

## **TREES FOR DORSET**

### **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

**Trees for Dorset fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.**

Our policy applies to all members, volunteers, trustees and contractors working with or on behalf of Trees for Dorset.

#### **We recognise that:**

Child abuse is never acceptable.

We have a commitment to protecting children and vulnerable adults with whom we work.

When we work with partners, they must also recognise their responsibility to meet at least our standards of protection for children and vulnerable adults.

Where we work with schools, the Child Protection Policy of that school will take precedence. We will make sure that our members and volunteers involved are fully aware of the school's policy as well as our own. We will obtain the Safeguarding Policies for the schools we work with so that our Project Officer and volunteers are aware of the school's requirements.

#### **The main elements to our policy are to:**

- ensure we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of members and volunteers to work with children and vulnerable adults. All members and volunteers involved in working with children and vulnerable adults will be checked for suitability
- ensure that members who have contact with children and vulnerable adults have completed the Safeguarding Training Course and are kept up to date as and when required
- develop and implement procedures for identifying and reporting cases, suspected cases, of abuse
- report directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the school for each setting if there are cases or suspected cases of abuse.
- establish a safe environment in which children and vulnerable adults can learn and develop

**We recognise that, wherever we are involved with children and vulnerable adults, we must be vigilant for the outward signs of abuse, definitions of which are:**

- **Physical Abuse:** Causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult, including hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, or otherwise harming.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Persistent emotional maltreatment that impacts a child's or vulnerable adult's development, such as bullying, humiliation, or threats.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening.
- **Neglect:** Persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, leading to serious impairment of health or development.

**Members and volunteers should be alert to the following signs and symptoms of abuse:**

### **Physical Abuse**

- Unexplained injuries or bruises
- Frequent absences from school or activities
- Fear of going home or flinching when approached

### **Emotional Abuse**

- Excessive withdrawal or aggression
- Low self-esteem or extreme anxiety
- Developmental delays not linked to medical causes

### **Sexual Abuse**

- Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviour
- Sudden changes in mood or appetite
- Avoidance of specific individuals or places

### **Neglect**

- Poor hygiene or malnutrition
- Inappropriate clothing for weather
- Constant tiredness or lack of supervision

**Trees for Dorset will therefore:**

- establish and maintain an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to
- ensure children and vulnerable adults know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried
- ensure that a child or vulnerable adult can only participate in plantings if accompanied by a parent or carer

**We will follow the following procedures:**

- ensure that Project Leaders are also responsible for child protection and have received appropriate training and support for this role
- identify a named Trustee responsible for child protection who will:
  - a) keep a signed log of all those working directly with children to show up to date Level 2 Safeguarding training annually
  - b) keep a log of Advanced DBS checks for those working with children and those members checked at a lower level
- ensure every volunteer knows the name of the designated Trustee responsible for child protection and their role
- ensure volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated Safeguard Lead responsible for child protection
- ensure all partners abide by our code of conduct
- ensure that all members and volunteers involved in projects have seen and understood this policy and, where necessary, that of our partners
- where we work with schools, work with their staff who have the links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with any enquiries regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. Communicate concerns with the school
- develop and then follow procedures (through the school or according to NSPCC guidelines) where an allegation is made against a member or volunteer

**We will make sure children are fully aware of all Health & Safety aspects of our projects. All work away from the school is subject to a Risk Assessment.**

Lead Trustee: A.C.Warne, Vice-Chair

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Peter Rothman, Schools Project Officer

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by the Chair of Trees for Dorset:

Simon Goldsack Simon Goldsack

Date: 1st October 2024

(Compiled from policy guidance from NSPCC, Teachernet and Save the Children.

Keep up to date using NSPCC Learning.)