



Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures

The Dorset Children's Foundation acknowledges its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of every child and young person who has been entrusted to its care and is committed to working to provide a safe environment for all children and families. Our nominated Welfare Officer is Patsy Hallmey.

A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18.

1. The key principles of our Safeguarding policy are as follows:

- The child's welfare is, and must always be, the paramount consideration.
- All children and young people have a right to be protected from abuse regardless of their age, gender, disability, culture, language, racial origin, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

2. Working in partnership with other organisations, children and young people and their parents/carers is essential. We acknowledge that every child or young person involved with our charity should be able to take part in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from poor practice and abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult working in our charity.

3. The Dorset Children's Foundation has a role to play in safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional harm and from neglect or bullying. It is noted and accepted that this applies to everyone whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.

4. We will recruit staff and volunteers responsibly. As a minimum we will meet and chat with the applicant and where possible conduct interviews before appointing. We will discuss role

profile, request identification documents, and follow up with two references before appointing staff.

5. Staff who are regularly caring for, supervising, training or being in sole charge of children and young people will be required to complete a CRB Enhanced Disclosure. If there are concerns regarding the appropriateness of an individual who is already involved or who has approached us to become part of our charity, guidance will be sought from other similar organisations. All decisions will be made in the best interests of children and young people. It is accepted that The Dorset Children's Foundation aims to prevent people with a history of relevant and significant offending from having contact with children or young people and the opportunity to influence policies or practice with children or young people.

6. Any adult or young person with concerns about a colleague can 'whistle blow' by contacting the Co-Founders of our charity (Patsy Hallmey or Scott Akam) or alternatively by going direct to the Police, Children's Social Care or the NSPCC. We encourage everyone to know about this information and utilise it if necessary.

7. The Dorset Children's Foundation has appointed Patsy Hallmey as Welfare Officer. She has completed the Football Association's Safeguarding Children Workshop. As Welfare Officer, she is the first point of contact for staff regarding concerns about the welfare of any child or young person. Patsy is familiar with the procedures for referring any concerns.

8. We acknowledge and endorse bullying as a category of abuse. Bullying of any kind is not acceptable in our charity. If bullying does occur, those affected should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly. All incidents need to be reported to The Welfare Officer.

9. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility - no action is not an option.
 - If you are worried about a child then you need to report your concerns to the Welfare Officer.
 - If the issue is one of poor practice they will either: a. Deal with the matter themselves or b. Seek advice.
 - If the concern is more serious - possible child abuse - they will, where possible, immediately contact the Police or Children's Services.

- If the child needs immediate medical treatment take them to a hospital or call an ambulance and tell them this is a child protection concern. Let your Welfare Officer know what action you have taken.
- If at any time you are not able to contact your Welfare Officer or the matter is clearly serious then you can either:
 - a. contact the Police or Children's Social Care, or,
 - b. call the NSPCC 24 hour Helpline for advice on 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk.