

Child Protection Policy



HOME OFFICE GUIDELINES SAFE FROM HARM: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS PUB: HOME OFFICE 1993

In order to safeguard the welfare of the children and young people in their charge, voluntary organisations should consider the issues raised by each of the following statements of principles and then, if they wish to do so, take any action which they deem to be appropriate in the light of their circumstances and structures, and the nature of their activities.

- Adopt a policy statement on safeguarding the welfare of children.
- Plan the work of the organisation so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children may occur.
- Introduce a system whereby children may talk with an independent person.
- Apply agreed procedures for protecting children to all paid staff and volunteers.
- Give all paid staff and volunteers clear roles.
- Use supervision as a means of protecting children.
- Treat all would-be paid staff and volunteers as job applicants for any position involving contact with children.
- Gain at least two reference from persons who have experience of the applicant's paid work or volunteering with children.
- Explore all applicants' experience of working or contact with children in an interview before appointment.
- Find out whether an applicant has any convictions for criminal offences, including against children (often referred to as Disclosure and Barring Service or DBS check).
- Make paid and voluntary appointments conditional on the successful completion of a probationary period.
- Issue guidelines on how to deal with the disclosure or discovery of abuse.
- Train paid staff and volunteers, their line managers or supervisors and policy makers in the prevention of child abuse.
- Evidence of identity should also be provided (e.g. passport or driving licence with photo). This is in any case necessary for the completion of the DBS form referred to above.

POLICY

The welfare of the child or young person is paramount.
Sea-Change Projects Ltd and its employees are committed to:

- The safekeeping of all in their care - especially children and young people.

- Recognising that all children and young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse.
- Taking seriously and responding appropriately to all suspicions and allegations of inappropriate behaviour.
- Observing and undertaking, wherever possible, the guidelines set out in the Good Practice Guide.
- Supporting those who work with children and young people.
- Encourage and support an environment where children and young people feel safe and comfortable
- Exercising its duty to work with other agencies and share information with them. e.g. Child Protection Committees, Police, NSPCC.
- Recognising its role as one of referral not investigation.

Abuse and neglect are defined as:

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child or young person's health or development.

Emotional Abuse: The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects to the child or young person's emotional development.

Physical Abuse: Actual or likely injury to a child or young person, or failure to prevent physical injury or suffering to a child or young person.

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or young person is aware of what is happening.

PROCEDURES

- Any member of staff who receives a disclosure of abuse or suspects that abuse may have occurred **MUST** report it immediately to the designated person.
- Staff must not investigate abuse but it may be necessary to ask straightforward, non-leading questions of children and young people where possible abuse has taken place. Notes should be taken and passed to the designated person. They should state date, time, people present as well as what was said. It may be appropriate to make a note on a skin map of any marks or bruises.

- Staff must not give an undertaking of absolute confidentiality. They have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children and young people with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies. If a child or young person confides in a member of staff and requests the information is kept secret, it is important the member of staff tells the child or young person that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies for the child's sake. Within that context, the child or young person should be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know it. Staff who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.
- The "Designated Person" will immediately inform the designated person for the relevant school or other organisation if the child is still on the roll. Otherwise the designated person will inform Essex County Council Social Services.
- Information needed is:
Name, address, date of birth, family composition.
Other agencies involved with the child or young person.
Reason for referral.
Name of person receiving referral and any advice given.
Date and signature of referrer.
- All staff shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis.
- The designated person for Sea-Change Projects Ltd is Steve Williams – 24 hour contact number 07786 254229. Email: stevedwilliams@sky.com

Note: If you are worried about sharing concerns about abuse with an employee or trustee from Sea-Change Sailing Trust, you can contact Social Services or the Police direct or the NSPCC Child Protection Helpline on 0808 800 5000 or Childline on 0800 1111.

The designated person should be known to all staff.

The designated person needs to know:

- How to identify signs of abuse and when and how to make a referral.
- The role and responsibilities of investigating agencies and how to liaise with them.
- The role of record keeping.
- How to contribute to the child protection conference or review.

GUIDELINES ON GOOD PRACTICE FOR STAFF

Staff are in a position of trust and authority and have a responsibility to ensure that this unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should behave as role models using appropriate vocal and body language and should not engage in banter, scapegoating, or personal comment except where required by curriculum or health and safety issues.

Staff working in one to one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and young people are met.

Staff should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.

Staff should not use their position to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine children and young people.

When physical contact is made with children or young people this should be in response to their needs at the time, be of limited duration and appropriate for their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Extra caution is required where it is known that a child or young person has suffered abuse or neglect. In the child or young person's view physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. It is recognised that many such children and young people are extremely needy and may seek out inappropriate physical contact.

The general culture of "limited touch" should be adapted, where appropriate, to the individual's requirements. Children and young people with special needs, for example, may require more physical assistance.

Never engage in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.

Young people and children are entitled to privacy. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard them, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure bullying and teasing does not occur. Supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned.

All children and young people have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment or punishment. Staff should not do anything of a personal nature that the child or young person can do for themselves.

Sea-Change Projects Ltd
Child Protection

Incident/Allegation Report Form

Details of person completing the form:

Name: _____ Position: _____

Address: _____

Contact Telephone number: _____

Date: _____

Details of child/young person:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Location of incident or allegation: _____

Date of incident/allegation: _____ Time: _____

Details of incident or allegation as reported or observed by you:

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Continued:

Action taken:

Action taken by: _____

Date: _____