



STEPNEY BANK STABLES

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Last review date: April 2019

Next review date: April 2020

Safeguarding Policy

Rationale:

Mission statement:

Stepney Bank Stables is committed to making horses and riding accessible to the whole community. We offer opportunities to volunteers to develop confidence and skills whilst helping others.

Our Values:

We provide outstanding equestrian training. Commercial riding lessons provide the focus for all other activities and enable us to support those most in need.

We engage with vulnerable young people, raising their aspirations and helping them to feel positive about themselves and their futures.

We are fully committed to implementing a rigorous and thorough Safeguarding Policy to enable us to do our utmost to promote the well-being of all young people, staff and volunteers involved in activities at Stepney Bank Stables.

This Policy is supported by the availability of regular training provided internally and externally to all staff. Senior managers will hold a level 3 qualification in Safeguarding, workers on the Children and Young People's Project will hold a level 2 and the whole team will hold as a minimum a level 1 qualification. Everyone will undertake refresher training as necessary

N.B For the purposes of this policy anyone under the age of eighteen years should be considered a child.

1. Key Principles.

The key principles that underwrite this policy are:

- The child's welfare is paramount.
- All children whatever their age culture, ability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- To ensure that adults working with children are also provided protection and are aware of the best practice so they can be protected from wrongful allegations.
- All employees and volunteers with substantial access to children will be vetted and references sought prior to employment.
- Guidance will be provided to all volunteers and staff regarding Safeguarding and their responsibilities within this policy.
- Staff and volunteers will protect and safeguard all children they have contact with.

- Staff and volunteers will respect the diversity and human rights of all children and young people.
- Any concerns regarding possible child abuse must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer on duty.

Definitions of the four categories of Abuse:

Neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a child or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger including cold, starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child's health or development including non-organic failure to thrive.

Physical

Actual or likely physical injury to a child or a failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child including deliberate poisoning, suffocation or Munchausen Syndrome by proxy.

Emotional

Actual or likely to have a severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment. (This category also includes bullying)

Sexual

Actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child including exposure to sexual explicit material and sexual harassment as well as all forms of physical sexual contact.

Additional Information

- Child abuse is often difficult to recognise unless the child makes a disclosure
- Injuries may not be conclusive.
- There must always be concern if the parent or carer shows no anxiety about the child's condition or coldly blames the child. Most parents or carers express guilt about accidents involving their children, even if this is misplaced.

- Suspicion is raised when: 1) there is a delay in seeking treatment, 2) inadequate explanations are given, or the child has injuries of different ages or there is a history of injury 3) there is evidence of a failure to thrive.

N.B Different categories of abuse may be inter-related. For example, emotional abuse in some form is apparent in all other forms of abuse.

Recognising Child Abuse

Recognising the signs of child abuse is one of the first steps in protecting children.

The following is by no means a comprehensive list, but it demonstrates some signs which may give rise for concern.

- Unexplained bruising, injuries, burns or illnesses
- Changes in behaviour / character, such as becoming very withdrawn
- Sexually explicit language, behaviour or mode of dress
- Being left outside the home for long periods of time without food or drink
- Showing uncharacteristic aggressive behaviour
- Showing unexpected fear of an adult
- Refusing to attend school, or other school related issues
- Low self-esteem
- Depression and/or self-harm which may lead to suicide
- Developmental delay – mentally, physically or emotionally
- Reluctance to go home
- Reluctance to disclose personal details such as contact details
- Too much money or lots of new possessions

It is important to remember that changes in behaviour or signs that you have noted may not necessarily mean that a child is being abused. There may be other issues involved including bullying or domestic problems.

It is not your responsibility to decide if it is abuse – it is your responsibility to act on your concerns.

Responding to a disclosure

Receive

- Take seriously whatever the child tells you
- Listen and be supportive
- **Do not** ask detailed or leading questions or press the individual for more information than they want to give you. Instead ask “do you want to tell me more?” **Never ask** how, when, why, who? Etc.
- Do not show signs of shock, this may lead the disclosing person to feel they have done something wrong.

