

## Safeguarding Children Policy

This policy was developed to give guidance to Silver Lined Horizons (SLH) staff who are working with children and young people on projects and programmes. It stands for all aspects of projects undertaken by the organisation that entails working with children and vulnerable adults.

This document is in line with the legal framework set out in The Children Act 1989 and subsequent legislation, and all associated guidance, in particular Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015.

### 1. Definitions:

**Child or young person:** Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

**Adult at risk:** A person aged 18 or above who is unable to look after their own wellbeing, property, rights, or other interests, and is at risk of harm (either from another person's behaviour or their own behaviour) because they have a disability, mental disorder, illness, or physical or mental infirmity. An adult at risk is more vulnerable to being harmed than other adults. For concerns about adults, see the [Safeguarding Adults Policy](#).

### 2. Policy Statement

SLH believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice, which protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Provide protection for the children and young people who receive Silver Lined Horizons services.
- Provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.

This policy is mandatory for anybody working for or on behalf of Silver Lined Horizons meaning all paid staff, including staff working as Associates or on sessional contracts. The policy must be applied whenever there is a concern about a child/young person or about the behaviour of an adult.

This policy applies to all children and young people up to the age of 18 years, and the principles and ethos of the procedures apply to vulnerable young people over the age of 18 year.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with stakeholders.
- Reporting to Social Services any suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering, or is at risk of suffering abuse.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training including guidance on what to do if an individual is worried about a child or young person.

### **3. Legislation**

There are key pieces of legislation and national guidance that set out the framework for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk, which must be followed:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Children Act 2004
- The Children and Young Persons Act 2008
- The Care Act 2014
- The Children and Family Act 2014
- Serious Crime Act 2015
- Modern Slavery Act 2015

### **4. Other Policies and Procedures**

Other policies and procedures related to safeguarding across the organisation, which may also apply in specific situations and may need to be considered, include:

- Rules on Code of Conduct Policy
- Ethical Standards in Youth Engagement Policy
- Recruitment and Selection policy
- Mobile Working Policy
- Photography and Filming Consent Policy
- Visit Agreement Form
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy

## 5. Roles and Responsibilities

The **Safeguarding Lead** is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is given high priority within SLH. Specific responsibilities include:

- Providing support and advice to all staff on safeguarding matters related to children and adults at risk.
- Ensuring that all members of staff receive training on child protection and safeguarding as part of their induction, and on an ongoing basis where required.
- Referring the matter to the local authority social care team where abuse of a child or young person is reported or suspected.
- Maintaining an overview of safeguarding issues and monitoring the implementation of this policy.

The safeguarding lead should undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. This training should be updated at least every two years.

**All staff** have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children and young people's welfare is paramount. Any staff member who has a concern about a child or young person's welfare in relation to safeguarding should follow the safeguarding procedure below.

The named Safeguarding Lead in SLH is:

Natasha Rego – [natasha@silvelinedhorizons.com](mailto:natasha@silvelinedhorizons.com)

07733 102182

## **6. Procedures**

### **6.1 Abuse**

Recognising the signs and indicators of abuse poses challenges for most professionals, especially those who are not required to respond to safeguarding concerns on a day to day basis. Guidance has therefore been provided in this document to assist with the signs and indicators. Abuse can be understood under the categories of: physical, sexual, neglect and emotional abuse. The full definitions of abuse are detailed in the end section of this document.

### **6.2 Responding to concerns, allegations or suspicions of abuse**

If any person in SLH becomes aware of the signs and indicators of abuse, suspects, or is told that a child or young person is being, has been, or is likely to be abused or neglected, they must take action as set out in this procedure.

Concerns about abuse covers a broad spectrum, from the immediate risk of serious harm (where a referral to police or other agencies would be required) to 'lower level' indicators, that may require action such as a plan for further monitoring or referral to Early Help services. It is important to understand that these indicators could form part of a wider picture, and may need to be shared with other agencies. Lower level concerns can also become more significant if they occur frequently over a period of time. It is therefore important to make an informed, professional judgement when taking action. This should be done in consultation with managers, other agencies and children and young people themselves.

