

# **Safeguarding of Children and Young People**

## **Child Protection Policy 2019-22**

### **DARTMOOR ACTIVITY CENTRE**

#### **Policy Adopted 7th December 2019 at AGM**

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##### **Note**

With effect from date of registration of Dartmoor Activity Centre as a CIO the centre is managed by a board of six trustees who have legal title (The Governing Body). The Board for consultative purposes also draw on the expertise of the members of the Broadleas Committee.

## **A General Policy Statement**

### **1. The Dartmoor Activity Centre has a moral duty to ensure that it functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.**

Throughout these policies and procedures, reference is made to “children and young people”. This term is used to mean “those under the age of 18”. The governing body recognise that some adults are also vulnerable to abuse, accordingly, the procedures may be applied (with appropriate adaptations) to allegations of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults.

The governing body/ trustees is/are committed to ensuring that the organisation

- Provides a safe environment for children and young people
- Identifies children and young people who are suffering
- Takes appropriate action to see that such children and young people are kept safe from harm

In pursuit of these aims, the governing body will approve and annually review policies and procedures with the aim of:

- Raising awareness of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people.
- providing procedures for reporting concerns
- Establishing procedures for reporting and dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff
- The safe recruitment of staff

2. The organisation has nominated **Rev Andrew Prout** as lead person with special responsibility for child protection issues for the year 2019-20 commencing 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019. He will undertake appropriate training. This person is both a trustee and member of the management committee.

3. Staff and volunteers working with children will receive training adequate to familiarise them with child protection issues and responsibilities and the organisation's procedures and policies, with refresher training at least every 5 years. If appropriate there will be also be a member of the management team or volunteer who may through their employment background have particular expertise in child protection issues. He/she may be delegated by the management committee.
4. The governing body will receive from the designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection an annual report which reviews how the duties have been discharged.
5. **The governing body recognises the following as definitions of abuse:**

- i. Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse causes harm to a child's person. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning or suffocating. It may be done deliberately or recklessly, or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

- ii Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of the child's health or development.

- iii Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves a child or young person being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child to be aware that the activity is sexual and the apparent consent of the child is irrelevant.

- iv Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child's or young person's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse.

**B Designated Staff with Responsibility for Child Protection i.e Senior Staff Member with Lead Responsibility**

1. The designated senior member of staff with lead responsibility for child protection issues is **Rev Andrew Prout, Trust Safeguarding Officer, of 16 Gainsborough Avenue, St. Albans, AL1 4NL, Tel: 01727 851834.**
2. He has a key duty to take lead responsibility for raising awareness within the organisation of issues relating to the welfare of children and young people, and the promotion of a safe environment for the children and young people.
3. He is responsible for ensuring that exempted questions are asked on relevant volunteer and employment application forms.
4. He has received appropriate training and should keep up to date with developments in child protection issues. He will also have responsibility for making new staff and volunteers aware of the existing child protection policy.
5. He will be the main contact point for Child Protection issues and will have contact details for relevant organisations available for employees and volunteers. This list will usually include contact details of relevant individuals and provisions such as the NSPCC Helpline 0800 800 5000 and the local police child protection unit.

**C Dealing with Disclosure of Abuse and Procedure for Reporting Concerns**

If a child or young person tells a member of staff about possible abuse:

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Do not interview the child, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the child is telling you.
- Do not put words into the child's mouth.
- Reassure the child that by telling you, they have done the right thing.

- Inform the child that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of to whom you will report the matter.
- Note the main points carefully.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the child said, did and your questions etc.
- Staff should not investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Designated Person.

#### **D. Regulated Activity and obtaining Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks**

1. Under the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, an individual working unsupervised with children is considered to be engaged in regulated Activity and must have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check which will involve a check of the children's barred list, in order to perform their duties.
2. However, an individual working in a directly and permanently supervised position is not considered to be engaged in regulated activity but should still have an enhanced DBS disclosure check. However because they are working in a supervised role the enhanced check will not include a check of the children's barred list.
3. Note that applications for a DBS enhanced check can only be submitted where the applicant is aged 16 or over at the time of making the application.

#### **E. Duty to refer to the DBS (Now Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS))**

1. The Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 both make it mandatory to refer anyone known to pose a threat of harm to a child or vulnerable people to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This means that the designated member of staff responsible for safeguarding must not knowingly employ anyone who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults, this includes anyone who is believed to have committed a relevant conduct while on the job or who has a record of such conduct.

2. The organisation has a legal duty to refer an employee or volunteer who poses a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults to the DBS, failure to do so can result in a fine and/or up to 5 years imprisonment. There must be sufficient and solid evidence that the employee or volunteer poses a risk of harm before they can be referred to the DBS. The DBS will not consider evidence based on rumour or unsubstantiated reports. The employer should also inform the police and other relevant authorities if they believe a relevant conduct has occurred.
3. Referral forms can be downloaded from the DBS's website [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/dbs).