Reassure

- Do reassure the child that it is not their fault
- Do not make judgements or say anything about the alleged abuser
- Do not promise to keep secrets. Be honest about your own position and if possible name the person you will talk to about this matter
- Do not ask the child to repeat the disclosure to anyone else
- Do not display shock or disapproval when the child is making the disclosure
- Remember the child may not regard the experience as wrong or painful. They may not feel angry or guilty.
- Keep the child informed of any action you are going to take
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone other than the appropriate designated person.

Respond

- Tell the designated person as soon as possible
- Make a written record of everything as soon as possible. This record must state everything the child has said, these records must be precise and state only what the child has said, do not add anything which you think the child may have meant or implied similarly if the child uses “pet” words do not translate them. Sign and date the record –this should be submitted to the designated person who must keep it in a secure, locked place.
- Do not destroy any evidence. Initial disclosure, even if retracted may still be referred to
- **Take care of yourself** – make sure that you have the opportunity to discuss your feelings (in confidence) with a fellow professional

It is vital to follow these guidelines as closely as possible, any failure to do so may prejudice legal proceedings.

Dealing with an allegation of Abuse made against a member of staff or management

Any member of staff, volunteer or trustee who has an allegation of abuse made against them will be suspended immediately and remain suspended until the allegation has been investigated.

Any such allegation will be reported to the Newcastle LADO within 24 hours who will conduct their own investigation.

All steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality and allegations will not be discussed with all staff or board members.

During the course of the investigation and until its outcome is known regular contact will be kept with the suspended worker and support will be offered at every level.

Should the allegation prove to be unfounded, the employee will return to work and all efforts will be made to support them through this difficult time.

Procedures and Good Working Practice

This Safeguarding Policy aims to protect children and workers by promoting good working practices. If followed they will:

- Help to protect children and young people from abuse
- Minimise the risk of unfounded or mistaken allegations against individuals
- Support those who have suffered abuse
- Protect the organisation

The Stables has a friendly relaxed atmosphere and professional boundaries are not always clear. We must be aware that genuine responses can be open to misinterpretation. In order to reduce the risk of misinterpretation the following list will act as a guide to protect staff, volunteers and young people alike:

- Where at all possible do not be alone with a single child
- Keep everything public
- An open door policy should be in operation at all times
- Always arrange to meet children/vulnerable people with a parent/carer present
- Encourage parents/carers to attend the stables

- Ensure parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities. For example, to collect children on time, provide us with current contact numbers etc
 - Never be alone with a child if they are changing
 - Never take a child to your own home. If for example a child has not been collected and you cannot contact a parent you should ring Social Services on 0191 2772500
 - All staff must be seen to observe the law in terms of drugs, violence etc
 - If an adult witnesses any behaviour which may be misunderstood they should report it to senior management, who will then advise the worker about their conduct
 - No adult should develop inappropriate relationships with young people or a relationship which may cause them a conflict of interest, such as singling a young person out for special treatment, which may have been done for the best possible reasons may leave you vulnerable to accusations by the young person or others
 - Any training which involves close contact should be done in groups, if group work is not appropriate for that particular volunteer, the training must take place within sight of others
 - Any form of physical punishment (including shouting) is not acceptable at SBS
 - It is not appropriate to offer lifts to young people when they are alone. If you do have to do so (for reasons of safety) you must obtain parental consent first, making it clear that the child will be alone with you. If you cannot make contact with a parent, make sure another member of staff knows your intentions
 - If you the last member of staff on-site and a young person has not been collected make sure that you telephone the parents and make this clear and please inform a colleague. It is best to wait in a public area – e.g. reception or outside
 - If you do use your car make sure you have “fully comprehensive business” cover and ensure you are insured to carry other people’s children
 - No alcohol or drugs whatsoever should be consumed by adults working at SBS, nor should they still be working whilst still under the influence of alcohol etc
 - No child under the age of six may be booked in to volunteer without an accompanying adult
 - Any touching should be guided by the child’s needs e.g. for reasons of first aid or mounting/dismounting and permission should be sought from the child first
 - No intimate behaviour whatsoever by any members of SBS or its staff will be tolerated on site
- This is not a comprehensive list and if you are in any doubt about what is or is not acceptable please confer with your line-manager.

