



SSDS Safeguarding policy

June 2020

To Be Reviewed June 2021

This policy should be read in conjunction with SSDS Safeguarding Policy Statement, Child-friendly safeguarding policy and Safeguarding flow-chart

Principles and Values

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. As such it does not rest solely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to take a lead responsibility in all of the areas covered within this policy.

All member children and their siblings are able to talk to any member of staff, trustee, volunteer or service provider to share concerns or talk about situations which are giving them worries. The staff will listen to them, take their worries seriously and share the information with the safeguarding lead.

In addition, we may provide children and young people with information of who they can talk to within the community and with local or national organisations who can provide support or help.

We review this policy at least annually.

Date Approved by Board of Trustees: _____

Signed by the Chair: _____

Date of next review: _____

Definitions

Within this document:

'Safeguarding' means protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm, abuse or neglect and ensuring the best circumstances for them to thrive. Our safeguarding practice applies to every child and vulnerable adult.

The term **Staff** includes all paid staff, volunteers and trustees.

Child refers to anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

Young person refers to all people between 18 and 24 inclusive.

Vulnerable adult refers to anyone over the age of 18 who for any reason is unable to fully take care of themselves or protect themselves from exploitation. This may be permanent or temporary.

Parent refers to birth parents and other adults in a parenting role for example adoptive parents, guardians, step-parents and foster carers.

Service Provider refers to any person or organisation providing services to Stepping Stones DS whether paid or voluntary.

Key personnel:

The designated safeguarding lead for the charity is:

Alex Brewer - alex@steppingstonesds.co.uk

The safeguarding Trustee is:

Josh McCormack - Josh@steppingstonesds.co.uk

What is abuse?

Types of abuse include, but are not limited to:

- Domestic Abuse: affecting parent and child(ren)
 - Physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial, coercive control.
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced Marriage
- So-called 'Honour' based abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect/self-neglect
- Violence
- Trafficking, kidnapping
- Gangs and County Lines
- Cyber-bullying, sexting and grooming
- Bullying
- Prejudice-based abuse
- Radicalisation

Factors that increase the risk to the welfare of children and vulnerable adults include, but are not limited to:

- Disability
- Age (either under 18, or over 65)
- Homelessness
- Parent/carer mental ill-health
- Drug addiction
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Requirement for intimate personal care
- Being in the care system (e.g. in foster care)
- Parent/carer in prison

A child or vulnerable adult is more likely to experience abuse or neglect from someone they know than from a stranger.

Stepping Stones DS recognises that the best safeguarding is through prevention. We therefore run DBS checks for all staff and volunteers aged over 16. All staff, trustees and service providers are also required to undertake NSPCC online Introduction to Safeguarding course or equivalent as a minimum at least every three years.

The DSL and Trustee safeguarding lead are trained to level 3 safeguarding standard.

We will also seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing them, listening and respecting them
- Supporting our service providers to ensure their staff and volunteers are adequately trained
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies that need to know – not hindering any investigation
- Using our safeguarding procedures to manage any allegations against any staff or activity provider appropriately
- Providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable adults both online and offline

Raising a concern

Concerns may come about in a number of ways including:

- A direct allegation made by a child or vulnerable adult
- Someone witnesses abuse
- Noticing a change in behaviour
- Noticing signs of abuse

All allegations or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously.

All disclosures of abuse will be handed in the following way:

- Calmly
- Objectively
- With compassion
- Safely
- With a written record of the disclosure (made afterwards if more appropriate)
- With any evidence preserved.

The following will also be observed:

- Do not promise to keep any secrets.
- Do not investigate
- Do not make judgemental comments (e.g. “that must have been scary”)
- Do not ask leading questions
- Do not destroy any evidence
- Do not confront the alleged abuser
- Do not make decisions on your own.

All allegations will be reported to the DSL who will keep a confidential record of any reports. The DSL will share, where appropriate, information with relevant bodies such as Children’s Services and the police within 24-hours. Other actions that do not require an urgent response, but are important will take place within 3 working days.

Useful contacts:

Alex Brewer (DSL): 07506 870702; alex@steppingstonesds.co.uk

Josh McCormack (Safeguarding Trustee): 07557 229695; josh@steppingstonesds.co.uk

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Childline: 0800 11 11

Children's services:

- Bracknell Forest: 01344 352005
- Hampshire: 0300 555 1384
- Surrey: 0300 470 9100