



Warwickshire Pride

Registered Charity Number: 1162449

# Safeguarding Children Policy

We are fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of children by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from neglect, physical, sexual or emotional harm. All staff will at all times show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare of our children and conduct themselves in a way that reflects our principles.

Every child should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. We recognise that child abuse can be an emotive subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved and not to allow that to interfere with judgment about any action that needs to be taken. We also recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

### **Regulated Activity**

If your work either becomes a regulated activity or where you are asked to perform work that is a regulated activity, we will require you to provide a satisfactory check to confirm your suitability to carry out this work.

If you refuse to undertake this check, or if you appear on the barred list, we will investigate whether you can continue to be employed in activities that are not regulated activities before contemplating your dismissal.

### **If You Are Added to a Barred List During the Course of Your Employment**

If you are added to a barred list during your employment, we will be legally obliged not to allow you to continue to engage in regulated activity. This may mean that we cannot continue to employ you.

If we receive notification that you have been barred, we will investigate whether you can continue to be employed in activities that are not regulated activities, but in these circumstances we reserve the right to dismiss you without notice.

### **Responsibilities**

You must remain vigilant at all times of the risk to children of abusive behaviour from different sources including members of their family, guardians/carers, other children and employees.

If you believe that any children have been subjected to abuse, you should refer the circumstances to the designated safeguarding lead.

If the alleged perpetrator of abuse is another employee, the circumstances will be investigated fully under our disciplinary procedure.

If necessary, we will refer details of the circumstances to the relevant body.

## Background

This safeguarding policy has been approved by all members of Warwickshire Pride's board of trustees.

The child protection standards in this policy are consistent with the following government publications:

- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)'
- 'What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused (2015)'

Please note that this strategic policy is designed to complement and provide a context for more detailed Child Protection Procedures and does not replace them.

The designated safeguarding lead is **Daniel Browne**. Daniel's contact telephone number is **07816181428**. Daniel's email address is **dan@warwickshirepride.co.uk**. Daniel must be contacted as the first port of call regarding all child protection and safeguarding concerns.

## The Role of Staff, Volunteers & Supporting Partners

The role for all member agencies in safeguarding children who may be in need of safeguarding services is in identifying individuals who may be at risk and alerting the appropriate service.

All staff, volunteers and partner agencies must ensure that they know the child protection and safeguarding procedures that are in force within Warwickshire Pride and who is the designated safeguarding lead.

## Support within Warwickshire Pride

All trustees, staff and volunteers should raise all child protection and safeguarding concerns with the designated safeguarding lead in line with the procedures at the end of this policy. If the trustee responsible for child protection and safeguarding is not available, the trustee, staff member or volunteer raising the child protection or safeguarding concern must inform one of Warwickshire Pride's other trustees. If none of Warwickshire Pride's trustees are available, advice must be sought directly from the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). If trustees, staff or volunteers are in any doubt they must always seek guidance from MASH.

## Principles

The following principles are key for all trustees, staff and volunteers:

- The interests of children, young people and adults are paramount.
- In cases of suspected abuse, all trustees, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to take action in the ways set out in the procedure.
- Immediate action, to refer or consult, is required where there is suspicion of abuse.
- Investigation is the responsibility of the relevant Warwickshire Social Care Department and the Police. These agencies have to balance the necessity for action to protect children, young people and adults with the potential adverse effects of an investigation on the family and/or others.
- Record keeping is essential at each stage and all documents should be kept to the standards outlined by Warwickshire Pride.
- This procedure also covers disclosures made in electronic communications (e-mail or text messaging).

## Training

All trustees, staff and volunteers must attend child protection/safeguarding training in accordance with the requirements and standards of the charity. To meet the requirements of Warwickshire Pride, the board of trustees will ensure that single agency and multi-agency training on safeguarding and promoting welfare is provided in order to meet local needs. This covers both the training provided by single agencies to their own staff, and multi-agency training where staff from different agencies train together. The partner agencies will support Warwickshire Pride in evaluating the quality of this training, ensuring that it is provided within individual organisations, and checking that training is reaching the relevant trustees, staff and volunteers.

