



## **Sport4Health - Safeguarding Policy**

We in S4H are committed to practices that protect staff, volunteers, children and vulnerable adults from harm. Our Board of Directors, staff and volunteers recognise and accept our responsibilities for the physical and emotional safety of all involved in our activities and programmes. We also recognise that good safeguarding policies and procedures are of benefit to everyone involved with S4H's work, be they children, adults, volunteers or staff.

It is a common misconception that Safeguarding relates only to children/young people when in fact it is relevant to everyone – including staff and volunteers in an organisation - and, as such, this policy relates to children and adults alike.

### **What is Safeguarding?**

Safeguarding means protecting the health, wellbeing and human rights of people at risk, enabling them to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. Sometimes we all may experience situations in which we feel unable to protect ourselves from the actions of others. Safeguarding is a way of supporting people of all ages to be free from abuse by others. *(Please see below for the different types of abuse)*

Safeguarding is everyone's business, and it is about people and organisations working together to prevent both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect. It also means making sure that everyone's wellbeing is supported.

For Sport4health, all staff/volunteers who have unsupervised access to or contact with children or vulnerable adults are required to

- recognise and accept their responsibilities;
- develop awareness of the issues which can cause harm; and
- report concerns following the procedure below.

NB - Contact can be in the form of actual (ie face-to-face) or virtual/digital (ie via Zoom, social media etc) and safeguarding measures will apply regardless of the type of contact.

### **The S4H Board will endeavour to safeguard staff and beneficiaries by:**

- a) adopting safeguarding procedures and a code of practice for all who work on behalf of the organisation;
- b) reporting concerns to the authorities;

- c) employing suitable procedures for recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers;
- d) ensuring that anyone working on behalf of the organisation, either paid or voluntary, and who has unsupervised access to vulnerable people will have DBS clearance;
- e) providing effective supervision for staff and volunteers through support and training;
- f) operating a Safer Recruitment policy (see below)
- g) keeping updated of good practice on safeguarding policy and practice and attending appropriate training as and when required.

It is the Board's policy that:

1. All staff/volunteers working on behalf of the Board accept responsibility for the welfare of those who come into contact with S4H in connection with its tasks and functions, and that they will report any concerns about a person or somebody else's behaviour, using the procedures laid down.
2. There is a designated safeguarding lead person within the Board (*this is currently the Executive Director*) who will take action following any expression of concern and that the lines of responsibility in respect of safeguarding are clear.
3. The designated lead person knows how to make appropriate referrals to and/or to seek guidance from appropriate protection agencies (these will be either NSPCC, Social Services or the Police).
4. All those who are involved with vulnerable people on behalf of the Board should adhere to the Code of Practice.
5. Information relating to any allegation or disclosure will be clearly recorded as soon as possible, and there is a procedure setting out who should record information and the timescales for passing it on.
6. The "welfare of the child is paramount" became a principle of the Children Act 1989. This means that considerations of confidentiality which might apply to other situations should not be allowed to over-ride the right of children to be protected from harm. However, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned when an allegation has been made and is being investigated.
7. The Board's policy on duty of care to staff, volunteers and service users will be referred to or included in recruitment, training, moderation and policy materials where appropriate, and the policies be openly and widely available to staff and volunteers and actively promoted within the organisation.

8. A culture of mutual respect between service users and those who represent the Board in all its activities will be encouraged, with adults modelling good practice in this context.
9. All staff/volunteers working on behalf of the Board with unsupervised access to children will be checked appropriately.
10. It is part of the Board's acceptance of its responsibility of duty of care towards children and vulnerable adults that anybody who encounters safeguarding concerns in the context of their work on behalf of the Board will be supported when they report their concerns in good faith.
11. Our policies, practices and training needs will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they are up to date with current legislation and best practice.

### Code of Practice for Staff & Volunteers

1. It is important not to have unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact with service users or colleagues and this should be avoided.
2. It is not good practice to take children or vulnerable people alone in a car on journeys, however short.
3. Do not make suggestive or inappropriate remarks - whether verbally or via electronic communications - to or about another person, even in fun, as this could be misinterpreted and/or cause upset.
4. It is important not to deter people from making a 'disclosure' of abuse through fear of not being believed, and to listen to what they have to say. If this gives rise to a safeguarding concern it is important to follow the Board's procedure for reporting such concerns, and not to attempt to investigate the concern yourself.
5. Remember that those who abuse vulnerable people can be of any age (even other children), gender, ethnic background or class, and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions about people to prevent appropriate action taking place.
6. Good practice includes valuing and respecting people, especially children, as individuals, and the adult modelling of appropriate conduct - which will always exclude bullying, shouting, racism, sectarianism or sexism.

### Recruitment

Our aim is to ensure that our staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children and other vulnerable people. The aim of our Safer Recruitment policy is to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse others or are otherwise unsuited to working with us by having appropriate procedures. The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is monitored and evaluated. The aims of the policy are:

- to ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability for the position;
- to ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently;
- to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds including race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or religious belief, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, disability or age;
- to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations and guidance, including the need to have DBS checks where appropriate
- to ensure that Sport4Health meets its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our attendees, staff and volunteers by carrying out all necessary pre-employment checks. Employees involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with and complying with the aims and provisions of this policy.

