



Child Protection Policy

This Policy applies to all paid staff and volunteers including within the charity including the board of trustees, committee members, play workers, kitchen helpers or anyone working on behalf of us. This applies whether they are seasonal or permanent workers, work experience students, agency staff. This also applies to all members of the public who come to our sessions.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect all children and young people linked with Incredible Kids services. This includes the children who attend with their parent/carer, and other children in relation to the adults and children who use our services. And also our volunteers and staff who are legally classed as children.
- To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.
- Incredible Kids believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Who is a child: Children are persons under the age of 18.
(Section 65(1), Children Act 2004)

What is Child abuse:

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child, this can be from inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm.

Abuse can take place in anywhere that the child spends time from the child's home to support services, public places and places previously assumed safe, like schools and charities. Children can also be abused via the internet and other technology.

The different types of child abuse are

- **Physical Abuse,**
- **Psychological Abuse,**
- **Sexual Abuse**
- **Neglect.**

(Further details of each type are listed in appendix 1.)

Who may be the Abuser:

Abusers can be anyone who has any type of contact with a child.
It could be:

- An individual or a group of people.
- Any age; adults of any age or other children
- Male or Female
- Professionals; Teachers, health or social care staff
- Related to / responsible for the child;
- Someone thought of as a 'Nice Person'
- Strangers

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Responsibilities of Incredible Kids Trustees.

- Selection and training:
 - The Trustees, all of whom have an enhanced DBS check, will ensure all those in the charity are carefully selected.
 - This selection and training includes ensuring individuals have an enhanced DBS check where needed, everyone knows this policy and its appendix, understanding what process must be followed if child abuse is suspected.
- Supervision:
 - providing effective management for staff and volunteers through support and supervision.
- Consideration as to:
 - What activities are undertaken by Incredible Kids and who leads them.
 - Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
 - Sharing child protection concerns with agencies who need to know including children's social services, police and involving parents and children appropriately.
 - To support and where possible ensure the safety of individuals.

Responsibilities of all Incredible Kids Staff and Volunteers.

- To familiar themselves with and follow this child protection policy and the 'Toileting Policy' and 'Code of Behaviour' .
- Every Volunteer or staff member has a duty to take appropriate action if abuse is suspected/disclosed to them.
- To promote the promotion of good practice, when working with children, to other team members.
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions.

Children and their parents have the right to.

- Be made aware of this policy
- Have alleged incidences recognised and taken seriously
- Receive fair and respectful treatment throughout
- Be involved in any process as appropriate
- Receive information about the outcome.

Incredible Kids are committed to reducing Child abuse at an organisation level and service provision level

Organisational Level

- The best interests of people are maintained within our revision of care and implementation of services.
- We have a system for continuous improvement of quality of service/care that is in place.
- When reviewing, planning, implementing and evaluating our service we take into account our all our users individuality which includes their ethnicity, religion, belief, culture, language, age,

gender, physical, sensory, sexual orientation, development, mental health, social and environmental needs.

- We continually monitor the effectiveness of our service provision. It is our members/users views through feedback that help the development of our charity and enable us to provide a service that best meets their needs.
- We effectively communicate with other services and share information. Ensuring we have written consent whilst when needed whilst maintaining the best interests of individuals when they lack the capacity to make a specific decision.

Service Provision Level.

- We have effective leadership (trustees) within the charity, all of whom have an up to date DBS for Child and Adult Workforce, ensuring policies and procedures are followed by themselves as well as the staff and volunteers
- Confidentiality is maintained by all staff members. Ensuring information is shared on a need to know basis.
- We take all reasonable measures to ensure that any risks of harm to the welfare of those using our service as well as our staff and volunteers are minimised
- We help reduce social isolation through families coming to the sessions we run, and we direct families to other support providers increasing their support network.
- We monitor the training needs of our volunteers and staff and provide a variety of training needed for their individual roles.
- We use evidence based policies and procedures for our service delivery.
- We adopt child protection practices through procedures and a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- We keep clear records which are up to date in accordance with relevant policies and guidelines
- We have robust safeguarding systems in place enabling our staff and volunteer's to not only identify but respond appropriately to abuse.
- We have a clear complaints procedure.

