

Safeguarding (Child Protection) and Incident Policy

This policy applies to all directors, staff, volunteers, sessional workers and anyone working on behalf of Purple Elephant Productions CIC. Staff includes anyone working under contract on behalf of Purple Elephant.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children and young people who receive our services,
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

Child Protection Statement

- Purple Elephant believes that children and young people must be protected from harm at all times.
- We believe every child should be valued, safe and happy. We want to make sure that children we have contact with know this and are empowered to tell us if they are suffering harm.
- We want children who use our services to enjoy what we have to offer in safety.
- We want parents and carers who use our services to be supported to care for their children in a way that promotes their child's health and well-being and keeps them safe.
- We will achieve this by having an effective child protection procedure and following National and Local guidance.
- If we discover or suspect a child is suffering harm we will notify Somerset Children's Social Care in order that they can be protected if necessary. If a child is in immediate danger, including for incidents relating to Female Genital Mutilation or Extremism/Radicalisation, we will contact the Police.
- We will review our child protection policy and procedures every year to make sure they are still relevant and effective.

Legal framework:

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children. Further information is available via the links in Appendix 3.

Child Protection Procedure

- There will be a named person for child protection who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. This person is currently Sue Willis.
- All staff and volunteers will be carefully selected to try and ensure they do not pose a risk to children. Where possible, staff and volunteers will be Police checked. Where they are not, and they will be in charge of the activity, a Police checked volunteer or staff member will accompany them. **Staff and volunteers will never be in a situation where they are alone with a child.** The CIC Directors and Toy Library staff are Police checked (see details below).
- At least two of the Directors will have completed basic safeguarding training. All staff and volunteers will receive information about what to do if they have concerns about a child. This

will include information on recognising where there are concerns about a child, where to get advice and what to do if no one seems to have taken their concerns seriously.

- We will endeavour to make our events safe and caring for children by having a code of conduct for staff and volunteers. This will be given to all staff and volunteers and they will be expected to comply with it.
- Photos and videos may be taken at events. These will be stored safely for no longer than a year and may be used for publicity purposes. Parental consent will be gained (either verbal or written) if a child or children can be visually identified and are not in a public place.

Procedures relating to concerns about children

- Staff and volunteers are expected to be familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse (see Appendix 1) and will record incidents on the appropriate form (see Appendix 2). Once completed these should be handed immediately to the Child Protection Lead. Completed forms will be placed in a file and held in a secure place. The entry will be on a separate page for each child, dated and the nature of the concern described and any explanations given.
- The child protection lead will decide whether further action is necessary. Any action taken will comply with the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures (see Appendix 3).
- Any child wishing to disclose an incident should be given the opportunity to be listened to in a non-judgemental way. The listener should limit their questioning so as to prevent possible contamination of evidence. (see Appendix 4 for do's and don't's).

Procedures relating to allegations of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer

Any allegations of abuse by a director, staff member or volunteer should be directed to the Child Protection Lead. If the allegation is against the Child Protection Lead, it should be referred to another director.

- Any member of staff or volunteer accused of abuse should record the event as soon as possible including names of any witness but should not discuss the incident with colleagues or children.
- The accused person should co-operate with any investigation, using the support of a third party if needed.
- An initial investigation will be carried out to obtain a fair and balanced picture of the alleged incident.
- If necessary the matter should be referred to Somerset Children's Social Care for action.

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers

- Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Do not smoke in front of any child or young person.
- Do not use unprescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Never behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child or young person.
- Do not use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.
- Physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset.
- Do talk explicitly to children and young people about their right to be kept safe from harm.

- Do listen to children and young people and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- If you have to speak to a child/young person about their behaviour remember you are challenging 'what they did' not 'who they are'.
- Do make sure you have read the Child Protection Procedure and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosure and how to report any concerns.
- Do seek advice and support from your colleagues and your designated person for child protection.
- Do be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well-being of a child, that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.

