



## CHILDRENS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Tracks Through Pastures CIO is committed to ensuring the protection of children (under 18 years of age) at risk of abuse through the development and implementation of effective policies and best practice.

This Safeguarding Policy, with the associated procedures, provides guidance for all members of the Tracks Through Pastures team who may have any safeguarding concerns within the context of their work.

Tracks Through Pastures is a direct provider of services for either children or services that are designated for young people at risk.

Tracks Through Pastures provide services for children at risk. There may be activities that we undertake that may bring us into contact with those who are vulnerable to abuse because of their age, physical or mental ability or ill health. Types of relevant activity include:

- activities that bring us into direct contact with a person is a Tracks Through Pastures 1-1 AAT Therapy session or qualification delivered either at Tracks Through Pastures venue in Caterham CR3 6AS or within a setting in Surrey.
- provision of services to education or care organisations that work with children at risk.
- access to either personal or confidential data/information that relates to children at risk.

Tracks Through Pastures staff and volunteers, recognise and accept the responsibility to develop and raise awareness of the issues involved in working with children (under 18 years of age).

### Definitions for Children and Vulnerable Adults

*The Department for Education (DfE) 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance, Part 1, describes safeguarding as including:*

- protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development
- where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if *they are not suffering harm or are at immediate risk*.

*The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 is about preventing people from being drawn into radicalisation and must also be considered within the scope of this policy. Section 26 of this Act places a duty on certain bodies ("specified authorities" listed in Schedule 6 to the Act), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".*

### Objectives

Tracks Through Pastures CIO shall:

- provide an environment in which children feel safe and valued
- ensure Tracks Through Pastures, including staff and volunteers, take responsibility to protect children from harm at all times
- Sarah Lopez is Tracks Through Pastures designated safe guarding representative for all children, and vulnerable matters, and to identify appropriate onward training opportunities
- develop and adopt a set of guidelines/code of conduct for working with children, which all Tracks Through Pastures including staff and volunteers are aware of and adhere to
- exercise a Duty of Care and, when necessary, share information and/or concerns in a confidential manner with the appropriate outside agency e.g. Social Services ,LA or to call the emergency services if there is immediate danger of harm
- ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with, or have responsibility for, children undergo an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS)
- ensure recruitment of volunteers is thorough and includes a minimum of two character references to support an application
- develop a time specific induction period when all new staff and volunteers are introduced to guidelines for working with children and vulnerable adults and policy and procedures
- ensure volunteers are supervised during a designated probationary period with ongoing regular supervision opportunities
- review and update this policy and practice annually.

## Tracks Through Pastures CIO Foundation Policy Statement

All staff and volunteers instructed by and acting for and on behalf of Tracks Through Pastures should not have any unsupervised contact with children during visits to Settings or in any other situation as part of their work for us unless they have a current Enhanced DBS check and clearance. We require everyone to declare unspent and exempt convictions at recruitment and appointment. The Safeguarding Officer- DSL has responsibility for reviewing and updating the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures annually or sooner in the event of any “safeguarding alert” (see under Procedures below). We promote our approach to Safeguarding and that the Safeguarding Officer is the first point of contact for anyone with concerns for either a child at risk.

Contact : Sarah Lopez [Info@tracks.org](mailto:Info@tracks.org).

## Procedure

All members, staff, third party, trustees and other Executive Committee Members who suspects there is abuse of a child, or to whom another has confided such abuse, should report this immediately to the Safeguarding Officer DSL. This is described as a “safeguarding alert”. If there is a concern that the child or adult is at immediate risk of harm the emergency services 999 should also be called immediately. Everything that has been discussed and logged it to be in clear and precise language.

The Safeguarding Officer will contact the relevant local authority Helpdesk or Safeguarding Service at Surrey County Council and act in accordance with their guidance in relation to a young person, for advice on action to be taken.

In the event that there is a safeguarding alert about a member, staff, third party of the Tracks Through Pastures, the Safeguarding Officer will inform the Trustees and another member of the Executive Committee will liaise with the relevant Surrey service (see the details below under the heading Additional Support & Advice regarding further action). These will advise about making a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who is responsible for dealing with such allegations. If the individual raising an alert regarding a child at risk feels that the Safeguarding Officer has not responded

appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Officer as to the appropriateness of a referral, it is their right and duty as a citizen to make a direct referral to the local authority designated safeguarding service. If there is an alert implicating the Safeguarding Coordinator, the person contacted with that concern should inform the other Directors or Committee Members, who will follow the procedure above. If the alert concerns the Safeguarding Officer the person raising the alert should contact the Additional directors and the local authority designated safeguarding officer.