Furthermore we recognise that it is always good practice to

- **Treat all children, young people and adults with respect**
- **Avoid inappropriate conduct in speech or action**
- **Challenge unacceptable behaviour**
- **Respect the right of individuals to privacy and dignity**
- **Be cautious when discussing sensitive issues with children, young people, vulnerable adults and parents/carers**

If abuse of a child should ever occur then the following should be followed.

Person initially identifying/receiving this information should.

Pass information onto the Incredible Kids nominated child protection / vulnerable adults safeguarding person as soon as possible, at least within 24hrs.

DO

- **Try to move somewhere more private.** But ensuring you are not alone with the person.
- **Listen and continue to listen** allow for pauses and silences, let person talk at their pace and without interruption. It could be an adult of child disclosing information to you.
- **Reassure them** that they have done the right thing telling you
- **Always take the person seriously**, believe what they are telling, showing or informing you.
- **Explain what will happen next** who you are going to talk to help with the situation but will still be confidential between only people who need to know. Where a child expresses a wish

for concerns not to be pursued and be kept a secret it must be explained this can't be done, so you can help them.

- **Seek help from Police, Social Services or Medical Staff if there is immediate risk.**
- **Write a factual account of the situation and immediately sign and date.** This must be done as soon as possible, at least on the same day. If you write this up neatly later you must also keep the original.
- **Report discreetly to the nominated child protection Person** at earliest opportunity, at least within 24hrs.

DON'T

- **Discourage those who are wanting to talk to you** about the attitudes and behaviours of others
- **Be shocked, angry or disgusted**, stay calm remember to breath.
- **Laugh or joke out of nervousness/embarrassment.** You need to clearly show through your words and body language that you are taking this seriously
- **Jump to conclusions or make assumptions** stick to the facts only.
- **Question or investigate.** That is the job of the police or social care to do. Once you suspect abuse asking any questions can interfere with procedures and later you can be blamed for leading the person to tell stories.
- **Promise to keep a secret / confidentiality.** Explain that if they tell you somethings that makes you think someone is hurting them or someone else you have to pass it on
- **Say it will be ok**, as at that moment everything is not ok for the person.
- **Tell others not in the reporting process**, this must be kept confidential telling only those who need to know.
- **Confront the accused**, this is the job of the police you could make matters worse and unsafe for yourself and the person talking to you.
- **Risk contaminating evidence.** If relevant ensure the area involved is kept clear of others and is not cleared up or touched.
- **Don't break confidentiality**, don't tell others not involved in the reporting process.

The Nominated person will then.

- Ascertain if an individual situation falls within definitions of abuse as outlined in this policy and its appendix.
- Ascertain if immediate action is required, is the child safe?
- Who else needs to be informed, Police, child social services
- Is an internal investigation required.
- Provide support to the person initially told about the abuse.
- Document the situation including discussions undertaken, the outcome of the persons decisions and who the incidence was further reported to, if relevant.

(see Appendix 2 for Further Information for the Nominated Child Protection Person.)

The Primary child protection nominated person is **Jeanna Bhalero**.

If this primary nominate person is away or the abuse involves them, then the Secondary child protection nominated person Santie Human is to be approached.

As long as the incidence does not involve the other nominated person, as needed each should be used to support the other to discuss situations and make further decisions together.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy was last reviewed on: November 2019

Signed: ...Jennie Prewett.....
(the safeguarding lead on our board of trustees)

Appendix 1

Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse - Results in actual or potential physical harm from interaction or lack of interaction, which is reasonable within the control of a parent or other person

May involve hitting, Shaking, throwing, Poisoning, Burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Indicators include:

- Bruises: especially not on areas associated with normal trips/falls i.e. on knees. e.g. on areas like trunk, upper inner arms, face, neck, shoulders, fingertip bruising, bruises on top of bruises.
- Burns and scalds: especially those that could be a cigarette burn or indicate lengthy exposure to heat.
- Bite marks.
- Fractures, swellings, reduced ability in limbs compared to individual child's abilities.
- Flinching when approached, unwilling to cooperate with personal care.
- Aggression to others or extremely passive.
- Untreated injuries, unexplained falls or major injuries

Indicators are especially a concern if story told seems inconsistent

Psychological Abuse - The threshold of significant harm is reached when the abusive interactions dominate and become typical of the relationship between the person and the abuser.

May involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. Age developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. Interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. Serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Indicators include:

- Developmental delay
- Passive acceptance of excessive punishment.
- Over reactions to mistakes
- Continual self depreciation.
- Sudden speech disorder.
- Inappropriate emotional responses,

- Change in behaviour including neurotic behaviours, thumb sucking, rocking, hair twisting.
- Poor self esteem, withdrawal, mental health problems,
- Change in appetite/weight

Sexual Abuse - when someone is used by another person for his/her gratification or sexual arousal or for that of others

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessary involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Physical contact including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. Non-contact activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

- Indicators of:
 - Damage to genitalia
 - Soreness in genitalia, anus, mouth.
 - Sexually transmitted infections,
 - Unexplained, recurrent urinary tract infections, discharges or abdominal pain,
 - Unexpected pregnancy, especially in very young girls.
 - Age inappropriate sexual play, language, drawings, acting out,
 - Age (ability) inappropriate wetting / soiling.
 - Sexually provocative behaviour.
 - Sexualised behaviours in very young children.
 - Self harm, sadness, depression, loss of self esteem.
 - Change in behaviour

Neglect The threshold of significant harm is reached when the person's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected.

Involves Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Inadequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, Physical and emotional harm or danger including not ensuring adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers. Withholding access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It can also include unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators of:

- Poor social relationships
- Developmental delay
- Absence of food, Pot belly, short stature, emaciation,
- Poor skin / hair tone
- Untreated medical conditions and failure to attend medical appointments.
- Being left dirty or unbathed.
- Constant tiredness and hunger,
- Unusual weight loss
- Compulsive stealing.
- Unsanitary living conditions.
- Unsuitable clothing for weather

Appendix 2

Further Information for the Nominated Child Protection Person.

Incredible Kids will fully support any external investigation and provide all documents requested. Recognising that there is a need to balance the requirements of confidentiality with the consideration that, to protect children it may be necessary to share information on a 'need-to-know basis' (bearing in mind the provisions of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998);

Incredible Kids will involve the police and child social services about an instance of alleged abuse. Recognising that a criminal investigation by the police takes priority over all other lines of enquiry.

Not only does Incredible Kids have a responsibility to the child who has been abused but may also have responsibility in relation to some perpetrators of abuse who may be a member of the Charity.

Initial rejection of help from the abuse victim should not always be taken at face value. There needs to be further opportunities for them to receive help if they later choose to.

Children are entitled to the protection of the law the same as any other member of the public.

It is often not clear the seriousness or extent of abuse when it is first expressed. It is important to approach reports of incidences or allegations with an open mind when considering the appropriateness of intervention.

We recognise that incidents of abuse may be multiple either to one person or to more than one person so we will look beyond a single incident/breach of our standards to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. And any findings reported as necessary.

The following factors will be considered when assessing the information given

- the individual child;
- the nature and extent of the abuse;
- the length of time it has been occurring;
- the impact on the individual;
- the risk of repeated or increasingly serious acts involving this or other children

All reports of suspected abuse to the Safeguarding Person will be documented including discussions undertaken, the outcome of the persons decisions and who the incidence was further reported to, if relevant.

Departments within the Local Council for reporting suspected child abuse.

South Glos Child Protection – 01454 866000 (emergency duty team 01454 615165)

Bristol First Response Team - 0117 0936222 (emergency duty team 01454 615165)

Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/23/contents>