#### **F. The DBS's barring process**

1. Whenever new relevant information (such as a conviction or caution) becomes known, the information will be sent to the DBS. The DBS will consider this information, together with other information known on the individual, and decide whether it indicates that the individual poses a risk of harm to vulnerable groups. If so, the DBS will commence its barring process and the DBS will issue a disclosure certificate to the applicant with the barring information.
2. The applicant should be advised by the designated member of staff to make a representation to the DBS regarding the barring information. The DBS will assess the barring information and representation and decide whether to bar the applicant. If there is sufficient barring evidence, the applicant will be placed on either the **Children's Barred List** or the **Vulnerable Adults Barred List** or both depending on the offence. The applicant must then be removed from regulated activity.
3. The applicant has the right of appeal to a tribunal and must be advised of this right. Serious offences committed against vulnerable people will lead to automatic barring and the applicant will have no right to make representations or to appeal against a barring decision.

#### **G. Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff.**

The procedures apply to all staff, whether trustees, administrative, management or support, as well as to volunteers. The word "staff" is used for ease of description.

1. In rare instances, staff of Christian organisations have been found responsible for child abuse. Because of their frequent contact with children and young people, staff may have allegations of child abuse made against them. The Dartmoor Activity Centre recognises that an allegation of child abuse made against a member of staff may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may

not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that investigations are thorough and not subject to delay.

2. The Organisation recognises that the Children Act 1989 states that the welfare of the child is the paramount concern. It is also recognised that hasty or ill-informed decisions in connection with a member of staff can irreparably damage an individual's reputation, confidence and career. Therefore, those dealing with such allegations within the organisation will do so with sensitivity and will act in a careful, measured way.

#### **H. Safer Recruitment and Selection Procedure**

The Dartmoor Activity Centre will already have recruitment and selection procedures. These should be reviewed in order to ensure that they take account of the following:

- They should apply to staff and volunteers who may work with children.
- The post or role should be clearly defined.
- The key selection criteria for the post or role should be identified.
- Vacancies should be advertised widely in order to ensure a diversity of applicants.
- Obtain professional and character references.
- Verify previous employment history.
- Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure/List 99 checks (maintain sensitive and confidential use of the applicant's disclosure).
- Use a variety of selection techniques (eg qualifications, previous experience, interview, reference checks).

#### **I. Date of Next review of this Policy**

Policy Reviewed and reaffirmed without amendment 4th December, 2021 (AGM)

Date of Next Review December 2022 (AGM)

## **Note**

In accordance with this policy all Trustees and Committee members will be required to undertake a DBS check prior to appointment and have a knowledge of this policy and its implications. The appointed office holder under clause B1 above with responsibility for Safeguarding (**OS**) designated by the Trust with responsibility for overseeing this policy will advise on how to obtain said disclosure. The disclosure must be seen by the **OS** who will report to the Trust and the Committee that all is satisfactory or disclose any matters of concern. Members of the Committee will be required to obtain a new disclosure at least every five years. The **OS** will keep a record for this purpose.

The Warden of the Site (appointed by the Trust), and any members of his / her household over the age of 18 resident at Broadleas will also be required to provide and obtain an Enhanced Disclosure. This process must also be undertaken at least every 5 years and the **OS** will keep a record for this purpose. The **OS** will advise the warden and any eligible members of his / her household of their responsibilities in relation to good practice in the safeguarding of children and young people.

It will be a condition of all groups booking the site that they fully comply with the responsibilities that are laid down in law in respect of Safeguarding the Welfare of Children and Young People, Children and Young People being those members of any group under 18.

The warden or any committee member shall immediately report any concern or incident in relation to abuse or suspected abuse immediately to the **OS**, who will act in accordance with procedures laid down. In the event of the warden or any trust or committee member being the subject of any allegations, that person will be immediately suspended from their position whilst investigations take place and procedures are followed overseen by the **OS**.

The warden and all members appointed to the Trust or Committee must be appointed initially for a six month probationary period. This is to insure that all such people are competent in relation to their work and contact with children and young people and committed to safeguarding and preventing any abuse. The Trust before appointing a warden or any new members shall require written and confidential references from at least two people. The Trust will make known to referees that the appointment involves work and contact with children and young people.

The warden and members of his / her household over 18, and Committee Members will do everything possible not to allow themselves to be in a place alone with a child or young person / s where there is little or no likelihood of anything being observed by others. This is for the benefit of both the young person and the adult.

This policy is designed to insure the highest standards are met and only be amended by the Committee in accordance with its agreed voting procedures. All who are named in this policy, in addition to groups who use the Centre are required to adhere to this policy statement and to note its guidelines, groups also following their own set and additional procedures. Details of Childline and NSPCC Child Protection Helpline will be placed in prominent positions around the site.

In the event of the Trust handing over management responsibility for the site under the terms of a contract with DOT-C the Trust will insure that DOT-C has its own comprehensive Safeguarding Policy.