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Tel: 01278 732741

Safeguarding Policy – At Risk Adults, Children and Beneficiaries

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey
- The design and implementation of The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey's Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey or associated personnel

What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey understands it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults (vulnerable adults), from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

Scope

- All staff and volunteers contracted by The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey

- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; speakers, trainers, programme visitors

Policy Statement

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff, volunteers or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them (see Associated Policies).

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of **Prevention, Reporting and Response**:

Prevention

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey responsibilities

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will:

- Ensure all staff, volunteers and trustees who work directly, or indirectly, with children or at risk adults have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying any staff and volunteers
- Ensure staff and volunteers receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

DBS Checks

- Employed staff must undergo a DBS check.
- Volunteers who have direct contact with children and at risk adults in a lone capacity must undergo a DBS check.
- Volunteers who work alongside others do not need to undergo a DBS check.

If a DBS check shows there is information on it, the Thomas Poole Library Trustees will need to discuss the information disclosed on the certificate. The information should be used to

make a decision as to whether a person is suitable for an intended role – providing the information on the certificate is relevant to the applicant's position. A meeting must be held with the applicant to discuss the matter further before making a recruitment decision.

Staff responsibilities

Child safeguarding (see *Signs of Abuse in Appendix*)

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour
- Take photographs of children without express permission of their parents or guardians
- Divulge a child's personal details without express permission of their parents or guardians

Adult safeguarding (see *Signs of Abuse in Appendix*)

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

Enabling reports

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey's Disclosure of

Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy.

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the named Trustee Safeguarding Lead Officer or Volunteer Co-ordinator. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their named Trustee Safeguarding Lead Officer or Volunteer Co-ordinator (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to any other appropriate person eg a Management Committee member.

Contact: **Sue Aubrey Safeguarding Lead Officer**

Lynn Scales Volunteer Co-ordinator

Roger Stacey Chair, Management Committee

Response

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns in Associated Policies).

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

This policy must be reviewed annually

Next Review APRIL 2024

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern to Somerset County

a) Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP)

*The Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) is the partnership responsible for safeguarding children in Somerset. It is made up of **Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary** and **Somerset Integrated Care Board**, who have joint and equal responsibility to safeguard children and young people.*

b) Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB)

The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is a partnership committee providing strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across the county.

Reporting a Safeguarding Concern for Adults or Children:

Adults or Children 0300 123 2224 Mon – Fri 8.30 – 5.30

0300 123 2327 (out of hours)

Email (Adults) : adults@somerset.gov.uk

(Children) : children@somerset.gov.uk

For advice contact NSPCC Email help@NSPCC.org.uk

More information www.nspcc.org.uk/

Police telephone 101

In cases of immediate Emergency telephone Police 999

APPENDIX

Signs of Abuse in Children

If you suspect child abuse:

- **Do** listen to the child.
- **Do** take what the child says seriously.
- **Do** act quickly.
- **Do** share your worries with Children's Social Care, the police or the NSPCC – they are there to help you.
- **Do** continue to offer support to the child.
- **Don't** delay.
- **Don't** probe or push the child for explanations.
- **Don't** assume that someone else knows and will help the child. You must act.
- **Don't** be afraid to voice your concerns, the child may need urgent protection and help.

Forms of abuse

There are many different forms of child abuse.

Child abuse occurs in all types of family and culture and in every part of the country.

Children can be abused by strangers, adults they know or members of their own family.

Children can be abused by the direct actions of an adult, such as a physical beating or because an adult fails to act, for example, by failing to provide proper food or clothing for a child.

Child abuse usually falls into one or more of four categories: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse may involve

- hitting
- shaking
- throwing
- poisoning
- burning or scalding
- drowning
- suffocating, or
- otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

It may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates symptoms of, or induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Telling a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only to meet the needs of another person.
- Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations, for example interactions beyond the child's developmental capability, overprotection, limitation of exploration and learning, preventing the child from participation in normal social interaction.
- Causing a child to feel frightened or in danger, for example witnessing domestic violence, seeing or hearing the ill treatment of someone else.
- Exploitation or corruption of a child.
- Online bullying.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill-treatment of children, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not they are aware of what is happening.

Activities may involve

- Physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts.
- Sexual activities may also include non-contact activities, for example involving a child in looking at, or production of, abusive images (maybe online), watching sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Children under 16 years of age cannot lawfully consent to sexual intercourse.

Neglect

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

Examples include failure:

- during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse
- to provide adequate food, clothing or shelter
- to protect from physical and emotional harm or danger
- to meet or respond to basic emotional needs
- to ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers
- to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- to make sure their educational needs are met
- to make sure their opportunities for intellectual stimulation are met.

Signs of Abuse in Adults

What are the ten different types of abuse?