Specifically, when recruiting we will:

- Inform candidates of our commitment to safeguarding those in our care.
- Carefully plan our recruitment process timeline to ensure that we have enough time to thoroughly vet each candidate.
- Detail that applicants will have to undergo vetting procedures before appointment, making note on any job advert of all the checks we will carry out.
- Carry out relevant pre-employment checks which may include DBS checks, qualification checks, reference checks and identity checks.
- Ensure staff members are appropriately trained for their duties.

The Role of the Executive Director as designated safeguarding lead person

The role of the designated person is to:

1. know which outside agency to contact in the event of a safeguarding concern coming to the notice of the Board (in most cases this will be the local Social Services, though it could be the Police or NSPCC)
2. provide information and advice on safeguarding within the Board
3. ensure that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover
4. liaise with local Social Services and other agencies, as appropriate
5. keep relevant people within the Board informed about any action taken and any further action required; for example, disciplinary action against a member of staff

6. ensure that a proper record is kept of any referral and action taken, and that this is kept safely and in confidence
7. keep personally up to date on safeguarding good practice and advise the Board of safeguarding training needs; and
8. liaise with the NSPCC or other relevant body to review the operation of the Safeguarding Policy regularly to ensure the procedures are working and that it complies with current best practice.

### Procedure for Reporting Concerns - Including Whistleblowing:

Staff/Volunteers could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

1. the conduct of a member of the Board, staff or volunteers;
2. a child, vulnerable adult or other person “disclosing” abuse;
3. bruising or evidence of physical hurt; which may or may not be accompanied by;
4. unusual behaviour by a child or vulnerable adult.

If a member of staff/volunteer has a concern this should be reported immediately (and ideally within 12 hours) to the Executive Director (as the Safeguarding Lead Person). The Executive Director will make an appropriate written record of this reporting. The Executive Director will consider the report and either refer this immediately (ie within 24 hours) to the appropriate authority (eg Social Services) or, after taking appropriate advice (which may include discussing the circumstances on a confidential basis with the NSPCC or other appropriate agency), decide not to refer the concerns to the authorities but keep a full record of the concerns.

If the concern is about the Safeguarding Lead Person then it should be reported to the Lead Board Member. Contact details are provided below.

### **Types of Abuse**

Abuse can take place anywhere. It could occur in the home, at a day centre or college, at work, in hospital, or out and about in the community. Abuse can also be committed by anyone. It could be someone the victim is close to such as a family member, friend, or someone who provides care for them. It could also be a complete stranger.

### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a person. It

may be the result of a deliberate act but could also be caused through the omission or failure to act to protect.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional wellbeing or development. It may involve making a person – child or adult - feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Domestic violence and abuse include any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It also includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the person is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. It may involve physical contact, including rape or oral sex, or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, and by other young people. It also includes non-contact activities such as involving children in watching or taking part in the making of pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in inappropriate ways.

### **Discriminatory Abuse**

Discriminatory abuse is often on the grounds of age, gender, race, culture, religion, sexuality or disability.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or failing to ensure that they get appropriate medical care or treatment. Self-neglect can also occur, where a person fails to look after their own health, hygiene or surroundings.

### **Modern slavery**

Modern slavery is the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. Modern slavery is all around us, but often just out of sight. From the outside, it can look like a normal job but people are being controlled.

Types of modern slavery:

- Debt bondage - being forced to work to pay off debts that realistically they never will be able to

- Domestic servitude
- Forced labour
- Human trafficking
- Sexual exploitation, such as escort work, prostitution and pornography

### **Responding Appropriately to a Person Making an Allegation of Abuse**

1. Stay calm.
2. Listen carefully to what is said.
3. Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
4. Tell the person that the matter will only be disclosed to those who need to know about it.
5. Allow them to continue at her/his own pace.
6. Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
7. Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
8. Tell them what you will do next, and with whom the information will be shared.
9. Record in writing what was said, using their own words as soon as possible – note the date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
10. *It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies, following a referral from the designated child protection person in the organisation.*

### **Contact details of key personnel**

Safeguarding Lead & Executive Director:  
Edmund Kung – T. 07768076459 E. ed@sport4health.co.uk

Lead Board Member:  
Dr Sue Hunt – T. 07958497161 E. info@sport4health.co.uk

## **Information on Other Resources & Guidance**

NSPCC – [www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/)

As the NSPCC is one of the key organisations in the safeguarding arena the above link also provides a range of information and guidance as well as links to other key agencies and information on reporting.

Childline – [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Young people can contact Childline directly via their 24hr helpline

### Safeguarding Adults Boards

Every local authority is required to have a Safeguarding Adults Board who can provide information and guidance on safeguarding for vulnerable adults and how to report. You can find their contact details/websites via your local authority website.

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