

Bridport ASD and Social Anxiety Group.

Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding officers are Debbie Marlow (07972782579) and Karen Wright (**07974 826891**).

Everyone in our group, volunteers and participants have a right not to experience abuse. We have some vulnerable adults and young people in our group, so it is our responsibility to take note of any suspected abuse and work to end it. We are committed to doing what we can to stop any abuse. (IR 2019)

We believe everyone has the responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and act in a way that protects them.

We give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. We are particularly mindful that our group includes vulnerable and special needs teenagers and adults who may not be able to communicate, or understand and report abuse in the same way. KW 01/2020

Types of abuse

Physical-- any physical hurting of a child and non-consensual hurting of an adult.

Emotional – deliberately trying to scare, isolate, ignore or humiliate someone.

Sexual-- forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities. Undesired sexual behaviour by one person upon another. People under 16 cannot give consent to sexual behaviour. People in positions of power (like group facilitators) should not have any sexual contact to under 18-year-olds. Sexual contact includes grooming, flashing and showing young people sexual images. We expect our facilitators not to have any sexual contact or romantic relationships with anyone related to the group who is under 21 years old. Also, **Child sexual exploitation, Harmful sexual behaviour.**

Neglect- failing to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs which can result in damage to their health and development.

Online – This includes online grooming and taking sexual images of children and showing sexual images to children. Online/**cyberbullying** is also included in this definition.

Bullying– verbal abuse and non verbal e.g hand gestures. often harassment, exclusion and slurs etc. relating to race, gender, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

For more detailed information, see Definitions and signs of child abuse NSPCC document kept with our group policies or available online.

Disclosures

Disclosers of abuse should be directed to a Safeguarding officer, who will take careful note of what has been disclosed. Disclosers need to be handled very delicately. **ALL SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE, however small, NEEDS TO BE REPORTED TO A SAFEGUARDING OFFICER!**

Safeguarding Policy Actions

- **All disclosures will be recorded by a Safeguarding officer**
- If the disclosures relate to a member of the group as a perpetrator, they will be investigated and reported to authorities. The individual will be suspended for attending the group. A committee meeting will be held to determine any action against a volunteer or participant.
- If the disclosures relate to a child as a victim, the abuse can, and most likely will, be reported without consent. But the child will be notified, as will the parent/guardian if safe to do so.
- If an adult discloses abuse outside the group, they will be encouraged to report it themselves and signposted to agencies who can support them. If it continues it could need to be reported to authorities by the safeguarding officer with the consent of the victim, unless they are deemed to be a vulnerable adult (possibly very elderly or disabled in some way or homeless or going through extreme & difficult emotional times etc), in which case the abuse should be reported after notifying them.

Reviewed and revised April 2020 KW

