



# **Stour Valley VINEYARD CHURCH SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

# Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility

Stour Valley Vineyard Church Safeguarding Policy

## Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
DRAFT 1	27/02/2023	Ian Copeman	Full revision of policy
Draft 2	20/06/2023	Ian Copeman	Minor typos corrected
Draft 3	07/07/23	IC. VL. JT. KT	Review and amend

## Review History by trustees

Date	Approved by	Next Review date
31/07/2023	Charles Vernon Chair of Trustees	07/2024

Note:  
The trustees recognise that aspects of this policy are yet to be fully implemented but that procedures are in place to bring all areas into full compliance. These actions will be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Trustee and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.  
It is also recognised that the document is dynamic in nature, especially in relation to the move to new premises and the attendant structures that will be needed.

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## Section 1 – Organisational Information

### Organisation Details

<b>Organisation name:</b>	Stour Valley Vineyard Church (SVV)
<b>Address:</b>	The Vineyard Centre Tudor Road, Sudbury, CO10 1NP
<b>Telephone:</b>	01787 377 670
<b>General email:</b>	<a href="mailto:office@stourvalleyvineyard.org">office@stourvalleyvineyard.org</a>
<b>Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number</b>	1131617
<b>Senior Safeguarding Lead (SSL)</b>	Vicky Leonard
<b>SSL Telephone number</b>	07919 256 408
<b>SSL email:</b>	<a href="mailto:vicky@stourvalleyvineyard.org">vicky@stourvalleyvineyard.org</a>
<b>Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b>	Ian Copeman
<b>DSL telephone:</b>	01787 375775
<b>DSL email:</b>	<a href="mailto:ian@stourvalleyvineyard.org">ian@stourvalleyvineyard.org</a>

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### Our Commitment

The trustees of SVV recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to "all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status". We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child." As trustees we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and any attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:eight.

The trustees undertake to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- provide on-going safeguarding training for all its staff and volunteers who work with children and adults and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding team in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children and adults.
- the trustees agree not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.



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## **Safeguarding Roles**

### **Senior Safeguarding Lead [SSL]**

The SVV Senior Safeguarding Lead (SSL) performs the following roles:

The SSL reports to SVV board of trustees.

- Manages the day-to-day implementation of the SVV Safeguarding Policy.
- Provide advice and training to SVV staff and volunteers on their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.
- Provide general safeguarding and compliance advice when requested.
- The first point of call for any safeguarding queries or concerns within the organisation.

### **Deputy Safeguarding Lead [DSL]**

The SVV Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL) performs all the roles of the SSL when they are not available.

### **Designated Safeguarding trustee**

- Involved in the safe recruitment process of Vineyard Senior Pastors, staff, and volunteers.
- Has strategic oversight on safeguarding matters and works closely with the designated SSL.
- Is responsible for reporting back to the trustee body on safeguarding matters.

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### **Structure of the Organisation**

#### **Affiliated church.**

SVV as an affiliated church is an independent legal entity within the National Vineyard movement and is responsible for our own legal compliance and safeguarding procedures. As an Affiliated Church, we are led by a Licensed Senior Pastor and subscribe to the VCUKI By-laws.

Failure to abide by the By-laws can lead to the removal of the right to use the Vineyard name by a senior pastor and the loss of a church's affiliated status.

Although responsible for our own safeguarding practices and procedures, We must demonstrate that we have adopted a robust safeguarding policy that is reviewed regularly, appoint a safeguarding lead and that we have joined Thirtyone:eight .

We recognise that as an Affiliated Church that if we do not follow this best practice to safeguard children, young people and adults SVV runs the risk of losing its affiliated status.

As an affiliated church we must complete an annual safeguarding questionnaire, confirming that SVV has in place an up-to-date safeguarding policy, the date it was last reviewed and the name and contact information for their safeguarding lead.

#### **Licensed Senior Pastors**

It is also a requirement for SVV as an Affiliated Church to report any safeguarding allegations made about a senior pastor or leader to the VCUKI as soon as they are raised.

#### **Conferences and Events**

SVV is also directly involved with the organisation and management of a number of retreats and training events (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Events"). At these Events certain staff and volunteers, working on behalf of the organisation, may have direct contact with children, young people and adults. As SVV has ultimate responsibility for the organisation of these Events, it is necessary that Event team leads are familiar with this policy and implement the necessary policies and practices detailed within to safeguard the children, young people and adults that they and their teams may have contact with.

## **Section 2 - Prevention**

### **Understanding Abuse and Neglect**

Defining abuse is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those who have contact with our organisation we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:

*1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

*2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

Also, for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included in the attachments of this policy.

