



## **Safeguarding Children Policy**

### **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**

Sebby's Corner recognises that the safeguarding and protection of children is paramount and we have a collective responsibility to protect children from all forms of harm or abuse.

Our purpose is to provide essential support to families in need, although we do not undertake any activities with children and no member has any direct contact with children. We have implemented the following Safeguarding Children Policy which applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees and across all of the work we do.

A copy of our Safeguarding Children Policy is made available to all staff, volunteers and trustees, as well as being available on our website.

### **Our policy**

Sebby's Corner strives to safeguard children and young people by:

- ✓ valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- ✓ sharing information about child protection and safeguarding and good practice with staff, volunteers and trustees;
- ✓ sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, if required;
- ✓ recruiting new staff in accordance with this policy, ensuring all relevant safeguarding checks are made; and
- ✓ communicating the importance of safeguarding amongst staff, ensuring supervision, support and training made available.

All staff, volunteers or trustees of Sebby's Corner must:

- ✓ be alert to the potential abuse of children;
- ✓ be aware of the different forms of abuse that may occur (see Schedule 1, Definitions of Abuse and What to Look Out For):
- ✓ be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect;
- ✓ be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children;
- ✓ share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances;
- ✓ contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare;
- ✓ take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans, if required; and

- ✓ work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety, if required.

It is all members' responsibility to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with this policy and the Child Protection Procedure set out in Schedule 2 to this policy.

### **Child protection**

Child protection is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

### **Staff and Volunteer Awareness**

Staff members are required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service ("DBS") check as part of our recruitment process. Any volunteer involved in collection or delivery of donations or referrals to families is also required to undergo a DBS check.

Any new member of staff, volunteer or trustee will be familiarised with Sebbys Corner's policies as part of their initial induction process, including our Safeguarding Children Policy. Staff and volunteers will receive updates or briefings on safeguarding on a regular basis.

### **Key Contacts**

The Designated Organisational Lead for Safeguarding is Natasha Langleben (Trustee).

### **Policy Updates**

This policy is regularly reviewed and updated from time to time, as may be appropriate in light of updated legislation, guidance or best practice in safeguarding and child protection.

## Definitions of Abuse and What to Look Out For

### Definitions of abuse and neglect:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

### *Physical abuse*

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.

### *Emotional Abuse*

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 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.

### *Sexual Abuse*

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 (eg: rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts.

They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### *Neglect*

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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## Child Protection Procedures

### What to do if you have concerns about a child

You may have concerns about a child because of something you have seen or heard, or a child may choose to disclose something to you. If a child discloses information to you, you should:

- ✓ Do not promise confidentiality, you have a duty to share this information and refer to Children's Social Care Services.
- ✓ Listen to what is being said, without displaying shock or disbelief.
- ✓ Accept what is said.
- ✓ Reassure the child, but only as far as is honest, don't make promises you may not be able to keep eg: *'Everything will be alright now'*, *'You'll never have to see that person again'*.
- ✓ Do reassure and alleviate guilt, if the child refers to it. For example, you could say, *'You're not to blame'*.
- ✓ Do not interrogate the child; it is not your responsibility to investigate.
- ✓ Do not ask leading questions (eg: Did he touch your private parts?), ask open questions such as *'Anything else to tell me?'*
- ✓ Do not ask the child to repeat the information for another member of staff.
- ✓ Explain what you have to do next and who you have to talk to.
- ✓ Take notes if possible or write up your conversation as soon as possible afterwards.
- ✓ Record the date, time, place any non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child (do not paraphrase).
- ✓ Record statements and observable things rather than interpretations or assumptions.

You must then report the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The DSL will pass the information on to Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership.