

# Sweet Circus Safeguarding: The Quick Guide!

This document is a quick guide to safeguarding at Sweet Circus and gives an overview of our policy and procedures regarding the safeguarding of our participants and staff.

## **This guide may be useful if:**

- you want to understand more about safeguarding in general.
- you want to understand more about how Sweet Circus protect their participants, participants families and staff.
- you are concerned about the wellbeing of a fellow participant or even a friend outside of the organisation.
- you are concerned about the conduct of a staff member or instructor.
- You are concerned about your own safety and wellbeing.

This guide accompanies our Safeguarding Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy which can be found on our website and contains further details.

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**What is 'Safeguarding'?** Safeguarding is about protecting children and adults at risk from abuse or maltreatment and protecting a person's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

## **How does Sweet Circus keep us safe?**

Sweet Circus wants to ensure that all children, young people and adults who are involved with sweet circus are protected and treated with respect.

### **To do this we:**

- have clear safeguarding principles and a safeguarding policy which all Directors, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors are obliged to follow
- carefully select anyone who works for us or represents the company. Ensuring suitable vetting, training or supervision as required
- have a code of conduct for staff (which can be found in the safeguarding policy)
- share information about what parents, children, young people, adults at risk and workers can expect from us and how to voice any concerns
- follow clear procedures and report concerns about any participant, staff member or person from outside the organisation to the correct authority in a timely fashion

**If you have concerns about any of our participants, the conduct of any of our staff, instructors, volunteers or contractors, or yourself please refer to page 7 for the contact details of our Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) and other useful contacts.**

### **What is a Child?**

A child is generally agreed to be anyone under the age of 18.

### **What is a Young Person?**

A young person is a child who is maturing and nearly an adult or has recently become an adult. At Sweet Circus we include people aged 11 – 23 as Young People, even if they are also regarded as children or adults.

### **What is an Adult at Risk?**

The law explains this as an adult in need of care and support, and because of those needs cannot to protect themselves against abuse, neglect, or a risk of it. At Sweet Circus we recognise a person's ability to protect or care for themselves can change, and needs can be permanent, or temporary, such as during an illness or whilst experiencing grief for example.

### **What is Abuse?**

Abuse is when someone causes harm or distress to another person or fails to prevent a person in their care them from being harmed or distressed. Children or adults at risk may be abused within a family, or in an institution such as a school or care home or in a community setting such as sports or recreational clubs. Abuse

may come from someone they know or, more rarely, by a stranger. The abuse may or may not be intentional.

There are many different types of abuse including, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, slavery, domestic abuse, cyber bullying, and radicalisation.

For further information on types of abuse see our safeguarding policy, the NSPCC website (for children and young people) <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/> or the government website (for adults) <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/recognising-adult-abuse-exploitation-and-neglect>

### **How do I know if someone is being abused?**

There is no definite way to be sure if someone is being abused other than witnessing it happening. Here are some signs that could indicate someone is being abused.

#### **Possible signs in children and young people include:**

- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
- Becoming withdrawn
- Seeming anxious
- Becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
- Lack of social skills / few friends
- They seem to have a poor bond or relationship with parents / carers
- Unexplained / poorly explained / poorly treated injuries and bruises
- Knowledge of adult issues or sexual language inappropriate for their age
- Running away / going missing
- Becoming unkempt (ie, appears unwashed, uncared for)
- Chooses clothing which covers their whole body

#### **Possible signs in Adults:**

- Becoming quiet and withdrawn
- Being aggressive or angry for no obvious reason
- Looking unkempt, dirty or thinner than usual
- Sudden changes in their character
- Bruises, wounds, fractures, untreated injuries
- The same injury happening more than once
- Not wanting to be left by themselves or alone with particular people
- Becoming unusually light-hearted, insisting nothing is wrong
- Their home may be cold, unusually dirty, or you might notice things missing
- A change in their finances, such as no longer being able to afford the shopping with no other changes in their circumstances.

