



# Child Protection Policy

## 1. Introduction

We in the Midsomer Norton Community Trust are committed to a practice, which safeguards and promotes the welfare of children.

Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which cause children and young people harm. We will safeguard children and young people by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for safer recruitment in the selection of staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management oversight for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

We are also committed to reviewing our child protection policy and good practice guidance on an annual basis.

## 2. Statement of Intent

It is the policy of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm. This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of activities and programmes either in the spaces we manage and/or the events and activities we run.

## 3. Types of abuse

**Neglect:** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.



**Physical abuse:** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Emotional abuse:** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

#### **4. Guidelines for all Midsomer Norton Community Trust staff and volunteers**

Staff must at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust.

##### **A. RESPECT**

Staff and volunteers are committed to:

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a child or young person is saying
- Valuing each child and young person
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person

##### **B. BY EXAMPLE**

Staff and volunteers will

- Provide an example, which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
- Respect a young person's right to privacy



## **C. ONE TO ONE CONTACT**

Staff and volunteers will:

- Avoid situations where they are alone with children, away from others. Staff should try to always be visible to others in their contact with children.
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or young person make every effort to keep this meeting as open as possible.
- If privacy is needed, ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts.

## **D. PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Staff and volunteers should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or a young person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises, for example, where a child or young person has limited mobility, Midsomer Norton Community Trust staff or volunteers should seek a member of school staff or leader of the youth organisation to deal with such an incident
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind

## **E. GENERAL**

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow ourselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking situations such as tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person, even in fun

## **F. RELATIONSHIPS**

Staff and volunteers who are involved in relationships with other members of staff or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within the Midsomer Norton Community Trust or the work of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust.

## **G. SHARING INFORMATION**

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In the Midsomer Norton Community Trust every effort will be made to assure that, should individuals have concerns, they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the management to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities.



Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

### **Children & Young People**

Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. The Midsomer Norton Community Trust will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, the Midsomer Norton Community Trust staff and volunteers will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

### **Parents**

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation.

We achieve this by:

- Publicising information on all the primary, post-primary, youth and parenting work we are involved with.
- Publishing the named Designated Child Protection Person(s) and how to make a complaint by contacting the Trust's Community Development Manager on 01761 419133, visiting the Trust Office at Midsomer Norton Town Hall, writing to them at The Town Hall, The Island, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2HQ (marked Private and Confidential)
- Publishing a full copy of the Child Protection Policy on the Midsomer Norton Community Trust website at [www.midsomernortoncommunitytrust.co.uk](http://www.midsomernortoncommunitytrust.co.uk)

### **Staff & Volunteers**

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is imperative that each member of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of the Midsomer Norton Community Trust's procedures. Each member of staff will receive updated training in Child Protection every three years.

### **Other Bodies**

A copy of our Child Protection Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

## **H. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

All action is taken in line with the following legislation/guidance:

- South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Shared Procedures, [www.onlineprocedures.co.uk/swcpp](http://www.onlineprocedures.co.uk/swcpp)
- Safeguarding Children in Education September 2013



- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

In any case where an allegation is made, or someone in the Midsomer Norton Community Trust has concerns, a record should be made. Details must include, as far as practical:

- Name of child or young person
- Age
- Home Address (if known)
- Date of Birth (if known)
- Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility
- Telephone numbers if available
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details;
- What has prompted the concerns?
- Include dates and times of any specific incidents
- Has the child or young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. school, designated officer, children's social care.
- Has anyone else been consulted?

## **I. DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSONS**

- The designated person will immediately inform Children & Families Assessment Intervention Team (CAFAIT) by telephone. **Telephone number: 01225 396312/313 Out of hours telephone number: 01454615165.**
- The telephone referral to CAFAIT will be confirmed in writing using the form marked C2, within a maximum of 48 hours, ideally 24 hours, with a copy to the designated person for child protection (insert name). Essential information will include the child's name, address, date of birth, family composition, and reason for referral, name of person receiving the referral and any advice given. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.
- Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual children and young people/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

## **J. ALLEGED ABUSE BY STAFF, MANAGERS, VOLUNTEERS OR TRUSTEES**

- When an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then the allegation must be passed to your designated person for child protection Alex Davis or their deputy Emma Hamilton or, if the allegation concerns them both, direct to the Local Authority Designated Officer.(LADO)
- Your designated person for child protection should contact one of the Local Authority designated officers for consultation **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Jackie Deas on 01225396810** or if unavailable **Head of Safeguarding, Stephen Mason on 01225396974**



within 1 working day. The designated officer contacted will record a note of the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken.

## **K. TRAINING**

- The designated person and his/her deputy must receive training every 2 years in Child Protection. Training is available from B&NES Local Safeguarding Children Board
- All staff and volunteers shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis, at least every 3 years.

## **L. RECORD-KEEPING**

- All records, information and confidential notes will be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet.
- Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

## **M. DISCLOSURE**

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Child Protection will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Listen to the child, rather than question him or her directly.
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what the child says seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption
- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event,
- Use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact one of (*organisations Designated Persons*) for advice / guidance.
- The Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral.
- If Designated Person is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer /member of staff with the concern should make direct contact with the relevant organisation themselves.
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.



## **N. FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information about what to do if you are worried a child is being abused, see the B&NES LSCB website, <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/child-protection/local-safeguarding-children-board>

Leaflets available from B&NES LSCB also include:

- Copies of the DfES summary booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused'.
- The South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Shared Procedures can be accessed at: [www.swcpp.org.uk](http://www.swcpp.org.uk)