The **Care and Support Statutory Guidance** identifies ten types of abuse, these are:

- **Physical abuse**
- **Domestic violence or abuse**
- **Sexual abuse**
- **Psychological or emotional abuse**
- **Financial or material abuse**
- **Modern slavery**
- **Discriminatory abuse**
- **Organisational or institutional abuse**
- **Neglect or acts of omission**
- **Self-neglect**

1. Types of physical abuse

- Assault, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, hair-pulling, biting, pushing
- Rough handling
- Scalding and burning
- Physical punishments
- Inappropriate or unlawful use of restraint
- Making someone purposefully uncomfortable (e.g. opening a window and removing blankets)
- Involuntary isolation or confinement
- Misuse of medication (e.g. over-sedation)
- Forcible feeding or withholding food
- Unauthorised restraint, restricting movement (e.g. tying someone to a chair)

2. Types of domestic violence or abuse

Domestic violence or abuse can be characterised by any of the indicators of abuse outlined in this briefing relating to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional.

3. Types of sexual abuse

- Rape, attempted rape or sexual assault
- Inappropriate touch anywhere
- Non- consensual masturbation of either or both persons
- Non- consensual sexual penetration or attempted penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth
- Any sexual activity that the person lacks the capacity to consent to
- Inappropriate looking, sexual teasing or innuendo or sexual harassment
- Sexual photography or forced use of pornography or witnessing of sexual acts
- Indecent exposure

4. Types of psychological or emotional abuse

- Enforced social isolation – preventing someone accessing services, educational and social opportunities and seeing friends
- Removing mobility or communication aids or intentionally leaving someone unattended when they need assistance
- Preventing someone from meeting their religious and cultural needs
- Preventing the expression of choice and opinion
- Failure to respect privacy
- Preventing stimulation, meaningful occupation or activities
- Intimidation, coercion, harassment, use of threats, humiliation, bullying, swearing or verbal abuse
- Addressing a person in a patronising or infantilising way
- Threats of harm or abandonment
- Cyber bullying

5. Types of financial or material abuse

- Theft of money or possessions
- Fraud, scamming
- Preventing a person from accessing their own money, benefits or assets
- Employees taking a loan from a person using the service
- Undue pressure, duress, threat or undue influence put on the person in connection with loans, wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions
- Arranging less care than is needed to save money to maximise inheritance
- Denying assistance to manage/monitor financial affairs
- Denying assistance to access benefits
- Misuse of personal allowance in a care home
- Misuse of benefits or direct payments in a family home
- Someone moving into a person's home and living rent free without agreement or under duress
- False representation, using another person's bank account, cards or documents
- Exploitation of a person's money or assets, e.g. unauthorised use of a car
- Misuse of a power of attorney, deputy, appointeeship or other legal authority
- Rogue trading – e.g. unnecessary or overpriced property repairs and failure to carry out agreed repairs or poor workmanship

6. Types of modern slavery

- Human trafficking
- Forced labour
- Domestic servitude
- Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography
- Debt bondage – being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to

GOV.UK has more information on **identifying and reporting modern slavery**

7. Types of discriminatory abuse

- Unequal treatment based on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation (known as '**protected characteristics**' under the **Equality Act 2010**)
- Verbal abuse, derogatory remarks or inappropriate use of language related to a protected characteristic
- Denying access to communication aids, not allowing access to an interpreter, signer or lip-reader

- Harassment or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of a protected characteristic
- Denying basic rights to healthcare, education, employment and criminal justice relating to a protected characteristic
- Substandard service provision relating to a protected characteristic

8. Types of organisational or institutional abuse

- Discouraging visits or the involvement of relatives or friends
- Run-down or overcrowded establishment
- Authoritarian management or rigid regimes
- Lack of leadership and supervision
- Insufficient staff or high turnover resulting in poor quality care
- Abusive and disrespectful attitudes towards people using the service
- Inappropriate use of restraints
- Lack of respect for dignity and privacy
- Failure to manage residents with abusive behaviour
- Not providing adequate food and drink, or assistance with eating
- Not offering choice or promoting independence
- Misuse of medication
- Failure to provide care with dentures, spectacles or hearing aids
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Failure to respond to abuse appropriately
- Interference with personal correspondence or communication
- Failure to respond to complaints

9. Types of neglect and acts of omission

- Failure to provide or allow access to food, shelter, clothing, heating, stimulation and activity, personal or medical care
- Providing care in a way that the person dislikes
- Failure to administer medication as prescribed
- Refusal of access to visitors
- Not taking account of individuals' cultural, religious or ethnic needs
- Not taking account of educational, social and recreational needs
- Ignoring or isolating the person
- Preventing the person from making their own decisions
- Preventing access to glasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc.
- Failure to ensure privacy and dignity

10. Types of self-neglect

- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
- Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings
- Inability to avoid self-harm
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs

Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from The Thomas Poole Library Nether Stowey's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the organisation serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

Child

A person below the age of 18

Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights

Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming.

Safeguarding

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes. One donor definition is as follows:

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

At risk adult

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may be in need of care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.