**Remember these signs don't necessarily mean that that person is being abused, there could be other things in their life affecting their behaviour.** But if you are concerned you should take action - see page 6.

### **Why should I be careful and open about my use of social media?**

Facebook, Twitter, blogs, instant messaging and photo and video exchange sites are increasingly popular and provide an opportunity for instructors and participants to connect and communicate. However, the use of social networking sites also introduces a range of potential safeguarding risks. These risks include: bullying by peers and people they consider friends, encouragement of causing physical harm ie, happy slapping, sexual grooming and exploitation, glorifying illegal and dangerous activities such as drug taking and imitating stunts.

**Specifically, for sweet circus there is the risk of participants becoming exposed to inappropriate material.** Due to the use of circus and pole in burlesque, and other adult entertainment, a simple internet search may lead to material of an unsuitable nature.

**If you / a child / adult in your care wishes to look for inspiration and encouragement via the internet and social media please supervise their time doing this. Our instructors can guide and advise on where to look / who to follow.**

Here is a short list of safe follows:

Instagram:

@paperdollmilitia

@Circus Mobility

@sweetcircusnet

YouTube:

[www.youtube.com/c/PaperDollMilitia](http://www.youtube.com/c/PaperDollMilitia)

[www.youtube.com/c/UniqueAerialists](http://www.youtube.com/c/UniqueAerialists)

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCumXttGUw5-kIHslB4gayVQ> (Sweet Circus)

Facebook:

[www.sweetcircus.com/sweetcircuseastbourne](http://www.sweetcircus.com/sweetcircuseastbourne)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/279002438906060> (national Centre for Circus Arts)

<https://www.facebook.com/circomediabristol>

Please ask instructors for more should you need it 😊

## **Why won't you friend / follow me on social media?**

Most of our instructors are on various social media platforms but for most of them it is not part of their work. They are not expected to use it for Sweet Circus purposes. Staff are discouraged from friending / following people simply because they attend Sweet Circus as this may risk participants accessing inappropriate material or having insight into a staff members private life which has no bearing on their work with us. There are exceptions to this for example when there are additional connections between the participant and instructor, or the instructor uses the platform for only professional purposes, even then, they would be discouraged from connecting with children / young people without parental permission.

The best way to keep in touch and up to date is to follow Sweet Circus's own YouTube Channel, Facebook and Instagram pages which will always be appropriate for all audiences. In addition, we do have WhatsApp groups and facebook groups for particular classes or groups, if you feel your group needs one, speak to Miz who will consider setting it up and monitoring it.

## **Can I use my phone in class?**

Phones can be useful to record your own progress and for instructors to take videos and photographs to help promote classes. However, they can be hugely distracting leading to unnecessary danger. Therefore, Sweet Circus have restrictions on Phone use within class:

## **Instructors will only use devices within classes / workshops sessions for the following purposes:**

- To play music required for the session
- For video / photography to document and demonstrate progress or for purposes of promoting Sweet Circus. However, consent (which is included in our PARQ) to the use of photos, videos for these purposes can be withdrawn at any time by parents / carers / adults by request.
- To call emergency services if required (safety of other participants must be considered)
- To call a parent / carer / next of kin if required concerning the wellbeing of the participant when it is safe to do so
- To call a Parent / carer / next of kin if concerned that an expected participant has not arrived, when safe to do so
- In the event that an emergency has affected an instructor's kin and someone is trying to get hold of them, once safe to do so, the call can be answered
- When using the device to show / share suitable content with a group that participants may wish to follow up on outside of the session
- Essential communication with other instructors / staff that is time sensitive

### **Appropriate use of phones and devices for participants include:**

- Photographs / videos of progress to celebrate achievement
- Photographs / videos to aid learning understanding and improvement
- Playing of music if allowed
- Communicating with parents /carers for purposes of collection or requiring equipment
- For young children / those with sensory difficulties who may need stimulus whilst waiting their turn

### **Inappropriate uses include:**

- Chatting on social media
- Checking notifications / emails
- Photographs / videos of other students without permission
- Posting to social media whilst in session