### **Safer Recruitment of SVV Staff and Volunteers**

The trustees will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post;
- Those applying have completed an application form and, if the role requires, a self-declaration form;
- Those short listed have been interviewed;
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview;
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate;
- A disclosure and barring check have been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information);
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified;
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant;
- The applicant has completed a probationary period if so required by the church.
- The applicant has been given a copy of the SVV safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Further information can be found in the SVV Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy (Attachment 6).

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### **Safer Recruitment of Senior Pastors**

Vineyard Senior Pastors have a varied working life that includes working in regulated activities with children, young people and adults. As VCUKI is responsible for the licensing of these individuals to use the denominational name, they take the selection and appointment of senior pastors very seriously. It is therefore a requirement that all senior pastors who are to be licensed:

- Complete the VCUKI pastoral application and discernment process;
- are approved for appointment by the Leadership Group and Board of Trustees (or their designated representatives);
- complete a self-disclosure form; and
- obtain an enhanced level criminal records and barring check.

### **Safeguarding Training for Staff and Volunteers**

The trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all staff and volunteers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and, if the role requires it, undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

The trustees will also ensure that children and adults are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

Staff and volunteers working at SVV Events will all receive foundation level safeguarding training provided by the church for any given Event. Safeguarding leads and key team members will, where appropriate, be provided with specialist safeguarding training in line with the level of responsibility that they have for safeguarding at the Event. This training will be provided, a minimum, of every 3 years.

The SSL for SVV will be required to attend an advanced level safeguarding training course, appropriate for their level of responsibility, and will repeat such training every 3 years.

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### **Workers Code of Conduct**

All staff and volunteers of VCUKI who work with children, young people and adults will receive a copy of the SVV Safeguarding Code of Conduct. The code is designed to safeguard children, young people and adults in any activity and help workers by, providing them with the expected standards of behaviour as they carry out their work. The code can be found in Attachment 3 of this policy.

## **Section 3 – Key Policies and Practice Guidelines**

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific guidelines and policies that cover the main areas associated with safeguarding those at risk.

### **General Guidelines**

#### **Data Protection**

SVV takes data protection seriously and is committed to processing personal data fairly and lawfully. All staff should familiarise themselves with the latest version of the SVV Data Protection Policy. Those staff and volunteers who are involved with processing criminal record checks must also familiarise themselves with the attached Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of DBS Policy (Attachment 4).

#### **Anti-bullying Policy**

We believe that every individual is uniquely created by God and made in his image and likeness. As a result, we believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in our organisation. If it does occur children and adults are able to report the matter and it can be dealt with promptly and effectively. There is an expectation that anyone who knows that bullying is happening will report it. There should be a clear line of reporting and should initially be raised to the leaders of any group that the children or adults are in. The SVV Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures can be found in Attachment 5 of this policy.

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## Risk Assessments

SVV has the responsibility to assess the risk involved in the activities that are provided in any location. Where appropriate a check will be made before the start of an activity that the venue/location is safe and that the planned activities have been assessed for any risks. The leader of each event will ensure that the necessary risk assessments are completed for each activity and the following are **some** of areas that should be considered:

- Identification of hazards;
- Consider who might be harmed and how this might happen;
- Assess the risks and take action to remove or reduce them as far as possible.
- Record details of the action taken.
- **Always consider safeguarding needs.**

## Health and Safety

The health and safety requirements will be in line with the policies and procedures of the church or event site to ensure the required safety standards are met.

## Communicating safely

In relation to safeguarding, communication has three aspects: talking, listening and responding.

- Expected standards when communicating with children and young adults:
  - All those working with children and adults need to be able to communicate effectively with them in order to build relationships, trust, self-esteem and an attitude of acceptance. Clear guidelines need to be in place to show what is acceptable communication.
- Communicating within teams:
  - Communications between workers and their leaders is of critical importance so that, everyone knows who to speak with and when. It is also important that all team members know when to communicate with the SSL. This is regardless of a team members position.
- Communicating with other agencies and partners:
  - Good communication with other agencies (statutory and voluntary) is important so that confidence is established about the existence of safeguarding policies and good practice within the organisation.



## **Section 4 – Responding to Allegations of Abuse**

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility;** this applies to safeguarding both adults and children. There needs to be clear and agreed procedures for responding to concerns about children, young people and adults. All those that work with them need to respond appropriately, in a timely manner and the process needs to be communicated to SVV.

