

Exmoor Centre - Safeguarding Policy

1. The Trust and the operation of the Exmoor Centre is committed to the safeguarding of all children, young people and adults at risk with whom it and its agents and volunteers have contact.

Principles

2. Everyone involved in the provision of activities and care of children, young people and adults at risk has a responsibility for the protection of them from harm.

3. A duty is placed upon our charity through the Human Rights Act (1998) to intervene to protect the rights of citizens. The Children Act (1989) makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and that everyone involved in the care of children has a responsibility to protect those children from harm.

4. In order to protect everyone from potential and actual abuse all responsible persons working with our charity must have an understanding of the issues involved and that appropriate procedures are in place that are shared and understood by all concerned.

5. Our policy focus is upon the following principles:

- The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk, is paramount;
- Everyone, regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- While it is not our responsibility as persons supporting this charity, or your responsibility as users of the Exmoor Centre, to decide whether or not abuse is occurring, it is your and our responsibility to act on any concerns and do something about it.

Objectives

6. The key objectives of this policy are to:

- Explain the responsibilities we all have in respect of safeguarding children and adults at risk to users of the Exmoor Centre, volunteers, staff, managers, management committee members and trustees.
- Provide people using the Exmoor Centre, volunteers, staff, managers, management committee members and trustees with an overview of child and adult safeguarding.
- Provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where a child or adult at risk safeguarding issue arises.

Definitions

7. A child is a child before their birth (i.e. during pregnancy) and until their 18th birthday.

8. An adult at risk is any adult who needs community care services because of mental or other disability, age or illness and who are, or may be, unable to take care of themselves against harm or exploitation. The term replaces “vulnerable adult” and “alleged victim”.

Identifying abuse and what to do if abuse is suspected.

9. The term 'abuse' is used to describe various ways that someone can be harmed or mistreated.

10. Abuse can happen anywhere and at any time, but research indicates that the perpetrators of abuse are likely to be known and trusted by the child or young person. For adults at risk evidence suggests that the perpetrators of abuse are often professional carers or other adults at risk.

11. Child abuse is split into four categories - physical, neglect, sexual and emotional. Abuse of adults at risk is split into seven categories, it includes the four used for children but includes three further categories; financial, institutional and discriminatory. The definitions of these different types of abuse are as follows:

Physical abuse

This may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, squeezing, suffocating, drowning, burning or biting the child or adult at risk. Giving a child alcohol is also a form of physical abuse. Giving a child or adult at risk (against their free and informed consent) drugs, poison or overmedicated using prescribed medications are also forms of physical abuse. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or an adult at risk's basic physical and psychological needs. This may include the failure to meet basic needs, like food, shelter, warm clothing or medical attention. Neglect of children may occur before their birth (i.e. during pregnancy) as a result of substance misuse and is also the failure to provide adequate supervision (including leaving children with inappropriate carers).

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Activities may involve penetrative and non-penetrative acts or non-contact activities such as forcing a child or adult at risk to look at, or take part in the production of pornographic materials. For children it can also include encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse includes grooming a child in preparation for abuse, for example, via the internet.

Emotional abuse

For children emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, such as to cause severe adverse effects on that child's emotional development. This may involve a lack of love and affection, telling a child they are worthless, serious bullying or being constantly shouted at. Emotional abuse also occurs when the child is valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, when the child is overprotected and unable to explore and learn on their own, or when they witness the ill-treatment or abuse of another (including domestic violence, or animal cruelty). Other examples are serious bullying, including cyber bullying, making fun of what the child says or how they communicate. For adults at risk emotional, sometimes called psychological, abuse can include the threats of harm or abandonment, blaming or controlling behaviour or enforced isolation.

Financial abuse

This type of abuse is used for abuse of adults at risk only, however if you think that a child is being abused financially you should report this in the usual way. Financial abuse is when an adult at risk is exploited for financial gain. This can include theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Institutional abuse

Again this type of abuse is used for abuse of adults at risk only, however if you think that a child is experiencing this type of abuse you should report this in the usual way and also consider contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (see section on managing allegations).

Institutional abuse occurs when the routines, systems and regimes of an institution result in poor or inadequate standards of care and poor practice which affects the whole setting and denies, restricts or curtails the dignity, privacy, choice, independence or fulfilment of adults at risk. Decisions will be taken because they are in the best interests of the staff or institution not in the best interests of the adult at risk.

Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is behaviour that makes or sees a distinction between people as a basis for prejudice or unfair treatment. This can include racism, sexism, homophobia, disability and not respecting individuals' right to worship.

12. Possible **signs of abuse** include:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts, or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries, or the explanation of the cause of the injury is ill-fitting.
- A disclosure of abuse, or description of what appears to be an abusive act by a child or adult at risk.
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child or adult at risk.
- Unexplained change in behaviour, such as withdrawal or sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or sexually explicit behaviour.
- Distrust of a particular individual, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in making friends.
- Eating disorders, depression, self-harm or suicide attempts.
- Deterioration in health or appearance including loss of weight.
- Unexplained loss of money or material goods (financial abuse)
- Unexplained possession of money or goods such as mobile phones (child sexual exploitation)
- Fear or anxiety

This is not an exhaustive list of possible indicators of abuse.

What to do if abuse is suspected

13. If anyone suspects abuse is taking place they should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer for the user / hirer of the Exmoor Centre, who will decide whether or not to take the matter further. A record of the concern must be kept and a copy of this sent to the Exmoor Centre Designated Safeguarding Officer identified at the end of this document. Where the user / hirer does not have a Designated Safeguarding Officer for their own organisation/hire all suspected abuse will be reported to the Exmoor Centre Designated Safeguarding Officer identified at the end of this document.

14. CSE is never the victim's fault, even if there is some form of exchange: all children and young people under the age of 18 have a right to be safe and should be protected from harm.

15. If the **child is at risk** of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), please report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, however if you consider that the child is at immediate risk as if so you might need to contact the Police on 999 and when in or for Devon call the MASH on 0345 – 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk. (MASH is the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub)

16. In Devon VOYC is the organisation who provides guidance and support community and voluntary groups and can be contacted on 01392 250976, email admin@voycdevon.org.uk or www.voycdevon.org.uk.

If necessary VOYC Devon will follow Devon Missing And Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) guidance and submissions where there is a concern that:

- someone may be involved in the grooming or sexual exploitation of a child or multiple children or,
- a location is suspected of being used for the grooming of, or sexual exploitation of children, for example private dwelling, car park, the fair or a hotel.

17. If there is a concern that a child is at risk of CSE and knowledge that the child is open to Children's Social Work, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will liaise with the child's social worker about our concerns so that they can complete the CSE risk assessment tool and ensure any information and concerns are collated within the CSE risk assessment tool.

If the child is not open to Children's Social Work and we are not sure if our concerns relate to CSE, the Designated Safeguarding Officer will complete the MACSE assessment and if necessary will call the MASH helpline on 0345 155 1071 and request advice from the REACH team (Reducing Exploitation and Absence from Care and Home).

18. People using the Exmoor Centre, volunteers, staff, managers, management committee members and trustees are expected to be vigilant and to identify ways of preventing people from becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism. In doing so there is an acknowledgement that a radicalisation process includes exposure of an individual to extremist viewpoints that may eventually influence the person to carry out an act of violent extremism or terrorism. This could take weeks, months or even years. It is possible to intervene during this process and stop someone becoming a terrorist or supporting violent extremist activity.

Violent extremism is where people seek to justify or promote terrorism or encourage others to commit such acts. If you believe someone is at risk of radicalisation you can help them obtain support and prevent them becoming involved in terrorism by raising your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who will then consider making a referral. If there are concerns then speak to the designated safeguarding lead to discuss these concerns. For referrals in Devon and Cornwall we will contact: prevent@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

19. If the **adult is at risk** please contact Devon Care Direct on 0345 155 1007, email csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk or for 'keeping safe' information at www.new.devon.gov.uk.

20. If it is felt that there is a significant risk to a child / vulnerable adult and further investigation is required in order to keep them safe then the matter must be referred to the Devon MASH or Devon Care Direct.

21. **For children:** the MASH consultation line may be contacted at any time for advice and consultation. In the event of a referral to MASH all relevant information must be shared, including copies of correspondence, records or log of previous concerns and notes of any conversations with the child, their family or other persons.