Training will be organised and delivered in accordance with the requirements of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018). Learning and development will also incorporate the Common Assessment Framework, and successor guidance such as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2018), 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (2012), and 'Safeguarding Disabled Children' (2009). The designated safeguarding lead will monitor attendance at relevant training to ensure all trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of the procedures and have received relevant training. Attendance at training events will be reported to Warwickshire Pride's board of trustees.

## Unaccompanied Children in Public Settings

There will be situations when children visit public settings unaccompanied by their parent or carer. Whilst not wishing to discourage individuals from visiting places such as libraries, information centres and play or educational facilities, trustees, staff and volunteers need to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the children and to inform parents and carers of their responsibilities. The way in which trustees, staff and volunteers deal with unaccompanied children must be based on awareness of the responsibility of the parent or the loco parentis carer (i.e. the one taking the responsibility of parent), and the duty of care to all children on the premises. In no instance would trustees, staff or volunteers be expected to take on parental responsibilities for children in these settings.

It should be noted that Warwickshire Pride are not accountable for activities that are not formally arranged by Warwickshire Pride.

## Safeguarding during Pride Event

Warwickshire Pride hosts an annual Pride Festival and wishes to ensure that during this event the safety and wellbeing of children is considered as part of the risk management strategy for the event.

A Lost and Found Child Procedure will be included within the Warwickshire Pride Event Plan. A relevant policy will be detailed and a clearly signposted Lost and Found Child and Vulnerable Adult Point will be marked on the Site Plan Layout.

The designated safeguarding lead will assume the role of Designated Lead for Lost and Found Persons during the event, unless unable to attend, in which case an alternative person will be identified and documented within the Event Plan.

## E-Safety

Children can be vulnerable to exploitation or abuse through the medium of information technology (IT). It is important that trustees, staff and volunteers are alerted to potential risks individuals may be exposed to, and that steps have been taken to mitigate the risk of this occurring, with specific reference to:

- Content – E.G. Exposure to age inappropriate material (E.G. Pornography), inaccurate or misleading information, socially unacceptable material (E.G. inciting violence, hate or intolerance) and illegal material (including images of child abuse).
- Contact – E.G. Grooming using communication technologies leading to inappropriate behaviour or abuse.

- Commerce – E.G. Exposure to inappropriate advertising, online gambling, identity theft and financial scams.
- Culture – E.G. Bullying via websites, mobile phones or other communication technologies, or inappropriate downloading of copyright materials (i.e. music, films, images), exposure to inappropriate advertising, online gambling and financial scams.

Addressing these issues through training for trustees, staff and volunteers, and awareness raising with service users, or members of the community, will be undertaken by the charity. If there is any indication that a child is experiencing difficulties in this area (for instance if they are reported to be spending long periods of time using a PC on their own or if they appear unnecessarily defensive, secretive or anxious about their PC use), then this must be taken seriously.

Settings offering IT access to members of the public or children and young people should consider placing restrictions on IT access, developing an 'acceptable use policy', and having an agreement about the conditions in which children will be able to access IT equipment unsupervised.

## Allegations

Concerns for the safety and wellbeing of children could arise in a number of different ways and in a range of settings. It is essential to act quickly and effectively if an allegation is made.

If you believe there to be a child protection issue directly relating to an employee or volunteer working for Warwickshire Pride, the designated safeguarding lead must be informed. All such allegations or concerns should be referred to and discussed with the designated safeguarding lead. The matter will be investigated and the appropriate action taken. The designated safeguarding lead should inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (**01926 743433** or **lado@warwickshire.gov.uk**) who will advise of next steps.

In the event that an allegation is made in relation to trustees, staff, volunteers or members the following principles must be observed:

- If a safeguarding allegation is made in relation to trustees, staff, volunteers or those attending a service provided by Warwickshire Pride, the designated safeguarding lead should be informed
- All known material in relation to the allegation should be provided to the designated safeguarding lead via the completion of a safeguarding form.
- If there is a necessity to secure statements from impacted parties in relation to the safeguarding matter, any meetings or correspondence in relation to the matter should include a minimum of two Warwickshire Pride trustees.

