

Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

Reviewed; 2018
Next Review: 2021

Statement – Balloons is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

The welfare of children and young people (C&YP) using the services of the charity is paramount and it is everyone's responsibility to keep children and young people safe. This includes Balloons staff, volunteers and trustees.

Balloons believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, through a commitment to practice which seeks to protect them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- All C&YP regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, racial heritage, faith, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse
- Working in partnership with C&YP, care givers and partner agencies is essential in promoting C&YPs welfare

Balloons will operate in line with *Working together to safeguard children 2015* outcomes (see https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf) and as far as possible and practical will ensure that the charity:

- Protects children from maltreatment
- Prevents impairment of health or development
- Ensures that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Takes action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

This policy should be used in conjunction with the more detailed guidance in *What to do if you are worried that a child is being abused 2015*.

See:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf) and the *Devon Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures Manual*. See <http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/devon/index.html>

This policy is based on the principle that promoting children's wellbeing and safeguarding them from significant harm depends crucially upon effective information sharing, collaboration and understanding between agencies and professionals.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the *Balloons Managing Allegations Policy*.

What is Abuse and Neglect

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.

If individuals have concerns about a child's welfare they must follow the advice on the Devon Safeguarding Children Board website <http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/devon/index.html>

- **Physical Abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the systems of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.
- **Emotional Abuse** is the persistent emotional ill-treatment 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 valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, not necessarily involving a level of physical violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **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, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Named Person

A named person (Balloons CEO) will have responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed. They will also be responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse.

The role of the named person is to:

- Receive information from staff, volunteers, children or parents/carers who have child protection concerns and record that information.
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Liaise quickly and as appropriate with Trustees of the charity and agree next steps.
- Consult as appropriate with child protection agency, such as the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) enquiry or consultation, or directly with a named Social Worker or NSPCC Helpline.
- Make a formal referral as appropriate to a statutory child protection agency.

- Where appropriate, follow the Balloons Managing Allegations Policy to process an allegation.

It is **NOT** their role to decide whether a child has been abused or not. However, all employees and volunteers must feel free to refer directly to MASH or NSPCC:

Telephone: 0345 155 1071

E-mail: mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk

Referral Form: available at: www.devon.gov.uk/mash-enquiryform.doc

Post: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, P.O. Box 723, Exeter EX1 9QS

Early Help and MASH Consultation: 0345 155 1071 (stating the service you require)

Police – non emergency 101

Emergency Duty Team – out of hours 0845 6000 388

The Balloons CEO contact details are:

Sara Bennett

sarabennett@balloonscharity.co.uk

01392 826052

07876593440

Risk Assessment to keep children safe

Balloons has a Risk Assessment Template for use by staff, and all relevant activities will be risk assessed.

This risk assessment will include:

- Why activity happens – aims and objectives
- Who is it for?
- Where and when will it happen?
- How many staff are needed?
- How are they recruited?
- What training and supervision is needed?
- Who is responsible for CYP during the activity?
- What potential hazards are there and what precautions can be taken?
- How will we monitor and evaluate the activity?

Staff & Volunteer Recruitment

All staff and volunteers will be recruited using a safer recruitment process, which will include references, enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks and relevant and appropriate interviews and assessment exercises.

Training

All staff, trustees and volunteers will be given mandatory safeguarding training and as appropriate supervision will be provided at which safeguarding issues can be raised.

Training will include:

1. How to recognise abuse
2. How to respond if they suspect a child is being abused
3. Responsibilities for recording, storing and sharing information including confidentiality
4. How to respond if a child discloses abuse
5. How to respond to allegations of abuse against someone not in organisation
6. What to do if a child/YP shows evidence of unexplained physical injuries
7. Information on how staff and volunteers will be treated if an allegation is made against them
8. Behaving appropriately and guidance on what is considered safe physical touching
9. Managing behaviour that might be demonstrated by bereaved CYP and their families, such as anger, in a safe way

Lone Working Policy

Balloons will follow the Lone Working Policy to ensure the safety of staff and volunteers and of the children and young people using the service.

Recording Information

The named person (CEO) will always listen and take seriously any safeguarding concerns raised by staff or volunteers, and will:

- Keep a written record of the observation or the information received. This should be done as soon as possible after the incident or disclosure
- Sign and date the record
- Share the record as appropriate with Trustees and agree follow up action, following the steps in the Balloons Managing Allegations Policy

If a Child is Telling You Something Themselves

It is really important that you:

- stay calm
- listen carefully to what is said
- do not promise to keep secrets. If the child asks, then tell them you have to share it and with whom. When the child has finished making the disclosure tell them that because they are believed, or because someone else may be at risk, the information must be shared. It is probably not advisable to stop them during the process of disclosure as this may well inhibit them from going any further
- allow the child to continue at his/her own pace
- ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer
- reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you

- do not pass an opinion on the perpetrator
- tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared
- record in writing what was said using the child's own words, as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure the record is signed and dated

If there is an allegation against a staff member

All staff and volunteers have an obligation to ensure that no child is harmed either by themselves or by other members of staff. Where any member of staff or a volunteer is suspected of or is accused of harming children, this must be acted upon. Staff and volunteers should discuss their concerns with the named person as soon as possible.

If an allegation has been made against a member of the Balloons team, then this should be taken seriously and reported immediately to the Named Person or if unavailable the Chair of trustees or in exceptional circumstances the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01392 384964.

Mechanism for Review

- Safeguarding will be a standing item at all Trustee Board meetings
- This policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis and relevant changes made to bring it up to date
- If legislation changes, the policy will always be updated to reflect this

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Balloons Lone Working Policy.