Responding to the child or young person when abuse is alleged, or signs and indicators are seen or heard. When responding to a disclosure of abuse from a child or young person, staff and volunteers should:

- Listen carefully to what is said and allow the child or young person to talk at their own pace.
- Be careful not to compromise potential evidence.
- Stay calm and find an appropriate opportunity in the discussion to explain the likelihood that information will need to be shared with other responsible people. Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Call the police if you believe the child or young person is at risk of immediate significant harm.
- Only ask questions for clarification and do not ask leading questions (leading questions may elicit answers, which could compromise evidence).
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you. Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform.
- As soon as possible after the discussions, make a clear, written record of any concern identified in our Concern Recording Form
- Report any concerns to the line manager, designated member of Lead Safeguarding Officer, who will then decide what (if any) further action is required.

- Decide whether any subsequent action should be taken that may involve either contacting children's services, the police, or the NSPCC on 0808 800 5000. A concern will be raised if any of the following circumstances have or are happening to a child; physical abuse; emotional abuse; neglect; sexual abuse.

**If the situation is an emergency, we will dial 999.**

## **The Safeguarding Process**

You see or hear something which suggests that abuse has taken place or that someone is or may be, at risk from harm

- Harm can be to a person's physical or emotional wellbeing, or to their development

Is there an immediate need for medical attention, has there been a crime, or is there immediate danger?

- If so, deal with that by providing first aid, contacting emergency services and/or alerting others to ask for support

If an allegation or disclosure has been made or you are not clear what has happened, ask only those questions you need to in order to clarify the situation and gather relevant facts.

- Good questions are: tell me about...explain to me about....

Report the situation to the safeguarding lead

- Do this as soon as possible, at least within two hours. Describe what you have seen or heard, what you or others have done, and what the child or young person's views are

Record the incident. If not immediately possible to use an Incident Report Form, please ensure to complete it by the end of the working day.

- Be factual and objective, describe actions and conversations. Include timescales.

**(Last reviewed January 2019**

**Next update January 2020)**

## **DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE:**

Abuse: 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. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

- Physical abuse: a form of abuse which involves hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult at risk.
- Fabricated illness: caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or adult at risk.
- Emotional abuse: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult at risk such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the student's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child or young person that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations. These may include interactions beyond their development 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 (including cyberbullying), causing the child to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of the child. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse: involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: this is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological need, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of a maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access

to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or young person's basic emotional needs.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** is any procedure which involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs.

**Child sexual exploitation:** Child sexual exploitation is a type of sexual abuse. It occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

- **Online abuse:** This is any type of abuse that happens on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones.
- **Peer on Peer abuse:** this is most likely to include, but may not be limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), sexual violence & sexual harassment, gender-based violence/sexual assaults, sexting, teen partner abuse, initiation/hazing type violence/rituals.
- **Bullying and cyberbullying:** Bullying can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child or adult at risk both physically and emotionally.
- **Domestic abuse:** Witnessing domestic abuse is child abuse, and teenagers can suffer domestic abuse in their relationships.
- **Child trafficking:** Child trafficking is a type of abuse where children are recruited, moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold.
- **Grooming:** Children and adults at risk can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional.
- **Harmful sexual behaviour:** Children and adults at risk who develop harmful sexual behaviour harm themselves and others.
- **Financial Abuse:** Which includes taking another person's money or possessions – for example, having money or property stolen, being pressured into giving people money or changing a will, misuse of benefits, not being allowed access to money.
- **Discriminating abuse:** Discriminating abuse includes any type of abuse aimed at a child or adult at risk because of their colour, religion, appearance or sexuality. For example, ignoring spiritual or religious beliefs, comments or jokes about a person's disability, age, race, sexual orientation, or gender / gender identity, ignoring cultural needs, for example diet or clothing.
- **Organisational abuse:** This is abuse occur in an establishment such as a college, school (including residential provision) that may range from poor practice to ill

treatment and gross misconduct. For example, lack of individual care, no flexibility of bedtimes or waking, deprived environment and lack of stimulation.

- Abuse of Individual Rights/discriminatory abuse/racial abuse: Abuse of individual rights is a violation of human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Discriminatory abuse consists of abusive or derisive attitudes or behaviour based on a person's sex, sexuality, ethnic origin, race, culture, age, disability or any other discriminatory abuse - this includes hate crime. Forced marriage is also an abuse of human rights and falls within the definition of adult abuse