### **Documenting a concern**

If there is a concern that a child, young person or adult may have been abused or a direct allegation of abuse has been made, it is important the person receiving this information does the following:

- Makes notes as soon as possible (preferably within one hour of the individual's disclosure) that include a description of any injury, its size, and if possible, a drawing of its location and shape on the individual's body.
- Write down exactly what has been said, when it was said, what was said in reply and what was happening immediately beforehand (e.g. a description of an activity).
- Write down dates and times of these events and when the record was made. Write down any action taken and keep all handwritten notes even if subsequently typed up.
- Workers need to share SSL any concerns that they may have and any clear allegations that have been made to them by, or about, children, young people and adults. **Sharing 'gut feelings' at an early stage, may assist in helping those who need it.**

***Remember, someone becoming quiet and withdrawn does not automatically mean that they are being harmed. But by sharing your concern about them with your Safeguarding Lead, it will enable you to discuss ways of asking 'open questions' which may clarify their worries.***

Questions such as 'you seem a bit quiet today. Can you tell me about it?' will enable them to talk to you (if they wish) and let them know you are interested in them.

These skills can be practiced in advance including at training sessions.

Workers need to know what the process is for the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of reporting concerns and allegations.

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### Reporting procedures

#### Licensed Senior Pastors

The leadership / trustees of SVV should notify the VCUKI SC as soon as possible following any allegations that are made against a senior pastor or leader.

#### Safeguarding Lead reporting responsibilities

The SVV SSL or their deputy will:

- Contact the statutory authorities (if appropriate to do so);
  - Contact the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499 within 24 hours of an allegation being made against someone who works with children or young people; If you are concerned about an immediate risk to the safety of a child please call Customer First on 0808 800 4005. In an emergency, call the Police on 999.
- If an allegation is made against a person working in a Regulated Activity; notify the DBS (England and Wales) at the point at which any allegation is confirmed, a person is withdrawn permanently or at such other point as guided by the statutory agencies to make such a referral.
- If an allegation is made regarding a person within the organisation; SVV will contact SVV's insurance company, where appropriate, to alert them to the situation which has arisen.

The SSL will notify the Trustees who will, in the case of a Serious incident, notify the Charity Commissions of any allegations raised against any employee or volunteer of SVV.

### Procedures when there is a concern

If there is a concern about the wellbeing or safety of a child or adult, then workers and volunteers should follow the procedures detailed in Attachment 8 of this policy.

### Allegations against a SVV worker or volunteer

Allegations of abuse against workers are comparatively rare but must be treated seriously and responded to immediately. SVV will commit to following the guidance below:

- If the worker against whom the allegation is made has any contact with children, the person dealing with the allegation should seek the advice of the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499 and/or the Police before taking any action such as suspension of employment.
- Similarly, for an adult seek the advice of the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499 Social Services or the Police where there are concerns about a worker's behaviour with adults.

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- It is important to be aware that suspension is not always the best and most appropriate course of action, but serious consideration should be given to this where there is evidence to suggest that further harm may come to children or adults if they were not removed from duties (albeit temporarily).
- In either case, it may be better for the worker to be required to alter their responsibilities so that they are removed from the activities of the group whilst the allegation is investigated.
- However, the best course of action (suspension or change of duties) needs to be decided after consultation with the MASH team and relevant people such as the Designated Officer (Children's work only).
- During such situations, it will be necessary to supervise the worker as closely as possible without raising suspicion during the period between the matter coming to your attention, the authorities being informed, and the appropriate action being taken.
- It is important to be aware that, on occasion, allegations can be made that are malicious.

It is also important to ensure that in acknowledging this fact, we do not take this as our sole basis for responding to all allegations.

The worker should have someone to support them and represent their interests throughout any investigation process.

If it turns out the allegation is a conduct or relational issue rather than abuse, SVV will still ensure good personnel practices are observed to support the worker as well as the person(s) making the allegation.

## **Section 5 Pastoral Care**

### **Supporting those affected by abuse**

SVV is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the organisation. We believe that we are able to be an advocate for those who are survivors of abuse and support them to find the appropriate care and help. SVV will make every reasonable effort to ensure that anyone affected by abuse is supported pastorally within the/a local church and/or community and that they are made aware of the support services available to them.

### **Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk**

It is important to have strategies in place to supervise and manage individuals who pose a risk to others, and have committed, or have been accused of, sexual or other crimes against anyone. Even though the individual may have regretted and accepted responsibility for what they have done, the possibility of succumbing to opportunity or habit is still present. Therefore, SVV recognises its responsibility in protecting all, both offenders and potential victims. Along with the safeguarding procedures that have already been mentioned in this policy it is vital to manage the risk represented by known offenders to create a safe organisation for all. SVV will therefore ensure that an agreement is in place when working with any known or suspected offenders. This agreement will stipulate what the offender/suspected offender can and cannot do within the organisation. When an agreement is needed, details should be added that reflect the particular areas of risk for that individual.