We are aware that anyone having a concern or receiving a disclosure that some kind of abuse has taken place may feel uncomfortable, hesitant or anxious about voicing it to someone else. It is important to report any concern to the Safeguarding Officer, without trying to make a judgement or assess its validity. It is the role of others to assess the risk. Tracks Through Pastures staff must simply ensure that they report any concern or disclosure. If a disclosure is made, the person first being confided in should allow the discloser to talk without rush or interruption; showing acceptance of what they say (however unlikely the story may sound) by reflecting back words or short phrases they have used. They should try to remain calm, even if on the inside they are feeling something different.

## Guidelines

The Tracks Through Pastures shall follow these guidelines:

- ensure that the child at risk feels safe. Tracks Through Pastures staff will call emergency services 999 if there is immediate danger of harm
- show that we take what they are saying seriously
- reassure and stress that they are not to blame
- be honest and explain that we will have to tell someone else (e.g. Safeguarding Officer)
- inform them that we will make a record of what has been said as soon as possible after the event
- if the discloser decides not to tell you after all, accept their decision but let them know that you are always ready to listen and that you will still need to tell the Safeguarding Officer that a conversation was initiated
- use language that is age appropriate
- for those with a communication difficulty such as hearing or sight impairment, learning difficulty or where English is not their first language, try to ensure there is someone available who can interpret appropriately.

A person who is confided in should not carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Instead, they should report what they have been told and/or any concerns as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Officer. It is then the role of the Safeguarding Officer to collect and clarify the details of the concern, and pass these on to statutory agencies with the legal duty to investigate.

## Abuse

Abuse may be defined as the wrongful application of power by someone in a dominant position. This can be in a family, institution or community setting and very often the abuser is known often in a trusted relationship with the child. It involves an imbalance of power and exploitation without full and informed consent. It is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. Abuse might be unintentional; the important factor is whether the person is harmed or not.

Abuse can take several different forms and may be a single act or repeated acts of:

- **Physical abuse:** includes hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing, withholding or misuse of medication

- **Sexual abuse:** includes sexual assault and rape, or sexual acts where the vulnerable person has not (or could not give) given consent or was forced into consenting
- **Psychological abuse:** includes threats of harm, emotional abuse, humiliation, verbal abuse, intimidation, coercion, harassment, withdrawal of support, isolation and deprivation (physical and sensory)
- **Material / financial abuse:** includes fraud, theft, exploitation, financial transactions, misappropriation e.g. willed inheritance, property, benefits and possessions
- **Neglect & Acts of Omission:** includes ignoring physical care and medical needs, withholding basic living requirements e.g. adequate nutrition, safe and warm environment, withholding necessary medication and failure to provide access to appropriate health and social care services and / or educational services
- **Discrimination:** includes harassment and/or exclusion because of race, creed, culture, ability, gender and any slur deemed offensive and abusive.

**Online Abuse:** Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. And it can happen anywhere online, including:

- social media
- text messages and messaging apps
- emails
- online chats
- online gaming
- live-streaming sites.

## Bullying

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). The damage inflicted by bullying can frequently be underestimated. It can cause considerable distress to children to the extent that it affects their health and development or, at the extreme, cause them significant harm (including self-harm). All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have in place rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies.

## Other kinds of abuse

Can include spiritual abuse (such as when an intimidating leader imposes his/her will on other people, causing them to be fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval). The child can be witnessing domestic violence between parents to threatening behaviors, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults. Children can suffer all forms of abuse in a situation of domestic violence and will also suffer from witnessing domestic violence.

**Modern Slavery** encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Organisational Abuse** includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a school, hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Self-Neglect** covers a wide range of behavior neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behavior such as hoarding.

**Possible indicators of abuse may include a child:**

- speaking directly or more indirectly about it
- showing unexpected changes in mood or behavior
- nervousness
- persistent tiredness
- running away
- stealing
- lying
- exploitation (includes radicalisation)
- Spiritual abuse
- Multiple forms of abuse
- Inappropriate restraint
- Hate crime
- Human trafficking
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

**Possible indicators of abuse in relation to a child**

Whilst we do expect staff, volunteers and other board members to diagnose abuse, it is also important to be aware, recognise and be alert to signs that all is not well also with a young person:

- Disclosing partially or fully
- Frequent or unexplained minor injuries or bruising
- Signs of depression or stress which may happen suddenly or gradually emerge
- Neglected personal care
- Weight loss
- Dramatic change of behaviour /personality – this can happen very suddenly and unexpectedly and is often associated with fear
- Confusion
- Denial that anything is wrong and an emphasis that all is extremely well
- Seeking help from numerous sources/people – this may be a direct request for help or attention seeking behaviors
- Deference or submission to a suspected abuser
- Not getting to medical appointments.

Abuse can happen in any setting where people are dependent on the care of others for their well-being.

**Code of Conduct**

- all staff and volunteers must treat all children with respect and sensitivity at all times

- all staff, and volunteers must ensure that the safety and dignity of those children in their care is maintained at all times
- all staff and volunteers have a duty to ensure that any children in their care are aware that there are designated members of staff to help them with any worries and/or difficulties
- all staff and volunteers should be made aware of this Safeguarding Policy, and Duty of Care, during induction and follow the Tracks Through Pastures procedures for reporting possible / alleged cases of abuse or harm.

## Sharing Information

- If staff and volunteers have concerns about the possible abuse of a child, or where a disclosure has been made, this must be reported to a member of staff as a Duty of Care responsibility.
- An accurate written dated record of concerns, disclosures and any related incident(s) must be made by the staff and volunteers.
- The designated staff member will liaise with the relevant agencies and forward the record of concern for information. A copy should be kept on file to which designated staff members only have access.

It is important for staff and volunteers to avoid making assumptions and discussing concerns indiscriminately.

Confidentiality, and respect for the vulnerable child involved, is of the utmost importance.

## Volunteer recruitment

- Volunteers who wish to work with children are required to obtain an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, which is valid for three years
- As part of the recruitment process, volunteers will be required to complete an application form, supply two character references and attend for interview (to be interviewed by two or more people, which includes a Tracks Through Pastures Director
- Volunteers will have a supervised probationary period of three months with regular supervision thereafter.

## Induction & Training

Volunteers will complete an induction period that will include training in:

- Guidelines, where applicable, for working with children
- Training of recognising different forms of abuse
- guidelines on the process for recording concerns / disclosures
- Tracks Through Pastures policies and procedures.

## Monitoring of this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by Tracks Through Pastures directors to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

The designated Safeguarding Officer is Sarah Lopez.

## Additional Support & Advice

### First point of contact for all social care calls information and advice:

If you are a child or young person being abused or neglected, or an adult who is concerned about a child or young person's safety and wellbeing, you can contact the Children's Services 'Single Point of Access' between 9am to 5pm on Monday to Friday.

- **Phone:** 0300 470 9100
- **Email:** [cspa@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:cspa@surreycc.gov.uk)

For people with hearing or speech impairments:

- **Text line:** 07527 182861
- [Sign Language Video Relay Service](#)

During evenings, weekends and bank holidays, the [Emergency Duty Team](#) is available:

- **Phone:** 01483 517898
- **Email:** [edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:edt.ssd@surreycc.gov.uk)

For people with hearing or speech impairments:

- **Text line:** 07800 000388
- **Text relay** (a speech-to-text translation service): 18001 01483 517898

### For further information on the signs of child abuse see:

**Website:** [www.nspcc.org.uk/inform](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform) for the Child protection fact sheet: The definitions and signs of child abuse.

## Annex A Template for Safeguarding Records

<b>Name of individual:</b>	
<b>Date of birth:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Phone No.:</b>	
<b>Mobile No.:</b>	
<b>Email address:</b>	
<b>Complete as appropriate:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- child/young person; or</li> <li>- adult at risk; or</li> <li>- person who may pose a risk</li> </ul>	
<b>Start Date:</b>	
<b>Name of contact person (the person who first raised the concern):</b>	
- role	
- address	
- Phone	
- Mobile No.	
- Email	
<b>Nature of risk/ concern/behaviour</b>	
<b>Other contact(s) add as appropriate:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Relationship:</b>	
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Phone No:</b>	
<b>Mobile No.:</b>	
<b>email:</b>	
<b>Further information:</b> <b>Notes of discussions/meetings (those in attendance including role/relationship), actions agreed and by whom</b>	

Reviewed by Sarah Lopez & Louise Stinton 11/07/2024. Next review due 11/07/2025