

Safeguarding, Child Protection and Incident Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safer Recruitment, Lone Working and Health and Safety policies.

The role of the safeguarding trustee is to provide support and challenge to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the leadership of Purple Elephant on how they manage safeguarding so that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people can continuously improve. The role includes: The DSL and the safeguarding trustee meet on a regular basis to discuss safeguarding issues and to agree steps to continuously improve safeguarding practices in Purple Elephant. **The Safeguarding trustee is John Clarke.**

This policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers, sessional workers and anyone working on behalf of Purple Elephant. Staff includes anyone working under contract on behalf of Purple Elephant. This policy will be included in induction and further training given where necessary.

The purpose of this policy

Purple Elephant provides family support services to families who are facing challenges and are disadvantaged in some way. In the course of day-to-day service provision, Purple Elephant encounters children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our aim is:

- To protect children, young people and adults who receive our services from harm,
- To provide trustees, 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.

Vulnerable adults statement

Purple Elephant believes in protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of Purple Elephant in working together in promoting the adult's

welfare and safeguarding them from abuse and neglect. This responsibility applies to adults accessing Purple Elephant services and to Purple Elephant staff and volunteers.

Legal framework:

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

Safeguarding Procedure

- There will be a named person for child protection and safeguarding who will be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. This person is currently Sue Willis – suewillis@purpleelephant.org.uk.
- All trustees, staff and volunteers will be carefully selected to try and ensure they do not pose a risk to children and vulnerable adults. Where possible, staff and volunteers will be Police checked. Where they are not, and they will be in charge of an activity, group or service, a Police checked volunteer or staff member will accompany them. All trustees, key staff and volunteers are DBS checked (see Safer Recruitment policy).
- All trustees, and staff and volunteers who have face to face contact with families, 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 services safe and caring for children and vulnerable adults by having a code of conduct for staff and volunteers. The code is part of this policy and 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 and during groups. These will be stored safely for no longer than 5 years 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 and vulnerable adults

- 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 Safeguarding Lead. Completed forms will be placed in a file and held in a secure locked box. The entry will be on a separate page for each child, dated and the nature of the concern described and any explanations given.
- The safeguarding lead will decide whether further action is necessary. Any action taken will comply with the Somerset Local Safeguarding Children/Adults Board procedures (see Appendix 3).
- The DSL will regularly check records of incidents to see if any patterns appear and if any action is necessary.
- Any child or adult 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 dont's).

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

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

- 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, the accuser or their family.
- 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 Adult/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, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Do not use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language.
- Any behaviour that is or could be construed as bullying, is unacceptable.
- Physical contact should be open and initiated by the child/adult's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset.
- Do talk explicitly to children and families about their right to be kept safe from harm.
- Do listen to children and families and take every opportunity to raise their self-esteem.
- If you have to speak to a child or family about their behaviour remember you are challenging 'what they did' not 'who they are'.
- Do make sure you have read the Safeguarding Procedure and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child or adult 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 safeguarding.
- Do be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well-being of a child or adult, that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself.

Procedure for dealing with an incident at an event or group

- If an incident occurs at one of our events or groups, the lead staff member should be informed in the first instance.

Purple Elephant Family Support CIO

- They will assess the situation and decide if emergency services need to be involved. If so, the lead staff member will call (Police/Fire/Ambulance).
- For children and young people, 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.

Whistleblowing

Purple Elephant is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, will be protected from reprisals and victimisation.

Agreed at the Trustees meeting on 6.12.22 (after becoming a CIO)

To be reviewed annually at the AGM

Appendix 1: Signs and Symptoms Of Abuse - children

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.
- 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.

Signs and symptoms of abuse - adults

The Care Act 2014 defines the following ten areas of abuse. Purple Elephant also includes self-neglect as an additional category. These are not exhaustive but are a guide to behaviour that may lead to a safeguarding enquiry. This includes:

- **Physical abuse** - Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Domestic Violence/ Domestic Abuse** - Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Exploitation**- Including sexual and/or criminal exploitation.
- **Sexual abuse** - Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography. Witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse** - Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** - Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** - Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and those who coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.
- **Discriminatory abuse** - Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because you are, or are perceived to be different due to race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational abuse** - Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to long-term ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes or practices within an organisation.
- **Neglect and acts of omission** - Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- **Self-neglect** - This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Appendix 3: Local Policies and Guidance

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

<https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/>

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

Care Act 2014 Definition of an Adult at Risk of Abuse:

Where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there)

- (a) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),
- (b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- (c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

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

DO

- believe the person and tell them you believe them.
- tell the person you're glad they told you.
- acknowledge that the person has been brave to tell you.
- reassure the person that what's happened is not their fault, that the abuser is responsible for what has happened to them.
- reassure the person that what's happened to them is not unusual and has happened to lots of other people.
- 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 person fully informed about what you are doing / what's happening at every stage.
- give the person information about other confidential sources of help (e.g. CHILDLINE (0800 1111 or SIDAS 0800 694 9999 re domestic abuse).
- feel able to talk about your own feelings – though not specific detail of the situation – with a colleague.

DO NOT

- make promises you cannot keep.
- 'interrogate' the 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 person tells you. It has taken a great deal of courage for them to tell.
- say anything which may make the 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 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.