Procedure for dealing with an incident at an event

- If an incident occurs at one of our events or activities, one of the Directors should be informed in the first instance.
- The Director will assess the situation and decide if emergency services need to be involved. If so, the Director will call (Police/Fire/Ambulance).
- If possible the parents/carers of the child/young person will be contacted and brought to site. Responsibility for actions always remains with the parent/carer. The child/young person will be discharged to the parent/carer and if necessary, asked to leave the event.
- All volunteers, providers and stewards will be informed of this procedure.

Signed:.....

Dated ...April 2021.....

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

To be reviewed at the AGM in April 2023

DBS details:

Sue Willis DBS no. 001669061931 Dated 13.8.19 Issued by Spark Somerset. Enhanced.

Helen Fielden DBS no. 001618871045 Dated 14.6.18 Issued by Spark Somerset. Enhanced.

Tracey Ashford DBS no. 001703447503 Dated 14.7.20 Issued by Spark Somerset. Enhanced.

Sarah Banks DBS no. 001604217083 Dated 5.2.18 Issued by Steiner Academy Frome. Enhanced.

Sarah Hynds DBS no. 001713400871 Dated 17.10.20 Issued by Oakfield School Academy. Enhanced.

Lenka Grimes

● **Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms Of Abuse**

Possible signs of PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained injuries or burns
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illnesses not attended to
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of undressing
- Aggression / bullying
- Running away
- Deterioration in work
- Unexplained pattern of absences which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries
- Bruises and finger marks
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of medical help
- Over compliant behaviour
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation

Possible signs of EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Fear of new situation
- Self harm or mutilation
- Drug / solvent abuse
- Air of detachment – ‘don’t care’ attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention seeking behaviour
- Eating problems
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Compulsive stealing / scrounging
- ‘Neurotic’ behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb sucking

Possible signs of NEGLECT

- Constant hunger
- Inappropriate clothing
- Untreated medical problems
- Poor social relationships
- Constant tiredness
- Poor personal hygiene
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Low self esteem
- Compulsive stealing or scrounging

Possible signs of SEXUAL ABUSE

- Bruises, scratches or bite marks on the body
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Pregnancy
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child’s age – e.g. shown in drawings, vocabulary, games etc.

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- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends

These lists may indicate that a child is being abused. However, in themselves they are not evidence of abuse, but they may suggest abuse if a child exhibits several of them or if a pattern emerges. Remember that there can be other explanations for a child showing such signs or behaving in such ways.

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Appendix 3: Local Policies and Guidance

Policies, procedures and guidance are available on Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board website

www.somersetlscb.org.uk

South West Child Protection Procedures

www.swcpp.org.uk

Direct and immediate child protection concerns should be made to the Police by dialling 999 and/or Somerset Children's Social Care Emergency Duty team on: 0300 1232224

Early Help Advice Hub:

01823 355803

Children's Safeguarding Leads Consultation line:

0300 123 3078

Appendix 4: Do's & Don'ts If A Child Tells You They Are Being / Have Been Abused

DO

- believe the child / young person and tell them you believe them.
- tell the child / young person you're glad they told you.
- acknowledge that the child / young person has been brave to tell you.
- reassure the child / young person that what's happened is not their fault, that the abuser is responsible for what has happened to them.
- reassure the child / young person that what's happened to them is not unusual and has happened to lots of children.
- be honest about your position, who you will have to tell and why.
- ensure that you make notes as soon after as is possible.
- keep the child / young person fully informed about what you are doing / what's happening at every stage.
- give the child / young person information about other confidential sources of help (i.e. CHILDLINE (0800 1111)).
- feel able to talk about your own feeling – though not specific detail of the situation – with a colleague.

DO NOT

- make promises you cannot keep.
- 'interrogate' the child / young person with lots of questions. It isn't your role to carry out an investigation – that is up to the Social Services / Police.
- cast doubt on what the child / young person tells you. It has taken a great deal of courage for them to tell.
- say anything which may make the child / young person feel responsible for the abuse (e.g. 'Why haven't you told anyone before?').
- communicate your feeling of anger without stating that it is the abuser you feel angry towards: the child / young person may think you are angry with them.
- panic. When confronted with reality of abuse there is often a feeling of needing to 'act immediately'. Action taken in haste can be counter-productive.