



South Brent Old School Community Centre Safeguarding Policy

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1. Summary Statement

1.1. Scope of this policy

- 1.1.1. South Brent Old School Community Centre ('SBOSCC') aims to provide for people of all ages to use its facilities to carry out a range of activities where they will feel welcome and safe.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this policy is to provide protection for the children, young people and vulnerable adults who access services, facilities and activities at the Community Centre.
- 1.1.3. This policy applies to users of and activities in SBOSCC, and any ancillary activities which are the responsibility of SBOSCC.
- 1.1.4. All trustees, paid staff, contractors, sessional workers, volunteers and students, or anyone working on behalf of the Community Centre or any of its user groups must abide by this policy.
- 1.1.5. This policy provides staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect someone may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
- 1.1.6. A copy of this policy will be made available on the Centre website and section 4 will be displayed within the Centre.

1.2. Commitments

- 1.2.1. The welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse, whether physical, verbal, sexual, bullying, exclusion, emotional or neglect.
- 1.2.2. All children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- 1.2.3. Anyone who is not willing to consider other Centre users, and their right to free access and undisturbed usage, may forfeit the right to have access to the Centre.

1.3. Responsibilities

- 1.3.1. Whilst safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone, all hirers of the Centre will be made aware that they must have their own safeguarding procedures in place if, during the course of their hire, they have direct responsibility for children and/or vulnerable adults. SBOSCC provides the space for many groups to meet, and responsibility for the safeguarding of those groups rests with the relevant group leaders. Acceptance of SBOSCC's safeguarding policy is part of the agreed contract taken out upon hiring space or undertaking activities at the Centre.

- 1.3.2. Where SBOSCC directly runs a group/event/activity, the Board of trustees will ensure that all trustees, volunteers, staff and contractors will have the appropriate level of DBS clearance. A record of staff and trustee clearances will be kept.
- 1.3.3. All trustees, staff, contractors and volunteers of SBOSCC have a role in identifying children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be at risk, and alerting the appropriate service.
- 1.3.4. All people working/volunteering on behalf of SBOSCC, and all hirers/users of the Centre must ensure that they know what to do if they have concerns about the safety of children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- 1.3.5. The trustees are committed to safe recruitment, selection and vetting.
- 1.3.6. The trustees recognise that dealing with allegations of abuse can be stressful and will offer SBOSCC staff/volunteers as much support during the process as resources permit.
- 1.3.7. If allegations are made against a SBOSCC staff member/volunteer, the Chair of Trustees or their Deputy will refer to the Disciplinary Procedure taking this Safeguarding Policy into account. The rights of staff under Grievance and Disciplinary procedures will still apply.

1.4. Reporting Concerns

- 1.4.1. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Chair of Trustees. The Chair may delegate these responsibilities to the Centre Manager or other nominated trustee.
- 1.4.2. All safeguarding concerns should be reported to the DSL, who will record them and take appropriate action.
- 1.4.3. Training will be provided for the DSL, to equip them to handle such reports, including informing appropriate authorities when necessary.
- 1.4.4. The name(s) and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be displayed within the Centre, and in Section 4 of this policy.

2. Safeguarding Children & Young People

2.1. Introduction

- 2.1.1. The Board of trustees acknowledges that the users of the Centre include children, young people and their families. The Board believes it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind, and recognises its duty to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them. This policy has been informed by the guidance of the Charity Commission, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and under the legislation of the Children Act 1989 and 2002.
- 2.1.2. Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- 2.1.3. Any children and young people under 18 attending the centre are deemed to be the responsibility of parents/carers or, after a hand-over, the nominated adult running the class or workshop that the child(ren) are attending. Children are not the responsibility of employees or volunteers of the Centre unless the employee/volunteer is running an activity/event for children on behalf of SBOSCC and have advertised that they will do so.
- 2.1.4. All hirers will be made aware that facilities such as the toilets are shared with other groups and users, and that appropriate supervision/arrangements should be made.
- 2.1.5. All hirers will be made aware of their obligations under the Licensing Act 2003 to ensure that alcohol is not sold to those under the age of 18.
- 2.1.6. No gambling or entertainment of an adult or sexual nature shall be permitted on the premises.

2.2. What is Abuse and Neglect of Children?

- 2.2.1. Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.
- 2.2.2. **Physical abuse** 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.
- 2.2.3. **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or only valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include 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. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, 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.
- 2.2.4. **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- 2.2.5. **Neglect** is the 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. Once a child is born it may involve a parent failing to: – provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment) – protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger – ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) – ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- 2.2.6. The following groups are potentially more vulnerable and at increased risk of harm:
 - disabled / has specific additional needs;
 - has special educational needs;
 - is a young carer
 - is showing signs of engaging in anti-social or criminal behaviour
 - is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as substance abuse, adult mental health, domestic violence; and/or
 - is showing early signs of abuse and/or neglect.

2.3. How to Listen if a Child Reports Abuse

If a child or young person confides in you:

- a. Listen to them. Let them tell you in their own words what is happening and how they are feeling.
- b. Do not ask leading questions.
- c. Do not promise confidentiality – explain that you might need to speak to a safeguarding professional about the concerns.

- d. You do not need to seek a child's consent before reporting concerns.
- e. Make a note of what the child said as soon as you can after the conversation.
Try to record it verbatim (what the child actually said).

2.4. Reporting Concerns & Taking Action

See Section 4 of this policy for who to contact.

