

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Holding On Letting Go aims to create an atmosphere where children and young people feel valued, safe, and secure in an environment where their welfare is prioritised and safeguarded.

All concerns raised will be taken seriously, and acted upon appropriately

### **Legal Framework**

**This policy is drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely:**

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2004
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Relevant government guidance on safeguarding children..

We will be rigorous and vigilant in safeguarding the children and young people using our service from all forms of abuse, bullying, and intimidation. We will do this through a careful recruitment and selection process of staff and volunteers.

All volunteers and staff, including any temporary personnel and helpers, should be subject to a rigorous selection process with the following elements:-

- Completion of an application form.
- An interview.
- Enhanced DBS check.
- No unsupervised access to any child or young person until all checks are completed.
- Background in health, social work, education, or counselling would be vital for a role working alongside the children and young people.
- HOLG Introductory Training in working with bereaved children.

It is mandatory that every volunteer and staff member will attend Level 2 Child Safeguarding Training provided by Holding on Letting Go.

One person at any support weekend **must** be level 3 trained.

All safeguarding training must be repeated at least every 3 years.

There will be a dedicated safeguarding representative on each weekend programme (usually Clinical lead, or deputy), and every volunteer will know who that person is.

The Clinical Lead for Children & Families holds overall responsibility for the safeguarding within HOLG.

(Currently Debbie McSwiney – Debbie.McSwiney@HOLG.org.uk, 03445611511).

### **Guidelines for the nominated safeguarding person**

The person who has responsibility for making sure any safeguarding issues are responded to properly will need to know:

- The signs and symptoms of abuse.
- Knowledge of how abusers (perpetrators) behave. (Training will be given to personnel in this key role).
- Knowledge of the [local safeguarding](#) boards and key contact details for escalating concerns to team.
- Resources of information and helplines will be available on request.
- Knowledge of how to make a referral to Social Services or/and Police (see Child Protection Policy)

## **Staff and Volunteers Code of behaviour**

The Charities Code of behaviour should include all of the following elements

### **Rules and arrangements for:**

- Relationship with children and young people.
- Relationship between personnel.
- Appropriate conduct with children and young people.
- Physical restraint.
- Personal care.

### **Specific behaviour not allowed:**

- Sexual conduct.
- Lending or borrowing money or property.
- Giving or receiving personal gifts.
- Exclusive or secretive relationships.
- Taking project users to your home.
- Exchanging telephone numbers and emails.

### **Guidelines for project workers/volunteers responding to a report of abuse from a child or young person**

#### ***Do***

- Do treat any allegation seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child they did the right thing in telling you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the child what you are doing and when, keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do tell the nominated child protection person for HOLG as soon as possible.
- Do document everything that has been said to you, in the words the child/young person has used as soon as possible.

## ***Don't***

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child - it's not your job to carry out an investigation as this will be done by Social Services and the Police.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you.
- Don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do nothing – make sure you alert the nominated safeguarding person immediately.

Remember you have a duty of care to make sure any concerns are reported so appropriate action can be taken to protect the individual(s) in question.

## **Keeping a record of concerns**

When a safeguarding concern arises, it is essential you record what is said or seen, and what action was taken.

This record, or any other written record, should be kept in a locked cabinet or drawer and access should be limited to:

- The person who has completed the form.
- The nominated safeguarding representative.
- The operational trustee/safeguarding lead.
- KCC Safeguarding board representative.

Ensure that any notes you make are concise and factual - only write down what you observed or heard, not opinions or assumptions. Sign and date your notes using the record of concerns form (attached).

Your notes may be shown to the Police and Social Services and these could be used in Court.

Any contact with parents/carers regarding the safeguarding matters should be made via the nominated safeguarding person for HOLG, Social Services, or the Police.

## Safeguarding Children Record of Concerns

<b>Name of child:</b>
<b>Date of birth:</b>
<b>Address:</b>
<b>Telephone number:</b>
<b>Parent/Carer Names:</b>
<b>Parent/Carer Address:</b>
<b>Parent/Carer Telephone number:</b>
<b>What is said to have happened or been seen?</b>

**When and where did it occur?**

**Have there been any concerns noted about this child or siblings in the past?**

**Who else, if anyone was involved and in what way?**

**What was said by those involved?**

**Were there any physical signs, or a change in behaviour?**

**Was the child able to say what happened, if so how did they describe it?**

**Who has been told about it and when?**

**Are the parent/carers aware?**

**Any other relevant details?**

Signed:

Print name in full:

Role within HOLG:

Date:

Signed by safeguarding lead:

Print name in full:

Date: