



Safeguarding Children Policy MAY 2015

STaSS fully recognises its responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children and is committed to a practice that protects children from harm.

This policy applies to all STaSS trustees, staff and volunteers. The main elements of our policy are to:

- To ensure that procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers are followed carefully;
- Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers receive training in reporting cases of abuse or suspected abuse;
- Address all safeguarding children issues swiftly and efficiently and raise awareness of the need for safeguarding children procedures to be followed;
- Establish a safe environment in which children can feel comfortable and gain appropriate advice and skills as required.

STaSS is committed to reviewing this policy and good practice at regular intervals.

STaSS will follow the procedures set out by the local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of the guidance issued by the Department of Education and any other relevant bodies.

1. Code of Behaviour

It is the policy of STaSS to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people it comes into contact with by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual. The organisation is committed to providing an environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure. All trustees, staff and volunteers should at all times show respect for an individual's rights, safety and welfare, and behave in a manner that reflects the ethos of STaSS.

2. Guidelines for all STaSS trustees, staff and volunteers:

Attitude:

- Treat children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Listen carefully to what a child or young person has to say.
- Recognise that each child or young person is unique and has their own contribution to make.
- Avoid sarcasm, discrimination, negative criticism, labelling etc.
- Positively encourage good behaviour and discourage inappropriate behaviour.
- Show respect for children and colleagues at all times and be sensitive to the feelings of others.
- Treat children and young people fairly at all times.
- Use suitable language and challenge any child or young person or any adult who uses unsuitable language.

Never:

- Physically punish a child or young person.
- Humiliate or belittle.
- Use inappropriate language or humour or act in any way that could be considered offensive or inappropriate.
- Deprive any child or young person of food or other necessities, nor unreasonably deny them access to basic facilities for health and hygiene.

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- Put yourself or any child or young person in a position of risk. This includes being left alone with a child unnecessarily.

3. One to One Contact

Staff and volunteers should:

- NOT spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others.
- If privacy is needed, ensure that another member of staff is informed of the meeting, its purpose, its whereabouts and the length of time it is expected to take.

4. Physical Contact

Staff and Volunteers should never:

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or young person that they can do for themselves.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind.

If you have any uncertainty about anything proposed, refer to the director or any other STaSS employee.

5. General

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be aware that what they say or their actions could be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw a conclusion without checking the facts
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Ensure any relationship they are having with a STaSS volunteer or member of staff does not affect their role within STaSS.

6. Communication and Information about Safeguarding Children

Good communication is essential in any well-run organisation. In STaSS, every effort will be made to ensure that any concerns expressed by trustees, clients including children and young people, staff or volunteers about safeguarding children issues will be listened to and taken seriously.

The management of STaSS will ensure that general information about child protection is available to all those involved in the organisation. However, some information is confidential and will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

6.1 Children and Young People

Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better or safer for them. If it is felt that a young person may benefit from receiving such information, STaSS will ensure to the best of its ability that they have information about how and with whom they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties.

When sharing information, STaSS staff and volunteers will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity of the individual concerned. STaSS will ensure that children know that there are adults at STaSS whom they can approach if they are worried and will include opportunities in one to one or group discussions for children to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

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6.2 Parents

Parents or persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation.

We will achieve this by:

- Publishing a full copy of the Safeguarding Children Policy on our website
- Publishing the name of the Designated Child Protection person and details of how to make a complaint on our website.

6.3 Staff and Volunteers

As an organisation that sometimes offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is important that each member of staff and all volunteers are aware of their responsibilities under Safeguarding Children legislation and has a working knowledge of STaSS' procedures.

6.4 Other Bodies

A copy of our Safeguarding Children Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

7. Procedure for Reporting Allegations or Suspicions of Abuse

Where an allegation is made, or someone at STaSS has concerns about a child or young person, a record must be made. Details must include, as far as is practicable:

- The name of the child or young person,
- Age,
- Home address if known,
- Date of birth if known,
- Name/s and address/es of parents or person/s with parental responsibility,
- Telephone numbers if known,
- Details of whether the person making the report is recording their own concerns or those of someone else.
- What has prompted the concerns? [Include dates and times of any specific incidents].
- Has the child or young person spoken/been spoken to of the concerns, if so, what was said?
- Has the name of an alleged abuser been mentioned? If so record details.
- The name and address of the person the matter been passed to so that appropriate action can be taken e.g. school, social services, and or designated officer within STaSS etc.
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so record details.

Any serious concerns or allegations must be reported immediately to the Director of STaSS or failing that any other member of staff.

8. Record Keeping

All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer, filing cabinet or password protected IT system. Only the Designated Person will have access to these files. All concerns about the safety and well-being of children and young people should be written down, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.

9. Disclosure

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Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Safeguarding Children will always take precedence over any other issues. Listen to the child rather than asking questions directly. Offer him/her reassurance without making promises, and take what the child says seriously. Allow the child to speak without interruption. Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question. Do not overreact. Explain that you must pass the information on. Explain what you have to do and who you have to tell. Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event. Use the child's words or explanation – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child has said.

Contact the Designated Person for advice and guidance. The Designated Person may then discuss the concern/suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral. If the Designated Person is unavailable, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer/member of staff with the concern should make direct contact with the relevant organisation themselves. Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.

10. Adhering to the Procedures for Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

STaSS operates employment and supervision procedures that ensure the highest priority is given to issues regarding safeguarding children. Members of staff and volunteers who may spend time alone with children will be required to undergo a DBS check at the commencement of their employment.

11. Providing Effective Management for Staff and Volunteers through Supervision, Support and Training

STaSS encourages the development of staff and volunteers through its on-going support, supervision and training

- **Induction**
- New members of staff and volunteers will be made familiar with STaSS's policies including the Safeguarding Children Policy.
- **Supervision**
- Members of staff have monthly supervision meetings with their line manager. Volunteers who come into contact with children will have regular supervision meetings with the member of staff who is responsible for them.
- **Training**
- Management will identify the training needs of staff and volunteers and will arrange for attendance at suitable training courses where finance allows. Individuals are also responsible for identifying their own training needs and bringing them to the attention of management.

Designated Safeguarding Children Staff:

Tina Latifah Jones
STaSS
Room 11, Kingston Community Centre
11 Winchester Circle
Milton Keynes
MK10 0BA

Tel: 01908 282185 or 07950397475

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The Designated Person will inform the relevant outside organisation of the incident.

Milton Keynes Safeguarding Children Board
01908 253169 or 01908 253170
www.mkscb.org

Police 0845 8 505 505

NSPCC Helpline -0808 800 5000 24hrs freephone

Childline – 0800 1111 – Freephone

This policy was explained to me and I have also read and understood its content. I promise to abide by it during my engagement with STaSS.

Signed _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

Policy Review

The Director and Board of Trustees are responsible for reviewing this policy annually and ensuring that it is compliant with current legislation and good practice.

REVIEWED MAY 2015, NEXT SCHEDULED REVIEW MAY 2016

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Room 11, Kingston Community Centre, 11 Winchester Circle, Kingston, Milton Keynes, MK10 0BA

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