

Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust

Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

1. Policy statement & purpose

The Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust (SPDT) believes that every child and adult should be safe and secure, the SPDT is committed to safeguarding and protecting from harm everyone who comes into contact with our work—beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, trustees, and people using our services. We will prevent abuse, respond appropriately to present and historical concerns, and promote a culture where people feel safe to speak up.

Trustees of all charities must make safeguarding a governance priority and take reasonable steps to protect people from harm as safeguarding is everyone's business.

SPDT has safeguards in place to avoid situations whereby workers and volunteers could be at risk of allegations or risk of harm. SPDT believes that it is important to not only protect the vulnerable from harm but to actively promote the welfare of children and adults at risk to protect and safeguarding them.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working directly for SPDT as well as our Member Groups, contractors, agency workers or consultants ensuring they are aware of this policy and their responsibilities.

Member Groups may also have their own additional policies and procedures.

This policy is fully compliant with the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (PDSCP) policies and procedures along with the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board policy.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all trustees, staff, volunteers, contractors, and partners working on behalf of SDPT in any setting (in person, online, or overseas). It covers children (anyone under 18) and adults at risk (adults with care/support needs who may be unable to protect themselves) as well as the general public we engage with.

3. Definitions

- A child/young person is defined as anyone under 18.
- An adult at risk is defined under the Care Act 2014 as a person over 18 who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.
- Abuse may be physical, emotional/psychological, sexual, financial, neglect, discriminatory, organisational/institutional, online/digital exploitation.
- Concern/allegation: information suggesting a person may be at risk, has been harmed, or that someone's behaviour poses a risk.

4. Principles

We will:

1. **Prevent** harm through planning, risk assessment, safe environments and culture.
2. **Protect** by recognising signs of abuse and acting promptly.
3. **Report** concerns to appropriate internal leads and external authorities.
4. **Record** decisions and actions accurately, securely, and in line with data protection.
5. **Review** our practice and learn from incidents and near-misses.

References: Annual review, clear reporting, culture of respect and learning are core expectations

5. SPDT Values for Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults at Risk:

All people using our services including children, young people and adults at risk have the right to a friendly, secure, caring and safe environment whilst with SPDT, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

The needs of the child/adult at risk are paramount and should underpin all safeguarding work, working to this policy and procedures agreed by the PDSCP and the Dorset Adult Safeguarding Board.

The primary duty of staff and volunteer, whatever their nominated role, and organisations contracted by SPDT responsibility is not to investigate suspected abuse, but to report concerns to the local contacts (section 9).

Responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk must be shared as they can only be protected effectively when all the relevant agencies and individuals accept responsibility and co-operate with one another. Some children are additionally vulnerable due to the impact of previous experiences their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

6. Safer recruitment, selection and training:

SPDT is committed to ensuring safeguarding is prioritised throughout the recruitment, induction and ongoing management of staff and volunteers and to achieve this SPDT aims to:

Recruitment and selection:

- Practice safe recruitment, including application forms, structured interviews, reference checks and the use of criminal records checks (DBS) where permitted.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers having regular contact with children or adults at risk have an appropriate DBS and that these are regularly reviewed in line with guidance and legal requirements.
- Ensure all job descriptions and role profiles clearly set out safeguarding responsibilities.

Creating a safe environment:

- Ensure all SPDT activities are safe for staff, volunteers and people using our services
- Design systems of work to minimise one-to-one contact and other safeguarding risks.

Training and Development:

Provide mandatory safeguarding induction training to all staff and volunteers.

Ensure ongoing refresher training and updates are provided in line with PDSCP guidance. Offer any additional role-specific training where required.

Supervise and support staff/volunteers through regular line management and appraisals, with safeguarding responsibilities included in performance reviews.

Procedures and Policy Awareness:

Develop and implement clear procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected safeguarding concerns/harm/injury.

Ensure this safeguarding policy is available to staff, volunteers, contractors and member groups ensuring it is read, dated and signed.

Designate trained individuals as Safeguarding lead and Deputy to whom concerns must be reported.

7. Safer Practice in Direct Work:

- No SPDT member of staff or volunteer will be alone with a child or adult at risk without good reason and without alerting others to the reason except where this is in the urgent best interests of the child or adult.
- Members of staff or volunteers must not use inappropriate language or behaviour.
- Any concerns of harm/injury or disclosure will be acted on IMMEDIATELY.
- All allegations of abuse against a worker or volunteer, however minor are reported to the Safeguarding Lead and the procedure to be followed will be in line with the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Bournemouth or the Dorset Adult Safeguarding Board.
- Safeguarding also means reducing the risk of injury and we will carry out appropriate risk assessments before undertaking events/activities including balancing the danger of injury against the benefits for participants.
- When undertaking events/activities we will arrange for appropriate first aid cover and other health and safety measures e.g. fire training.
- Photographs and videos of children and young people must only be taken when specific, informed and recorded written consent of their parent or guardian and will be held and used in line with the consent under our Data Protection Policy and legislation. Consideration will be given to protecting the identifies of children (e.g. using only first names) if publishing photos.
- Data relating to safeguarding incidents will be held in line with our Data Protection policies, but may be shared with other agencies, in line with safeguarding legislation.
- If a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that their actions may be misinterpreted, they should report it as soon as possible to their Line Manager or Supervisor applicable to all members
- The Trustee Safeguarding Lead will support the Safeguarding DSL when required and will help ensure policies and procedures are compliant and regularly updated.
- Safeguarding is a standing item at Trustee meetings; the Trustee Safeguarding Lead and CEO will ensure that any decisions or advice from Trustees is communicated and incorporated into this policy.

