

Safeguarding Policy for Flourish Oxford Ltd

Introduction

Flourish Oxford Ltd is a company run for the following purposes:

Wellbeing - Activities to sooth, calm and build positive connections. Delivered as creative workshops, or Better Health at Work courses, there's plenty of Wellbeing opportunities for individuals, groups, schools and organisations.

Therapeutic Counselling - An experienced Therapeutic Counsellor, using creative, relational and developmental person-centered activities to connect and calm young minds and build supportive, trusted relationships.

Training/Consultancy - An accomplished Learning and Development professional, combining Therapeutic Wellbeing Practice with delivery and facilitation skills honed over many years.

Company Number: 12760014

The company has adopted this safeguarding policy and expects every adulty working or helping at Flourish Oxford Ltd to comply with it. Consequently this policy shall apply to all staff, directors, volunteers students or anyone working on behalf of the company.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy is intended to protect children who receive any service from us, including those who are the children of adults who may receive services from us. Under the policy, the term children shall mean any person who under eighteen years of age.

The company believes that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and us committed to the protection of children and young people. This policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

The Risks to Children

Children can be vulnerable to different forms of abuse and harm. It is important to recognise that abuse and harm of children can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviours. For example, children can be at risk of:

- Physical or emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Trafficking and modern slavery
- Exposure to or infliction of domestic abuse
- Bullying or cyber bullying
- Exposure to other inappropriate content or behaviour, such as violence of criminal behaviour
- Self-herm
- Physical harm when engaging with activities without adequate supervision

The casual factors of any such harm and/or abuse can also be wide ranging. For example, children can be place at risk by family members or by members of the community.

Safeguarding Principles

Safeguarding children from harm and abuse is an essential responsibility for our company. We are committed to ensuring that any child who comes into contact with our services is properly safeguarded. Every person under this policy must ensure that they play an active role in ensuring that children are properly safeguarded.

Every person under this policy holds responsibility for:

- Remaining alert and aware of possible safeguarding risks to children
- Guarding children against harmful environments with appropriate actions (for example, adequate supervision or ensuring safe environment).
- Taking positive steps to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children engaging with us as a company
- Reporting concerns expeditiously and appropriately, in line with child protection procedures
- Understanding the duty to report specific concerns (and understanding confidentiality)
- Challenging any inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adult and reporting this accordingly
- Acting appropriately in the presence of children
- Not taking any inappropriate risks
- Not smoking, drinking or taking any form of illicit substance in the presence of children

Safeguarding Officer

Any question, report or concern in relation to the safeguarding of children should be shared with our Safeguarding Officer:

Name: Nicolette Glashan
Email: nicolette@flourishoxford.com
Telephone: 07866 502 178

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All personal information we may process relating to children shall be processed and stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy, located at www.flourishoxford.com

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, any adult present should call 999. Thereafter, the Safeguarding Officer should be contacted as soon as possible.

Where there is a safeguarding concern but no immediate risk of serious harm, the adult who has heard or witnessed this concern should consult with the Safeguarding Officer as soon as practicable and by no later than the end of the same day.

Where any child makes a disclosure relating to harm or abuse to an adult, it is important for that adult to:

- Listen calmly and carefully, showing that their views are taken seriously
- Provide an appropriate and honest level of reassurance
- Avoid interrogating children and asking probing, intrusive and/or leading questions
- Avoid making false promises regarding secrets and confidentiality with the child (because concern of abuse/harm must be shared with the Safeguarding Officer and any subsequent safeguarding referral)
- Make a confidential written record of the discussion either during the discussion or immediately afterwards. The record should include key details of the disclosure together with any relevant times, dates, places and people concerned. Audio or video recordings of children making disclosures should be avoided.
- Refer all relevant information to the Safeguarding Officer as soon as practicable afterwards, and by no later than the end of the day.

Upon receipt of any safeguarding concern, the Safeguarding Officer shall consult any other relevant persons and will make any appropriate referrals to the relevant authorities, such as the applicable Local Authority Children's services department.

Reporting Concerns About Other Adults

Where any person has a concern regarding the conduct of an adult connected to Flourish Oxford Ltd, which poses or may pose a safeguarding risk to children such as:

- Harming a child either physically or emotionally
- Exposing a child to behaviour which may cause physical or emotional harm
- Engaging in criminal activity concerning a child

This must be raised in the first instance with the Safeguarding Officer (or where this is not appropriate, a different senior member of the organisation) so that the next appropriate steps can be agreed and actioned. We recognise that there could be circumstances where a person may need to report a matter that has taken place outside of the person's engagement with the company.

Usually, any appropriate steps following a safeguarding referral in respect of an individual connected to the company will include either:

- Further initial enquiries
- Escalation of the applicable Local Authority Children's Services department for assessment and/or for police investigation
- Instigation of any appropriate disciplinary, formal investigation processes and suspension of any person concerned with the Company.
- A referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service, or any other relevant regulatory bodies.

Any person within the Company who has allegations made against them shall be informed properly in a formal meeting of the particulars of the allegations and the relevant next steps that will be taken. Such a meeting should ordinarily be held by the Safeguarding Officer. On certain occasions, such a meeting may not be convened until it has been approved by any authorities involved (such as the police or the relevant Local Authority).