Aged 18 and over

If you have safeguarding concerns about a young person who is aged 18 or over, you should raise them under safeguarding adult procedures. Safeguarding adult procedures will change from 1 April under the Care Act 2014 to include more adults at risk, as below.

Under 18

If the young person is not yet 18, safeguarding concerns should be raised using your organisation’s safeguarding children procedures.

Safeguarding when the young person is aged 17 ½ to 18 years

In September 2014 Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) and Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) agreed a joint Safeguarding Transitions Protocol to use if the young person is 17 ½ to 18 years. The Safeguarding Transitions Protocol sets out the process to be followed for young people aged 17 ½ to 18 years when there are safeguarding children procedures ongoing, if there is a concern that the young person will continue to be at risk of harm following their 18th birthday.

The Safeguarding Transitions Protocol is about transfer arrangements between Newcastle City Council's safeguarding children procedures and safeguarding adult procedures.

Under the protocol the Newcastle City Council Safeguarding Adults Manager will decide whether to implement the safeguarding adults procedures. If this happens, whoever made the referral to the Initial Response Service in children's social care should then complete a referral form for Safeguarding Adults and send it to adult social care. The worker who works with the young person would also be expected to attend the hand-over safeguarding adults meeting, which will be held at least a month before the young person turns 18.

DO NOT RELY ON YOUR GOOD NAME

RELY ON GOOD WORKING PRACTICE

Adult to Child Ratio

When working with young people aged 8 to 12 the maximum acceptable ratios of staff to young people is 1 member of staff to 8 young people. This is the same for older volunteers aged 12 to 18 whilst they are in training.

Recruitment of Volunteers

Criminal records, vetting and references

- All necessary adult volunteers will be DBS checked in line with the new Guidelines.
- All adult volunteers must supply two references and young volunteers must supply one reference.
- All references will be checked in advance of a new employee or volunteer starting.
- References will be sought from people who can give information on the suitability of volunteers to work with children and vulnerable people.
- All volunteers will be required to fill in an application form, which will outline their experience and background. (Support with this is available).
- In addition to the application form all volunteers will be asked to sign a declaration stating that there is no reason known to them that would prevent them working with children.

Interviews

All volunteers will be asked to attend an informal Interview/Assessment, this will be used in conjunction with references, to determine whether the volunteer understands their responsibilities at S.B.S

Induction

All new volunteers will be required to attend an induction, once their references have been checked.

At the induction volunteers will:

- Be made aware of their role in implementing Policies E.g. Health and Safety, Child Protection etc
- Given guidelines as to their role within the organization and the duties they may be asked to carry out
- They will be shown: Toilets, First Aid kit, Fire regulations and assembly points, volunteer room and all safety notices

They will have explained to them:

- Yard procedures
- Health and Safety issues
- Accident reporting
- Booking in and signing in procedures
- How to claim expenses

It is the responsibility of the member of staff conducting the induction to identify and record any support or training needs the new volunteer may have. Only those members of staff who have

completed their probationary periods and undergone Safeguarding training may conduct these inductions.

Probationary period

All volunteers must complete a three month probationary period during which they are closely supervised by volunteer mentors, to ensure their suitability. If necessary this period may be extended.

Records

A list of all applicants, including any relevant information will be kept securely on site and up-dated regularly.

**If you have a concern that someone is being abused or neglected then you must take action.
In an emergency always contact the Police or emergency services: 999**

If you have any safeguarding concerns relating to any young person attending SBS please inform a member of the youth team or contact the Welfare manager – Denise Wilson 0191-261-5544

Useful Contacts 0191 277 2500

Emergency Duty Team 0191 278 7878 (outside of office hours)

Deaf community: 18001

- Initial Response Service – 0191 277 2500
- Emergency Duty Team – 0191 278 7878
- Northumbria Police – 101 (in an emergency always dial 999)
- NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

NSCB Co-ordinator -Sue Kirkley, Social Services Directorate, Civic Centre

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