**Parents also are advised that if they wish to take photographs / video of their own child they must first check with the instructor that this distraction will not compromise safety. They must only take photographs of their own child unless explicit permission is sought from the parent / carer of any other children pictured.**

### **What should I do I think I or another participant is being abused?**

If possible you should arrange to talk to one of our Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs):

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER  
(DSO):**

**DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER:**

Miz Wells  
Director  
[mizoid@outlook.com](mailto:mizoid@outlook.com)  
07718 996 853

Sophie Scott Harman  
Director  
[sophiaaerialist@hotmail.com](mailto:sophiaaerialist@hotmail.com)  
07974 341 642

If you feel comfortable to do so you can talk to any of our instructors but they will almost certainly have to discuss your concerns with one of the above DSOs.

**Remember instructors are not able to leave a group and you may have to arrange to speak to them after your session.**

### **What happens if I tell someone?**

Whoever you speak to will listen and take you seriously. Do not worry about making a fuss or being judged. Your safety and the safety of other participants is a serious concern and you will be treated sensitively and respectfully. The person you speak to may take notes or complete a form. This will only be shared to those who need to know. It will be the decision of the DSO whether parents / carers need to be informed. If they feel that doing so could cause more harm then they will not share

the information with parents / carers. The DSO may decide they need to consult with or report your concerns to the NSPCC, the county council Health and Social Care or the safeguarding partnership. If a report is made the Local Safeguarding partnership will then investigate. You will continue to be welcome in class and if you feel additional measures need to be put in place to make you feel safe, we will discuss this with you and see what we can do to help.

**What if I am concerned that the abuse is being done by an instructor, staff or volunteer of Sweet Circus?**

You should raise your concern in exactly the same way, if the concern is about the DSO then contact the deputy DSO. Or if you prefer you can report it directly to the Safeguarding Children Partnership / Health and Social Care / Police (please see page 8 for contact numbers). You will still be treated sensitively and respectfully. The DSO will have to report the allegation to the Local Authority. The allegation will be investigated, and the staff member will also be listened to. At Sweet Circus we are all committed to safeguarding and would far rather be made aware of any concerns you have so that they may be addressed.

**What if the person I am concerned about has nothing to do with Sweet Circus?**

While you can still talk to one of us for support and guidance there may be less we can do to help. However, we will support you as best we can. There are a number of websites and services you can also turn to which are listed on the next page.

## Who should I contact?

Here is a list of key contacts and useful websites:

### DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER: (DSO):

Miz Wells  
Director  
[mizoid@outlook.com](mailto:mizoid@outlook.com)  
07718 996 853

### DEPUTY SAFEGUARDING OFFICER:

Sophie Scott Harman  
Director  
[soph\\_sc\\_har@hotmail.com](mailto:soph_sc_har@hotmail.com)  
07974 341 642

### Safeguarding children partnership (East Sussex)

Single Point of Advice (SPoA) Mon-Thurs 8.30am-5pm and Fri 8.30am-4.30pm.  
Phone: 01323 464222

**Out of Hours Social Care Service** - Children's services: 01273 335905/6

Email: [0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk)

[Online referral form](#)

**East Sussex County Council Health & Social Care connect** 0345 60 80 191

**Out of hours social care service:** 01323 636 399

Email: [HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk)

[Online referral form](#)

**Sussex Police:**

101 / 999 Emergencies only

**Sussex Police Child Protection Team:**

0845 6070999

**Child Protection in Sport Unit:**

01163 665 580

**NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

**Childline:** 0800 1111

<https://www.childline.org.uk/>

**Kidscape** 020 7730 3300

<https://www.kidscape.org.uk/>

**National Domestic Abuse Helpline:**

0808 2000 247

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>

**NHS:**

111

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/help-from-social-services-and-charities/abuse-and-neglect-vulnerable-adults/>

**Government website:** <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/recognising-adult-abuse-exploitation-and-neglect>