Wessex Rivers Trust

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

January 2020

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1. INTRODUCTION

Wessex Rivers Trust (Wessex RT) recognises that they have a duty of care towards children and young people under the age of eighteen, as well as vulnerable adults. If children, or vulnerable adults, are in our charge we should protect them from physical, emotional and sexual abuse or harm, and ensure their wellbeing. Wessex RT seeks to comply with Hampshire, Dorset and Wiltshire County Council Children's Services in promoting good working practices that safeguard children and promote their welfare.

Definition of abuse (Working together to safeguard children, 2015):

> *"A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children."*

It is a requirement that any member of Wessex RT staff or any volunteer working on behalf of Wessex RT has the responsibility to pass on information and concerns regarding a child or young person who may have been or is likely to be harmed or abused.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Tracy Standish

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Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Amy Ellis – Senior Education & Engagement Officer

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Safeguarding lead on Board of Trustees: George Seligman

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Tracy Standish (DSL) is responsible for:

* Monitoring and recording concerns
* Making referrals to Social Services within 48 hours of a concern recorded
* Liaison with other agencies where appropriate

2. VETTING

All Wessex RT staff are interviewed, referenced and undergo criminal record checks to a standard level under the Disclosure and Barring Service for roles that come into contact with children and young people.

Wessex RT has recruitment policies for both staff and volunteers, which seek to ensure that the wellbeing of children and young people is maintained.

Wessex RT acknowledges and accepts the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, the principles of the Children Act 1989, the Human Rights Act 1998, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

We will:

* Treat all children with respect and celebrate their achievements
* Carefully recruit and select all adults whether paid or voluntary
* Respond to concerns and allegations appropriately

When any adult has concerns about the welfare of any child/young person then he/she is expected to share those concerns with the DSL. Please refer to Appendix A in the event of a disclosure.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

In cases of disclosure of abuse, by either children or parents, we are obliged to share the information and refer our concerns to Social Services, within 48 hours.

4. STAFF ALLEGATIONS

Concerns about the behaviour of adult/s in our organisation will be referred without delay to the DSL who will contact Social Services or the police as appropriate.

5. WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as a child/young person's protection will always have precedence over any other issues.

- Listen to the child/young person, rather than question him or her directly.

- Offer him/her reassurance without making promises and take what the child/young person says seriously.

- Allow the child/young person to speak without interruption.

- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.

- Do not overreact and maintain consistent in your support.

- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement.

- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.

- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.

- Use the child/young person's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child/young person was trying to say.

5.1 Record any discussion or actions taken within 24 hours. Details must include as far as practical:

Child's details:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Full address including postcode
- Telephone number
- Child's school (if applicable) and GP
- Child's ethnicity and religion
- Child's first language
- Any disability

Principal carer's details:

- Name
- Relationship to child
- Do they have parental responsibility?
- Names and ages of other siblings in the family (if known)
- Carer's first language
- Any disability

Referrer's details:

- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details.
- What has prompted the concerns? Include dates and times of any specific incidents.
- Has the child/young person been spoken to? If so, record details.
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details.
- Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. DSL within the school or Social Services etc.
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

All records, information and confidential notes should be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet. Only the designated persons will have access to these files.

The designated person/s will inform the relevant outside organisation of the incident:

HAMPSHIRE	Hampshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 555 1384	Office hours: 8:30am-5:00pm Mon-Thurs 8:30am-4:30pm Fri
	Out of Hours Service 0300 555 1373	
	Inter-Agency Referral Form	https://bit.ly/2LaeUkd
WILTSHIRE	Wiltshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub 0300 456 0108	Office hours: 08:45am-5:00pm Mon-Thurs 8:45am-4:00pm Friday
	Out of Hours Service 0300 456 0100	
DORSET	Children's Advice and Duty Service 01305228558	Monday to Friday between 8am and 10pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am to 10pm
	On-Call Out of Hours Service 24/7	

If you think a child/young person is in immediate danger, call the police on 999

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: … …….. (date)

Signed ……

Safeguarding lead on board of trustees

Appendix A

1. RECORDS, REPORTING PROCESS AND MONITORING

1.1 If we are concerned about the welfare or safety of any child/young person who has come into contact with our organisation, we will immediately contact the DSL or their Deputy.

1.2 The DSL or Deputy will report the matter to either Hampshire, Dorset or Wiltshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

1.3 If an allegation involves the DSL, the Deputy will be contacted. If the DSL or the Deputy are involved, the staff member or volunteer will report the allegation to the **Hampshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 01962 876364** or **Wiltshire LADO: 0300 456 0100** or **Dorset LADO:** 01305 221122**.**

1.4 Any information recorded will be kept in a separate named file and in a secure cabinet. These files will be the responsibility of the DSL and information will only be shared within the organisation on a need to know basis for the protection of the child/young person.

1.5 Any safeguarding information will be kept in the file and will be added to. Copies of referrals will be stored in the file.

1.6 Reports of a concern to the DSL must be made in writing and signed and dated by the person with the concern.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 The DSL will liaise with Children's Services and other agencies where necessary and make referrals to Children's Services.

2.2 Any concern for a child's/young person's safety or welfare will be recorded in writing and given to the DSL who will be responsible for ensuring that all staff members and volunteers are aware of our policy and the procedure they need to follow.

2.3 The DSL will ensure that all staff and volunteers have received appropriate child protection information during induction.

2.4 The DSL will ensure that a safeguarding policy is in place and is reviewed annually.

2.5 At all times the DSL will ensure that safer recruitment practices are followed.

2.6 Safer procedures ensure our recruitment practices are safe and compliant with statutory requirements.

2.7 We require evidence of any qualifications staff or volunteers hold. We do not accept testimonials and insist on taking up references as part of our appointment process. We will

question the contents of application forms if we are unclear about them. We will undertake enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service checks and use any other means of ensuring we are recruiting and selecting the most suitable people to work with children. We will use the recruitment and selection process to deter and reject unsuitable candidates.

2.8 Wessex RT undertakes to remedy without delay, any weakness in regard to our safeguarding arrangements that are brought to our attention.