22. **For adults:** if it is felt that further investigation is required in order to keep an adult at risk safe then the matter must be referred to Care Direct. Care Direct may be contacted at any time for advice and consultation. In the event of a referral to Care Direct to care all relevant information must be shared, including copies of correspondence, log of previous concerns and notes of any conversations with the adult at risk, their family or other staff.

23. The Data Protection Act is not a barrier to information sharing where doing so is necessary to safeguard children or an adult at risk.

24. In the event that the designated safeguarding champion is not available or contactable this should not delay action being taken to protect a child or adult at risk.

25. If there are any concerns about the immediate safety of a child or an adult at risk then the Police must be contacted on 999 without delay.

Allegations against volunteers, staff, managers, management committee members and trustees

26. Any suspicion that a child, or an adult at risk, has been abused by volunteers, staff, managers, management committee members and trustees must be reported to the designated Safeguarding Officer otherwise known as the Alerting Manager, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child or adult at risk in question and any other child who may be at risk.

27. The designated Safeguarding Officer will refer the allegation to MASH or Care Direct who may involve the police, or will refer directly to the police if out-of-hours.

MASH

0345 155 1071

You must follow up your telephone call by sending a completed referral form to the MASH within 48 hours. Email the form to mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk

Out of hours – 0845 600 0388 Care Direct

0345 155 1007 26

28. For abuse (or allegations of abuse) of children, Children's Social Care and the designated safeguarding champion will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose responsibility it is to:

- Provide advice and guidance;
- Liaise with the police and other agencies;
- Provide assistance in discussions regarding suspension and referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Details for the Devon LADO including a referral form can be found at:

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/child-protection/managing-allegations-against-adults-working-with-children>

29. The parents or carers of the child or adult at risk will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from MASH / Care Direct and/or the Police.

30. If the designated Safeguarding Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the concern must be made directly to MASH or Care Direct.

31. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation
- A child protection / safeguarding adult investigation
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation

32. The designated Safeguarding Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual suspected of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further Police and Social Care enquiries.

33. Where an individual is suspended it is advised that other employees / volunteers should have no contact with them until enquiries have concluded.

34. Irrespective of the findings of Social Care or police enquiries the organisation will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated. The welfare of the child or adult at risk should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Capacity

The following section applies only to adults.

35. As a general rule a child cannot be assessed for capacity under the Mental Capacity Act (2005) except in specific circumstances. (For more information on this you must access appropriate training).

36. In accordance with the Mental Capacity Act (2005), public agencies work from a presumption that an adult has capacity to make their own decisions unless a person's apparent comprehension of a situation gives rise to doubt. It is the right of adults who have capacity to make their own choices, irrespective of how wise we might consider that decision to be.

However, where:

- A crime is suspected or;
- Allegations involve a member of staff, paid carer or volunteer, or;

- There is a risk of significant harm to that person or any other adult at risk then relevant agencies must be informed and allegations must be investigated whether the alleged victim is willing to take an active part in the process or not.

37. Where adults lack the capacity to safeguard themselves, other people will need to make those decisions, and to ensure that this is done appropriately you may wish to ask the following agencies to support you:

Care Direct 0345 155 1007 26

Record keeping

38. Any records kept in relation to safeguarding concerns for a child or an adult at risk must be kept securely and confidentially in an agreed place. Records must be factual, accurate and clearly written in black ink or typed, with a legible date, time and signature.

Additional related policies

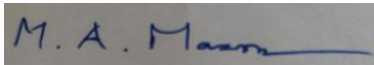
39. All volunteers, staff, managers, management committee members and trustees will receive a copy of this policy and undergo appropriate training as part of their induction to the organisation.

40. All users and hirers of the Exmoor Centre will receive a copy of this policy and to acknowledge this has been received and read for implementation during the period of use.

41. This policy has been formally agreed and adopted by the Management Committee and Trustees St Mary Lyncombe Exmoor Trust at a meeting on January 24th 2018.

The Management Committee who are also responsible for the implementation of this policy will review this policy annually.

Signed:



Name: Margaret Mason

Position: Chairman to the Board of Charitable Trustees

Date: 24 January 2018

Review Date: January 2019

The Exmoor Centre Designated Safeguarding Officer for the St Mary Lyncombe Exmoor Trust is:-

Steve Keable, 07967 655045, stevejkeable@gmail.com