If a child is in immediate danger, call [999](#) and ask for the police.

3. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

3.1. Introduction

- 3.1.1. The Board of trustees is committed to ensuring that vulnerable people who access the Centre are not exploited or abused, and that working practices minimise the risk of abuse. If abuse is reported, or if staff / volunteers recognise abuse, this policy outlines what steps should be taken.
- 3.1.2. The Board of trustees aims to: respond sensitively to reported incidents of self neglect and abuse, respect the rights and wishes of the vulnerable person, and work to the highest standards of good practice.
- 3.1.3. All individuals will be treated with equal respect regardless of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, national origin, disability, sexuality, religion or age.
- 3.1.4. The rights of all individuals will be upheld and decisions will be taken in partnership with the vulnerable person. There will be no unnecessary delay in resolving matters. Intervention will be no more than is necessary to protect the individual.
- 3.1.5. Personal information will be treated in the strictest confidence within the limits of the Data Protection Act 1998, and following the Centre's Privacy, Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy.

3.2. What is Abuse and Neglect of Vulnerable Adults?

- 3.2.1. Safeguarding adults is about protecting those at risk of harm (vulnerable adults) from suffering abuse or neglect. We all have the right to live our lives free from abuse. It is recognised that certain groups of people may be more likely to experience abuse and less able to access services or support to keep themselves safe.
- 3.2.2. An adult at risk is someone over 18 years old who:
 - has care and support needs,
 - is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect,
 - as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.
 - If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.
- 3.2.3. An adult at risk may therefore be a person who:
 - is old and frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment,
 - has a learning disability,
 - has a physical disability or a sensory impairment or both,
 - has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder,
 - has a long term illness or condition,
 - misuses substances or alcohol,

- is a carer such as a family member or friend who provides personal assistance and care to adults and is subject to abuse,
 - is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.
 - Although, anyone can be at risk of abuse or exploitation.
- 3.2.4. Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person. Abuse may consist of single or repeated acts. It can be physical, psychological, financial, sexual, neglect or discriminatory abuse, and can take place in any setting. Neglect can be deliberate or unintentional, amounting to abuse by a carer (formal or informal) or self neglect by the vulnerable person.
- 3.2.5. Devon County Council have some useful information on spotting signs of financial abuse & scams, domestic abuse, and sexual violence. Visit: [Safe from abuse - Adult Social Care](#)

3.3. How to Listen if an Adult Reports Abuse

- a. Listen carefully to what the person is saying.
- b. Give the person time to say what he or she wants to.
- c. Make initial enquiries and establish the situation as far as possible without starting an investigation.
- d. Sensitively ask open questions (not leading questions) to obtain key information, e.g. what has happened, when did the activity take place, where did it take place, who is involved.
- e. Discuss with the person what action he/she wishes you to take.
- f. Ensure that the person knows how to contact the police to report the incident if he or she wishes to do so.
- g. Keep brief notes, written after the disclosure, of what the person has told you using their own words, and not your interpretation of them.

3.3.1. If the person asks you not to take any action

You must explain to the person that you must inform the DSL. Tell the person you understand that he or she does not wish to take any action and you will inform the DSL of this. If the person does not want the matter to go any further, then his/her wishes should be respected, unless the following apply:

- Where the alleged abuse has been perpetrated by a professional, a paid helper or volunteer of any organisation who may have access to other vulnerable people,
- Where there is likelihood of a serious crime occurring,
- Where the person lacks the mental capacity to make an informed decision.

3.3.2. If the person wishes action to be taken

You should record all the information that you have been told and what you have observed. The wishes of the vulnerable person should be taken into account and their consent (if they are able to give it) should be obtained regarding further action and the sharing of information.

3.4. Recording Concerns & Taking Action

See Section 4 of this policy for who to contact.

If an adult is in immediate danger, call [999](#) and ask for the police.

4. Reporting Concerns & Taking Action

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is:

Dave MacDiarmid Trustee 07469 744272
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Reporting Concerns about CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE

If you are concerned about the safety of a child or young person, or if you are a child/young person and you feel unsafe:

Contact Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership by:

- visiting www.devonscp.org.uk/make-a-request-for-support/ and completing an online request for support form:
devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MASH/homepage
- phone: [0345 155 1071](tel:03451551071) (Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm; Friday 9am to 4pm)
- Or on evenings, weekends and bank holidays, call the Emergency Duty Service on [0345 6000 388](tel:03456000388)

If a child is at immediate risk contact the Police on [999](tel:999).

Reporting Concerns about ADULTS:

If you suspect that a vulnerable adult is being abused, or you are being abused yourself and live in Devon:

Contact Adult Social Care:

- phone: [0345 1551 007](tel:03451551007) (Monday to Thursday 9am to 5pm; Friday 9am to 4:30pm)
- or on evenings, weekends and bank holidays, call the Emergency Duty Service on [0345 6000 388](tel:03456000388)
- or you can email: adultsc.safeguardingadultservices-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

If an adult is at immediate risk contact the Police on [999](tel:999).

Policy Review / Update Procedure

This version approved by trustees:	November 2025
Next review due: This document should be reviewed annually or: <ul style="list-style-type: none">following any changes in relevant legislation or regulations, or;when any incident has occurred or feedback reported relating to this policy.	November 2026
Person(s) responsible for updating	Rik Meek, Sheila Alexander and Michelle Parton