Any person from within the Company who has allegations made against them shall be treated fairly. All enquiries, investigations and decisions taken shall be just and fair, with the safety of any child concerned at the heart of the process.

Any person from within the Company who makes an allegation, against another person from within the Company shall be listened to, taken seriously and shall be treated fairly and justly throughout the process of enquiries, investigations and decision making.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Checks under the appropriate legislation should be undertaken wherever possible. The groups of people we will usually undertake checks with the DBS in relation to safeguarding are:

Volunteers, visiting artists and wellbeing practitioners

Wherever we deem it is necessary and appropriate to remove any individual from a position of work in an activity which is regulated under the relevant legislation, we shall also be obliged to make a referral to the DBS.

Safeguarding Children at Events and Activities

Responsibilities and Planning

Typically we may arrange the following types of events and/or activities which could involve children

- Informal Creative Workshops that benefit individual health, community engagement, social connectedness and emotional wellbeing.
- Workshops that enhance overall wellbeing and bring people together from different parts of the community.

The safeguarding officer shall hold ultimate responsibility for the safety and appropriateness of the event. They may however appoint a delegate with some responsibilities at a specific event. Although the safeguarding officer and any appointed delegates will hold ultimate responsibility for overseeing the safety for events and activities, all individuals under this policy must also play an active role in ensuring the safety of children at all times.

Appropriate background checking shall be undertaken for any adult engaged by us in connection with an event or activity involving children, wherever this is required by law (see relevant section above on DBS).

For certain types of events or activities, we may issue an additional code of conduct policy, or some specific requirements which is specific to that occasion. Any such additional documentation will be made available to all those concerned in advance. They should be read carefully and adhered to.

Venues

The location for any events or activities which are held by us shall be risk assessed properly in reference to the suitability and safety for children. Fire and Safety procedures shall be made clear to all those involved.

First Aid

Any accident or injury concerning a child should be brought to the attention of the nearest First Aider and should thereafter be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

Consent Forms

We shall always obtain written consent from a parent or guardian for any event which takes place with children in attendance without their parent or guardian present. Consent will be obtained via the online booking process.

Consent forms will include emergency contact details and will set out any specific safety needs/requirements for children.

All consent forms will be kept secure and shall be stored in accordance with our data protection policy.

Supervision

For most activities and events, our procedures for supervision of children is as follows:

- For groups of children aged 7-12 there will be at least one adult present for every 8 children. For groups of children 13 + there will be one adult to every 10 children.

Where we hold any events or activities whereby a child attends alongside their parent or guardian, parents or guardians should ensure that children are properly supervised.

Managing Behaviour of Children Generally

It is important for all adults engaged by us to recognise that children can face harm from their peers. This can commonly take the form of bullying. Bullying can be defined as any behaviour which is

- Repeated; and
- Has the intention of hurting somebody either physically or emotionally

Bullying can sometimes be motivated by prejudices based on certain groups, for example gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. Bullying can often include:

- Physical harm perpetrated against another child
- Name calling and threats
- Cyberbullying (threats and abusive comments made via technology)

Any instance of bullying or concern relating to possible bullying between children at any event or activities arranged by us will usually be dealt with by us in the first instance as follows:

- All children and any relevant staff shall be spoken to individually to ascertain the facts. Where appropriate, children will receive a first warning and relevant support.

Where any behaviour amounting to bullying continues following this, the following steps will be taken:

- The child or children who have been found to be responsible for persistent behaviour which amounts to bullying another child, shall be asked to have some time away from the groups and a reintegration meeting organised where appropriate.

All steps in relation to the prevention or management of bullying should be taken in consultation with the Safeguarding Officer.

Photography

On some occasions, we may take photographs featuring children. We recognise that photography of children carries risks, such as:

- The potential for images to be re-used, shared or adapted in a damaging or inappropriate manner
- The general risk of sharing images and the impact this could have on a child's public image as they grow older

In view of these risks, we will:

- Always seek written permission from a child and their parent/guardian before taking and sharing an image of them
- Always ensure that a child and their parent/guardian are properly informed how an image will be used and shared
- Always ensure a child's identity is protected as far as is possible within any published material
- Ask that parents, guardians, children and any other person connected to them who may wish to share any of our published images which features other children to refrain from doing so unless they have the permission of the other children and their parent/guardian
- Always store photos in accordance with our data protection policy

Members of the Public

We do also recognise that members of the public may take photographs when they are attending our events or activities.

We ask that any parents, guardians and other members of the public take the following into consideration when taking photos at our events or activities:

- Images of other children should not be shared on social media without the permission of any children who feature in the images (where ascertainable), together with the permission of the children's parent/guardian
- Images which are shared on social media should be shared cautiously, with the appropriate privacy and security settings in place.

This Policy is approved and robustly endorsed by Flourish Oxford Ltd and is due for review in October 2024.

Signed: Nicolette Glashan
Nicolette Glashan – Safeguarding Officer
01/10/2023