

Balloons Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

Reviewed: 2024
Next Review: 2027

Safeguarding Statement

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

Context - The welfare of children and young people (C&YP) and adults 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

A child is anyone up until their 18th birthday. In addition to children, Balloons works with 18 – 25 year olds and comes into contact with parents. Therefore, Balloons staff, volunteers and trustees may meet adults at risk of harm and in need of protection. Balloons Adult Safeguarding Policy provides the specific approach for Balloons staff, volunteers and trustees when working with adults and should be read in conjunction with this document.

Operational practice

Balloons will operate in line with the *Working together to safeguard children 2018* outcomes (see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2> 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
- Taking 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 Partnership South West Child Protection Procedures Manual*. See <https://www.dcfp.org.uk/training-and-resources/south-west-child-protection-procedures/>

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) and is the Balloons CEO.

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 the DSO:

Name: Nicola Clarke

Email: nicolaclarke@balloonscharity.co.uk

Telephone: 01392 982570

Contact details for MASH:

Telephone: 0345 155 1071

E-mail: mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Referral Form: available at: [Make a request for support or report a child safety concern - Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership \(devonscp.org.uk\)](#)

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

Police – non-emergency 101

Emergency Duty Team – out of hours 0345 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 by a stranger.

If individuals have concerns about a child's welfare, they must follow the advice on the Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership website <https://www.dcfp.org.uk/training-and-resources/south-west-child-protection-procedures/>

- **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. This includes cyber bullying.
- **Sexual Abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including exploitation to pay a child for sex, 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 including oral and anal rape) 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.
- **Domestic abuse** is controlling, coercive, bullying, threatening, degrading or violent behaviour between people in a personal or family relationship. Children may witness domestic abuse within their families or older children may experience this within their own personal relationships.
- **Exploitation** of a child can be for sexual or financial and criminal gain and includes County Lines drug gangs, trafficking, child labour and online abuse.

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:

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. For staff and Grief Support Worker (GSW) volunteers this includes:

- Two references
- Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks which are renewed every 3 years
- Appropriate interviews and assessment exercises
- Mandatory safeguarding training on induction and refreshed every 3 years (see section below for detail)
- Ongoing CPD to ensure that safeguarding practice is constantly refreshed
- Supervision – where issues of safeguarding practice are addressed

Please see 'Balloons Staff – Safer recruitment policy and Process' and 'Balloons Staff – Safer recruitment policy and Process' for further details.

Training

All staff, trustees and GSW 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 keep 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 staff understand and feel safe to come forward with concerns of 'in-house' allegations and that they are dealt with appropriately.

Recording Information

The DSO will always listen and take seriously any safeguarding concerns raised by staff or volunteers. Information must be recorded:

- Person receiving the disclosure - Keep a written record of the observation or the information received. This should be done as soon as possible after the incident or disclosure, along with the date and submit it their supervisor
- Safeguarding disclosure forms should be shared with the DSO and added to the safeguarding log, with follow up actions agreed and noted
- Safeguarding log to be shared with Clinical Governance Trustees
- All Safeguarding incidents will also be logged on the secure Lamplight Case Management System.

Reporting incidents/Responding to disclosures:

If an adult working with a child has a concern that they feel needs to be reported, or a child makes a disclosure, 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 in a school/college:
 - 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 you are at the Balloons Office or other community venue:
 - Contact the Balloons supervisor as soon as possible to explain what happened and to seek support
- ✓ Balloons Supervisors will discuss the situation with the DSO and agree a plan of action. This may include:
 - No further Balloons action – This will be either where it is not deemed necessary to make a referral or where school are responding to the information and are following their safeguarding procedures. Balloons supervisors will contact the school to confirm what action has been taken. In this case the concern will be noted on case notes and a form completed for the safeguarding log.
 - Ongoing referral to MASH – In this case Balloons will discuss the case with the MASH and make a referral as appropriate, using the local procedures. This will be tracked on the Balloons Safeguarding Log and the trustee lead for safeguarding notified.

- ✓ REMEMBER - In case of emergency dial 999.

Additionally, when providing Grief Support we always commence the first session by explaining confidentiality.

16-17 year olds – Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (legislation.gov.uk) people aged 16 and over can make their own decisions about their life unless they lack capacity to do so. They can decide not to share information with a parent. They can make unwise decisions.

If there is a safeguarding concern (at risk of significant harm/if others are at risk/crime is being committed) volunteers/staff can share information about the child aged 16/17 without their consent to protect them under The Children Act.

However, if a young person makes a disclosure which is not a safeguarding concern and they are not at risk of significant or imminent harm, the volunteer/staff will need to discuss this with the young person to gain consent to share the information with school, college, parents or others who are supporting them. Decision whether to share or not, should be discussed with a supervisor and noted in case notes.

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 Adult Safeguarding Policy*, *Balloons Lone Working Policy*, the *Balloons Managing Allegations Policy*, *Balloons Whistleblowing Policy* and *Balloons Safer Recruitment Process*.

Key Contacts

Contact Details for the Balloons DSO:

Name: Nicola Clarke
Role: CEO
Email: nicolaclarke@balloonscharity.co.uk
Telephone: 01392 982570

Contact details for Balloons Supervisors

Name: Donna James
Role: Supervisor
Email: donnajames@balloonscharity.co.uk

Telephone: 01392 982570

Name: Clare Hammond

Role: Supervisor

Email: clarehammond@balloonscharity.co.uk

Telephone: 01392 982570

Name: Liz Cook

Role: Supervisor

Email: lizcook@balloonscharity.co.uk

Telephone: 01392 982570

Contact details for MASH:

Telephone: 0345 155 1071

E-mail: mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Referral Form: available at: [Make a request for support or report a child safety concern - Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership \(devonscp.org.uk\)](#)

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

Police – non-emergency 101

Emergency Duty Team – out of hours 0345 6000 388

Emergency Services:

In an emergency dial 999