- In the case of meetings with any impacted parties, one Warwickshire Pride trustee should be designated as note-taker in order to capture and distribute minutes from the meeting
- If it is deemed that an investigation is necessary in relation the incident, all impacted parties must desist from participating in any Warwickshire pride events, meetings, groups or social occasions until the investigation has concluded .
- Any matters warranting further disclosure to an external body should be managed the safeguarding procedures section which can be found below.
- Records should be secured and will be strictly limited to relevant trustees, staff, volunteers and external professionals on a need-to-know basis.
- Advice on the storage of all documentation must be sought from the designated safeguarding, who must ensure that access is strictly limited to relevant trustees, staff or volunteers, and external professionals on a need-to-know basis.

All safeguarding allegations, even those that appear less serious, need to be followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation or project concerned. All allegations will be considered by the designated safeguarding lead.

## Incidents

Where an incident occurs during events coordinated by Warwickshire Pride that triggers a safeguarding concern, there are important additional considerations for employees, volunteers and trustees to be aware of.

As in the case of allegations, it is essential to act quickly and effectively whilst demonstrating sensitivity and objectiveness regarding any party impacted by the incident.

Details of the incident may be captured on either a safeguarding form or an incident form, as is appropriate for the nature of the incident. However, this should be done as quickly as possible following the incident in order to capture relevant accuracy of what occurred during the incident for future reference.

The designated safeguarding lead must be informed and may engage with other trustees in determining the appropriate course of action. In most instances a risk-averse approach will be taken whereby incidents will be reported to the Warwickshire MASH, the Police and/or other agencies subject to the specifics of the incident.

As per allegations, in the case of a safeguarding incident the following principles should apply:

- If there is a necessity to secure statements from impacted parties in relation to the safeguarding incident, any meetings or correspondence in relation to the matter should include a minimum of two Warwickshire Pride trustees when gathered.
- In the following circumstances, the agency indicated below should be engaged to ensure that appropriate assistance is available.
  - Where there is an **immediate risk of physical harm**, the **police** must be informed via **999**, with the details of the location, potential victim and any details which will help with immediately locating the individual and preventing harm.
  - Where there is an **immediate risk of self-harm**, **health authorities** must be engaged, via **999** or by visitation of the **local A&E department**, in order to provide the necessary medical assistance.
  - Where there is a potential **future risk of harm (physical, emotional or self-harm)**, the Warwickshire MASH must be informed, via **01926 414144 during office hours** and **01926 886922 out of office hours**. This should be done via the designated safeguarding lead and the safeguarding procedures provides further guidance.
- If it is deemed that an investigation is necessary in relation the incident, all impacted parties must desist from participating in any Warwickshire pride events, meetings, groups or social occasions until the investigation has concluded.
- Records should be secured and will be strictly limited to relevant trustees, staff, volunteers and external professionals on a need-to-know basis.

## Monitoring Arrangements

The designated safeguarding lead will check that all charity procedures, including the use and storage of documentation, comply with child protection/safeguarding procedures. Where inconsistencies or shortcomings are identified, remedial action will be taken.

## Background Papers

- 'What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused', 2015, HM Government.
- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', 2018, HM Government.

## Signs of Abuse and Neglect

The following list is a guide and not an exhaustive list of signs.

- Behaviour changes – such as acting aggressive, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy.
- Difficulty sleeping or wetting the bed.
- Ill-fitting and/or dirty clothes or poor hygiene.
- Often tired and hungry.
- Avoiding specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason.
- Avoiding participation in physical activity or changing clothes in front of others.
- Having problems at school, such as a sudden lack of concentration and learning.
- Mentions being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers.
- Late to reach developmental milestones, such as speaking or walking, with no medical reason.
- Frequent absence from school or education, often late to arrive, and with parents late to pick them up.
- Reluctance to go home after a youth group.
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns.
- Parents who appear drunk or on drugs when picking up their child up.
- Drinking alcohol often from an early age.
- Expressing concern for younger siblings without explaining why.
- Talk about running away.
- Shying away from touch or flinching at sudden movement.

## Safeguarding Procedures

Advice must first be sought from the designated safeguarding lead. However, this should not preclude a direct referral to Warwickshire's Social Care Team (or the relevant Local Authority if the individual has travelled from outside Warwickshire), particularly if there is any element of immediate risk.