8. Type of Harm:

There are various forms of harm that can be evidenced by physical and behavioural indicators:

- Physical harm
- Coercion and Control
- Neglect
- Emotional harm
- Sexual harm
- Financial and Material harm
- Discriminatory Harm
- Radicalisation
- Modern Slavery
- Domestic Abuse

Further information is available from Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership (<https://pdscp.co.uk/children-young-people/abuse-what-is-it/>) or Dorset Adult Safeguarding Adults Board, Our Dorset Adult Social Care and Community Site (dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

9: How to report suspected harm/abuse:

Those working for SPDT may suspect someone is being harmed or is at risk of harm by observing their body language, appearance and/or behaviour to be told directly via a disclosure. If anyone involved with SPDT has a suspicion or receives a disclosure, then they MUST act.

The priority for all those working for SPDT (trustees, staff, volunteers, contractors etc) should be to ensure the safety and protection of an adult or child at risk. Therefore, if there is a concern, it is an individual's responsibility to act immediately where there is an urgent need for medical treatment or immediate risk of harm.

1 - Where a worker or volunteer suspects a child or adult at risk has of harm, they will follow the following process:

- Remain calm, treat seriously, offer support and listen however, do not press for further details.
- Explain that you cannot guarantee confidentiality and that you have a duty to report to your Safeguarding Lead/Deputy (inform parent/carer only after discussion and agreement with the Safeguarding Lead and unless it would increase the risk of harm).
- Record accurately what has been disclosed as soon as possible. Only record a factual account. Do not express any opinion
- Keep any evidence safe.

- Do not attempt to discuss this with the person alleged to have caused harm.

2 – If the person believes the child or adult is in immediate danger – call the police 999 and/or an ambulance 999. If not go to step 3.

3 – The person in receipt of a safeguarding concern should alert as soon as possible, and certainly within the same day, the SPDT Safeguarding Lead or Deputy, or that of the Member Group, who will make a decision as to whether further action is required. The Trust Safeguarding Lead to be updated following this. This process should be followed by all member groups of the SDPT.

4 - The Safeguarding Lead/Deputy will ensure there is an accurate record of the information given e.g. what was said, what was observed, when, where and who else was there, date/place of disclosure/concerns. This must be kept securely and only shared with relevant agencies.

5 – Safeguarding Lead makes the appropriate referral within 24 hours of disclosure or concern raised and informs the CEO and Trustee Safeguarding Lead. If the Safeguarding Lead is part of a Member Group, they should inform the SPDT Safeguarding Lead.

6 – Followed up in writing within 24 hours and a copy will be kept digitally in the SPDT safeguarding incident file.

Please note the Swanage Youth Club has its own safeguarding policy and procedures which must be reviewed regularly. Safeguarding concerns should be discussed with their safeguarding lead and report to the SPDT DSL.

Member groups of SDPT may also have their own safeguarding policy and procedures which must be reviewed regularly. If they differ from this policy, this must be agreed with the CEO. Safeguarding concerns should be discussed with their safeguarding lead and report to the SPDT DSL.

10. Whistleblowing:

SPDT is dedicated to the highest standards of operation, probity and accountability. In line with this commitment, employees, volunteers and others with serious concerns about any aspect of our work are encouraged to come forward and voice those concerns. In the first instance if you have safeguarding concerns or want to complain about a lack of action on a safeguarding concern, speak to our Trustee with safeguarding responsibility. However, if you have continuing authorities (the local safeguarding boards and/or Police). Advice is available from Protect – free confidential advice for people who witnessed wrongdoing in their workplace but are not sure how to raise their concerns (<https://protect-advice.org.uk> 020 3117 2520) and NSPCC National Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

11: Safeguarding Leads:

SPDT Safeguarding Lead - Rose Ward safeguarding@sandpdt.org.uk

Telephone number - 01929 208376 – mobile 07938465062

SPDT Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Rachel Tapping rachel.tapping@sandpdt.org.uk

Telephone number - 01929 208376 – mobile 07938465062

Trustee with Safeguarding Responsibilities - Debbie Evans

debbie.evans@sandpdt.org.uk

12: How to report concerns:

Immediate risk call Police 999

Concerns about a child/young person in the Dorset Council Area:

If you have concerns or suspect that a child/young person is at risk of abuse/harm/neglect, then contact:

Family support and advice in Dorset on 01305 228558

Email: familysupportandadvice@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Hours of operation:

Mon-Fri 8am – 10 pm

Saturday, Sunday and bank holidays 9am – 10pm.

Out of hours emergencies: 01305 221000 – This line provides support for families concerned about a child's welfare and offers guidance and resources.

Concerns about an adult at risk in the Dorset Council Area:

To report a concern call:

01305 221016 Monday to Friday 8.30am - 5pm

Outside of normal opening hours: 01305 221000 or website Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board/Our Dorset Adult Social Care and Community site (dorsetcouncil.gov.uk).

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

Concerns about staff/volunteers:

Contact the Dorset Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01305 221122 or email LADO@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

13: Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents including all Members of the SDPT.

Health & Safety Policy

Employee code of conduct

Volunteer Policy

Data Protection Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Anti-slavery policy

Whistleblowing policy

Risk Assessments

Member groups may have additional policies and Risk Assessments, relation to their area of work.

Approved by Trustees:

NAME AND POSITION: Debbie Evans (Safeguarding Trustee)

DATE: 27/01/2026

REVIEW DATE: Annually