normally the first point of contact. Concerns are discussed with parents to gain their view of events, unless it is felt that this may put the child in greater danger.
- Parents are informed when we make a record of concerns in their child's file and that we also make a note of any discussion we have with them regarding a concern.
- If a suspicion of abuse warrants referral to social care, parents are informed at the same time that the referral will be made, except where the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board does not allow this, for example, where it is believed that the child may be placed in greater danger.
- This will usually be the case where the parent is the likely abuser.
- If there is a possibility that advising a parent beforehand may place a child at greater risk the designated person should seek advice from children's social work services, about whether or not to advise parents beforehand, and should record and follow the advice given.

#### *Liaison with other agencies*

- We work within the [Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership](#) (BWSCP formerly LSCB) guidelines.
- We ensure a link to ['Report concerns about a child'](#) link to [BrighterFuturesForChildren](#) website is available.

#### *Allegations against staff*

- We ensure that all parents know how to complain about the behaviour or actions of staff or volunteers during our sessions, which may include an allegation of abuse.
- We respond to any inappropriate behaviour displayed by members of staff, volunteer or visitor, which includes:
  - inappropriate sexual comments;
  - excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibilities, or inappropriate sharing of images.
- We follow the guidance of the BWSCP when responding to any complaint that a member of staff or volunteer during our sessions, has abused a child.
- We ensure that all staff or volunteers know how to raise concerns about a member of staff or volunteers during our sessions. We respond to any concerns raised by staff and volunteers. We make them aware of how to escalate their concerns if they are not satisfied with our response.
- We respond to any disclosure by children or staff that abuse by a member of staff or volunteer during our sessions, may have taken, or is taking place, by first recording the details of any such alleged incident.

- We refer any such complaint immediately to the to investigate: BWSCP:  
[www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk)
- We co-operate entirely with any investigation carried out by children's social care in conjunction with the police.
- Where the management team and children's social care agree it is appropriate in the circumstances, the member of staff or volunteer will be suspended for the duration of the investigation. This is not an indication of admission that the alleged incident has taken place, but is to protect the staff, as well as children and families throughout the process.

#### *Disciplinary action*

Where a member of staff or volunteer has been dismissed due to engaging in activities that caused concern for the safeguarding of children or vulnerable adults, [we/I] will notify the Disclosure and Barring Service of relevant information, so that individuals who pose a threat to children and vulnerable groups can be identified and barred from working with these groups.

### **3. We are committed to promoting awareness and empowering all children**

We are committed to promoting awareness of child abuse issues throughout our training and learning programmes for adults. We also committed to empowering all children, promoting their right to be strong, resilient and listened to.

#### *Training*

- Training opportunities are sought for all adults involved in our organisation to ensure that they are able to recognise the signs and signals of possible physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect and that they are aware of the local authority guidelines for making referrals.
- Designated Officers (Safeguarding) receive training in accordance with that recommended by the BWSCP
- We ensure that all staff know the procedures for reporting and recording any concerns they may have about the provision.

#### *Planning*

- No child is left alone with staff or volunteers in a one-to-one situation without being visible to others. Where the geographical landscape of the work environment will make this harder, staff always try to avoid time alone with children and are mindful of this happening.
- We reduce the likelihood of a child needing intimate care or help toileting by including planned toilet trips in advance of trips to the woods as a part of our schedule as per toileting procedure.

#### *Confidentiality*

- All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who need to know. Any information is shared under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### *Support to families*

- We believe in building trusting and supportive relationships with families, staff and volunteers.
- We make clear to parents our role and responsibilities in relation to child protection.
- We would follow the Child Protection Plan as set by the child's social care worker in relation to any tasks in supporting that of the child and their family, subsequent to any investigation.
- Confidential records kept on a child are shared with the child's parents or those who have parental responsibility for the child in accordance with the Confidentiality and Client Access to Records procedure and only if appropriate under the guidance of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **Prevent Duty Guidance**

We will comply with the requirements of the duty of care guidance. All Staff will complete training.

[Online training is available from the government website.](#)

Reports of a Prevent Concern are made through the [National Prevent Referral Form](#) through guidance set by the Local Safeguarding Board.



## Legal framework

### Primary legislation

- Children Act (1989 s47)
- Protection of Children Act (1999)
- Data Protection Act (1998)
- The Children Act (Every Child Matters) (2004)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)
- Childcare Act 2006

### Secondary legislation

- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Criminal Justice and Court Services Act (2000)
- Equalities Act (2010)
- Data Protection Act (1998) Non Statutory Guidance
- Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015

## Further guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)
- What to do if you're Worried a Child is Being Abused (DfE 2015))
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DoH 2000)
- The Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People: A Guide for Practitioners (CWDC 2010)
- Statutory guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HMG 2007)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners providing Safeguarding Services (DfE 2015)
- Disclosure and Barring Service: [www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check](http://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)
- [Westwood Farm Federated Schools Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Sept 2023](#)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board refers to [Berkshire West Safeguarding Partnership](#) 2023.

This policy was adopted by	Wild City Collective CIC	<i>(name of provider)</i>
On	16/10/2023	<i>(date)</i>
Date to be reviewed	October 2024	<i>(date)</i>
Signed on behalf of Wild City Collective CIC		

Name of signatory	Kathryn Clark
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	DIRECTOR