Referrals must always be made to Warwickshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The telephone number for MASH is **01926 414144 during office hours** and **01926 886922 out of office hours**. In the event that the child is based outside of Warwickshire, please ensure that the corresponding MASH is contacted.

A referral must be made if there are signs that a child under the age of 18 years, or an unborn baby.

- Is suffering or has suffered abuse and/or neglect
- Is likely to suffer abuse and/or neglect

All trustees, staff and volunteers should raise all child protection and safeguarding concerns with the designated safeguarding. If the designated safeguarding lead is not available, the trustee, staff member or volunteer raising the child protection or safeguarding concern must inform one of Warwickshire Pride's other trustees. If none of Warwickshire Pride's trustees are available, advice must be sought directly from MASH. If trustees, staff or volunteers are in any doubt they must always seek guidance from MASH.

### **Responding to a disclosure**

If someone tells you that they, or someone they know, is being abused:

- Believe what the person is saying and take it seriously.
- Reassure the person who has made the disclosure to you that they have done the right thing.
- Give the child time to talk and do not probe or ask leading questions. Investigation is not your responsibility.
- Do not promise to keep secrets. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.
- Explain to the child that you will share this information with designated safeguarding lead, who will ensure the appropriate procedures will be followed.
- E-mails or text messages received detailing details of suspected abuse should be immediately responded to within 24 hours by contacting the child by phone or face-to-face to obtain further information.
- Record the event in accordance with Warwickshire Pride's procedures on an incident report form.
- The designated safeguarding lead will support you in contacting MASH (telephone contact: **01926 414144 during office hours** and **01926 886922 out of office hours**) to make the appropriate referral. They will be familiar with the procedure and will be able to advise you.
- The timing of referrals must reflect the perceived risk and should normally be within one working day of recognition. If, for any reason, you cannot contact the designated safeguarding lead, you should go ahead and contact MASH.
- When a referral is made to MASH, you must agree with them what the young person and parents will be told, by whom and when. Do not just leave messages. Always speak to someone. You must confirm verbal and telephone referrals in writing, within 48 hours (sometimes you will be asked to use a multi-agency referral form – MARF). Any early help assessment that has been undertaken should be attached to the referral. MASH should acknowledge your written referral within one working day of receiving it. Should you not have had a response within three working days, contact them again.

- Under no circumstances should you speak to, or confront, the abuser. Do not share suspicions or information with any other person other than designated safeguarding lead, MASH and the Police. Information given to MASH or the Police will be taken seriously, handled sensitively and shared only on a 'need to know' basis, wholly to protect the child. However, in order to ensure that young people at risk are safeguarded on the basis of proper evidence, the source of the referral cannot be kept anonymous.

### **Acting on concerns regarding an adult's behaviour**

If you have any concerns about an adult's behaviour towards children (not an employee or volunteer working for the charity):

- Do not ignore it. Warwickshire Pride will take any concerns very seriously.
- You must discuss your concerns with the designated safeguarding lead, who will support you in liaising with the statutory agencies should any child protection matter arise.
- Do not confront the adult but seek the advice of the designated safeguarding lead. If they are not available, seek advice from MASH.

### **Acting on a disclosure from an adult that they are involved in the abuse of a child, young person or adult at risk**

If someone not employed by the charity discloses that they are involved in the abuse of a child, you must take action:

- Believe what they are saying and take the allegation seriously.
- Record details of what you have been told as soon as possible on the appropriate pro forma document.
- Report it to designated safeguarding lead, who will ensure the appropriate actions are taken, also explaining the limits of confidentiality.
- If for any reason you cannot immediately contact the designated safeguarding lead, you must directly contact either MASH or the Police. Your actions must be communicated to the designated safeguarding lead as soon as possible.
- If there is any concern about the immediate welfare of a child, or if the information suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed, MASH and the Police should be informed immediately.

### **Useful Telephone Numbers**

- Child-Line: 0800 1111
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000
- Warwickshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 01926 414144 during office hours and 01926 886922 out of office hours

- Warwickshire Police: 01926 415000
- Warwickshire Adult Social Care: 01926 412080
- Warwickshire Safeguarding: 01926 410410
- Coventry Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 02476 788 555
- CAMHS: 01926 881640

Last reviewed: February 2026

Next review due: January 2027