Safeguarding Policy

Wellspring West Sussex

Charity Number 1100226

Statement

Wellspring West Sussex aims to assist children and young people with disabilities in West Sussex to overcome their difficulties by the provision of information, advice and support to such children and young people and their families and carers, and to provide recreational activities in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving their conditions of life.

This safeguarding policy has been developed to ensure everyone connected with the organisation is aware of the vulnerability of children and young people, and of the need to ensure they are protected from harm at all times.

This policy has been developed using the framework provided by the following Acts of Parliament:

The Children’s Act 1989

The Protection of Children Act 1999

The Human Rights Act 1998

Sexual Offences (Amendments) Act 2000

Children Act 2004

Children and Social Work Act 2017

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Other sources used include:

How to Develop Child Protection Policies and Procedures, Action in Rural Sussex

Working Together to Safeguard Children, Department of Health

West Sussex Child Protection Procedures, West Sussex Area Child Protection Committee

Safeguarding Children from Harm – An organisational health check, NSPCC

Useful Guidelines – Child Protection, Charity Commission

The welfare of the child is paramount and everyone involved with Wellspring West Sussex, either as a volunteer or as a paid worker has a duty to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse of all children. It is recognised that disabled children and young people face additional barriers in reporting abuse, because of communication difficulties, increased isolation, dependency on others or lack of education on staying safe.

Wellspring West Sussex is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and to treating everyone equally and fairly. Therefore this policy applies to all children and young people regardless of their age, gender, racial heritage, disability, sexual orientation and identity, or religious beliefs.

Any activities provided or supported by Wellspring West Sussex will be planned and appropriate to the needs of children and young people with disabilities in West Sussex.

The nominated child protection representative is Mrs Deborah Newson, 26 Goldsmith Road, Worthing BN14 8ER, telephone 01903 203657 or 07742 408868. Any concerns or suspicions of abuse that any member of the organisation has about a child should be reported immediately to this representative.

Everyone has a responsibility for the protection of children and for reporting concerns about a child’s welfare or safety. Any information provided will be treated seriously and in a confidential way and used only to protect the well being of the child. Any training considered relevant will be provided by Wellspring West Sussex.

It will be stated in the free, newsletter produced by Wellspring West Sussex, and on their website, that this safeguarding policy is in operation and that copies can be made available on request. Any disabled child or young person in West Sussex who expresses concerns about what may be happening to them will be encouraged to contact one of the nominated agencies for help.

In addition to the above, everyone connected to Wellspring West Sussex agrees to the following:

The welfare of the child is paramount

All children, without exception have the right to protection from abuse

All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately

All the trustees and volunteers of Wellspring West Sussex have a responsibility to report any concerns they may have

All children have the right to be listened to and taken seriously whatever their level of development or communication

Every child has the right to have his or her wishes and feelings taken into account

Any work with children will recognise the child as an individual, with individual needs

Everyone will be treated with respect

This policy will be implemented using the following procedures and reviewed annually at the AGM of Wellspring West Sussex.

# Procedures

The main types of abuse commonly recognised are:

Physical – this may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Failing to protect a child is also considered as abuse and causing a child to be ill in order for the parent or carer to gain attention also falls into this category.

Emotional – this is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child that leads to that child experiencing feelings of low self-esteem, worthlessness and of being unloved.

Sexual – this involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities. Abuse occurs whether or not the child is aware of what is happening and regardless of whether they have consented to the activity. The activities may involve rape, buggery, oral sex and/or fondling. Non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or in the production of pornographic material also constitute abuse. The sexual abuse of young people can be by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. The abuse may come from someone known to the young person or from a stranger.

Neglect – this is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs. It includes a parent or carer’s failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Failure to tend to a child’s emotional needs is also seen as neglect.

If abuse is suspected these guidelines may help in the reporting procedure

Everyone has a responsibility for the protection of children and for reporting concerns about a child’s welfare or safety

Early action is often the best way of protecting children

Any information provided will be treated seriously and in a confidential way and used only to protect the well-being of the child

If anyone is concerned about suspected abuse of a child they should contact the nominated child protection representative for Wellspring West Sussex, Mrs Deborah Newson. If the representative is unavailable then contact should be made with one of the following:

**Social Care and Health Services** 01403 470101,

email: mash@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk

**West Sussex Safeguarding Children Board** 0330 222 7799

email: lscb@westsussex.gov.uk

**Sussex Police** on 101 or 01273 470 101, text 07786 208090,

email: 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk

**NSPCC** 0808 800 5000, [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)

**Childline** 0800 1111 [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk/)

**Child Exploitation & Online Protection** [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk/)

In the event of a complaint the following information should be gathered:

Name of the child

Parent/carer’s details

The child’s address

Relevant phone numbers

What is said to have happened or what was seen

When it occurred

Who else was there?

What was said by those involved?

Whether there is any evidence e.g. bruises, bleeding, changed behaviour

Was the child able to say what happened?

Have the parents been advised?

If a child is anxious to speak or begins to disclose information, the following guiding principles should be adhered to:

Try to ensure that at least one other adult is present

Allow the child to speak and do not interrupt

Comfort and reassure the child but do not encourage disclosure

Do not make suggestions to the child in order to fill gaps in the information

Do not ask leading questions that presumes information not given

Only continue the conversation for as long as the child wishes to volunteer information

Any information about the suspected abuse together with details of any action taken should be recorded in a Record of Concern. These records should be kept in a locked cabinet accessible only by the nominated child protection representative.

Any volunteer or member of staff recruited by Wellspring West Sussex will be required to undergo the following selection and vetting process:

Completion of an application form

Produce evidence of their identity in the form of a birth certificate or passport

Provide two written references that are to be followed up after interview with a telephone call to each referee

Be interviewed by two members of the organisation

Identify reasons for gaps or inconsistencies in employment

Obtain full disclosure through checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service if the applicant will be taking part in any direct, unsupervised contact with children and young people

A supervised probationary period for new people that includes a comprehensive induction process and training in the safeguarding policy and procedures of the organisation

Training will be provided as appropriate for all staff and volunteers, this should identify signs of abuse, what to do if someone tells you they are being abused and what to do if you suspect abuse. Additional training will be available for the nominated child protection representative so they can ensure that any concerns about a child are properly responded to.

Any complaints about Wellspring West Sussex will be dealt with promptly and fairly, the procedure for registering a complaint is as follows:

A written outline of the individual’s concerns should be addressed to the Chairman who will respond within five days, if it is not possible to resolve the matter satisfactorily by mutual agreement then a formal complaint should be made to the Executive Committee who will respond within 14 days.

If the complaint cannot be dealt with to the satisfaction of the complainant then further redress may be made to the Charity Commission www.charitycommission.gov.uk.

**Wellspring West Sussex**

**Safeguarding Policy January 2018**