

Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

Reviewed; 2021
Next Review: 2024

Safeguarding 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

Context - 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

Operational practice

Balloons will operate in line with the *Working together to safeguard children 2015* outcomes (see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/942454/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_inter_agency_guidance.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.

Named Person (Designated Safeguarding Officer – DSO)

A named person within the Balloons staff team will have responsibility for ensuring this policy is implemented and reviewed. They will also be responsible for dealing with allegations or suspicions of abuse. This person is known as the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). Please contact the Balloons office for the details of the DSO.

The role of the DSO 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 (Clinical Governance & Safeguarding Sub-Committee) 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.
- Ensure that the Balloons Safeguarding Log is kept updated and actions noted.

It is **NOT** the role of the DSO to decide whether a child has been abused or not.

Whilst all employees, trustees and volunteers must feel free to refer directly to MASH or NSPCC as is their right as a citizen, where possible the DSO should be the person who reports safeguarding issues to these bodies. This enables consistent practice and clear channels of communication. If an employee, trustee or volunteer does directly contact MASH or NSPCC, where possible they should inform the DSO that they have done so.

Contact details for MASH:

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

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.

Prevent Strategy

The Prevent strategy, published by the Government in 2011, is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act this has simply been expressed as the need to "prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

The 2011 Prevent strategy has three specific strategic objectives:

1. Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
2. Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support
3. Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

The Home Office has responsibility for overseeing the delivery and evaluation of the Prevent strategy. Some charities will also be subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The strategy document states that:

"Trustees of those charities should make sure that they are familiar with the government's statutory guidance on the Prevent duty."

Balloons is not one of those specified charities, but nonetheless we encourage staff, trustees and volunteers to be familiar with the Prevent strategy and to report to the DSO any concerns about possible radicalisation which come up whilst undertaking duties in the Balloons role.

Please visit the website link below to find out more:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales>

Balloons Activity Days and Family Events - 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 C&YP during the activity?
- What potential hazards are there and what precautions can be taken?
- How will we monitor and evaluate the activity?
- If we have commissioned a third party to run the event – how are they managing safeguarding issues?

Staff & Volunteer Recruitment

All staff and volunteers will be recruited using a safer recruitment process, which will include:

- Two references
- Enhanced Child & Adult DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks which are regularly refreshed
- Appropriate interviews and assessment exercises
- Mandatory safeguarding training (see section below for detail)
- Ongoing CPD to ensure that safeguarding practice is constantly refreshed
- Supervision – where issues of safeguarding practice are addressed

Training

All staff, trustees and volunteers will be required to attend mandatory safeguarding training and 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
10. How to follow Balloons processes to kept appropriate safeguarding records

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.

Managing Allegations Policy

Balloons will follow the Managing Allegations Policy to ensure that all in-house allegations involving safeguarding issues are appropriately dealt with.

Recording Information

The DSO 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

When providing Grief Support - if a Child is Telling You Something Themselves

It is really important that you:

- ✓ Stay calm
- ✓ Listen carefully to what is being 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 you are providing grief support in school – report the issue to an appropriate member of staff before leaving the school site
- ✓ Contact the Balloons supervisor as soon as possible to explain what happened and to seek support

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 will be acted upon. Staff and volunteers should discuss their concerns with the DSO 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 DSO 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 these changes

Additional relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Balloons Lone Working Policy*, the *Balloons Managing Allegations Policy* and *Balloons Recruitment Process*.