### **Licensed Senior Pastors and the Affiliated Church**

LSPs will be expected to ensure that their Affiliated Churches, in this case SVV, have the appropriate policies in place that outline the procedures and boundaries based upon an appropriate risk assessment that will be developed in consultation with appropriate parties. LSP's will offer pastoral support.

It is the responsibility of SVV to develop its own safeguarding policy that includes the procedure of working with offenders and those who may pose a risk. Alongside the safeguarding policy there should be a template of an agreement for use with known or

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suspected offenders. This should stipulate what the offender/suspected offender can do and cannot do within the organisation. When an agreement is needed, details should be added that reflect the particular areas of risk for that individual.

### **Pastoral Support for alleged offenders**

SVV recognises that those who are accused of committing offences may need to receive pastoral care and support. Police investigations can take a long time and the process can be extremely stressful for all involved. An alleged offender may need to be suspended from their role and, therefore, find themselves without their usual support network.

SVV will ensure that all alleged offenders who are employed or volunteer for the organisation receive appropriate pastoral support throughout the investigation process. This support will always be managed and provided entirely separately to any support that is offered to victims.

# Attachments

## Attachment 1 – Identifying Abuse (Children & Young People)

The following signs **could** be indicators that abuse has taken place but should be considered in context of the child's whole life.

### Physical

- Injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them.
- Injuries that occur in places not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc.
- Injuries that have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained tummy pains.
- Bruises on babies, bites, burns, fractures etc which do not have an accidental explanation.
- Cuts/scratches/substance abuse\*.<sup>1</sup>

### Sexual

- Any allegations made concerning sexual abuse.
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.
- Age-inappropriate sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations.
- Eating disorders - anorexia, bulimia\*.

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<sup>1</sup> \* young person may be self-harming

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### **Emotional**

- Changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging.
- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety.
- Nervousness, frozen watchfulness.
- Obsessions or phobias.
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration.
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults.
- Attention-seeking behaviour.
- Persistent tiredness.
- Running away/stealing/lying.

### **Neglect**

Under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, Inadequate care.

### **Spiritual Abuse**

Spiritual Abuse is linked with other forms of abuse, and could be defined as an abuse of power, often in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

## **Attachment 2 – Identifying Abuse (Adults)**

### **Identifying an adult at risk**

An adult at risk of harm is a person aged 18 or over, **whose exposure to harm through abuse, exploitation or neglect** may be increased by their personal characteristics or life circumstances.

Their personal characteristics **may** include:

- age
- physical or mental disabilities
- special educational needs
- any illness, mental or physical they may have

Their life circumstances **may** include:

- isolation or loneliness
- finances and work
- living conditions

### **Identifying adult abuse**

It is abuse when someone misuses their power or control over another person, causing harm or distress. The abuser could be in a close relationship with the adult at risk. They could be someone the adult at risk depends on and trusts.

An abuser could be a:

- partner
- relative or other family member
- person entrusted to act on behalf of the adult in some aspect of their affairs
- service or care provider
- neighbour



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- health or social care worker or professional
- employer
- volunteer or another service user
- person or people who have no previous connection to the victim

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse is physical force or mistreatment of one person by another which might or might not cause physical injury. This type of abuse includes:

- hitting
- pushing
- rough handling
- exposure to heat or cold
- force feeding
- improper administration of medication
- denial of treatment
- misuse or illegal use of restraint
- not being allowed to go where you wish, when you wish

Signs of physical abuse are:

- fractures
- bruising
- burns
- pain
- marks
- not wanting to be touched

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### **Psychological or emotional abuse**

Psychological or emotional abuse is harmful behaviour that can cause mental distress. It can involve both verbal and non-verbal abuse which can scare, humiliate and isolate a person. This may include:

- threats
- humiliation or ridicule
- provoking fear of violence
- shouting, yelling and swearing
- blaming
- controlling
- intimidation
- coercion

Signs of psychological or emotional abuse are:

- being withdrawn
- too eager to do everything they are asked
- showing compulsive behaviour
- not being able to do things they used to
- not being able to concentrate or focus

### **Financial abuse**

Financial abuse happens if someone tries to steal, steals or defrauds you of your money, goods or property. This includes:

- exploitation

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- embezzlement
- withholding pension or benefits
- exerting pressure around wills, property or inheritance

Signs of financial abuse are:

- having unusual difficulty with finances
- not having enough money
- being too protective of money and things they own
- not paying bills
- not having normal home comforts

### **Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual activity or sexual behaviour that happens without consent or understanding.

Sexual violence and abuse can be physical contact or non-contact sexual activities, such as:

- indecent exposure
- stalking
- grooming
- forced to look at or be involved in producing sexually abusive material
- forced to watch sexual activities

Possible signs are:

- genital itching, soreness or having a sexually transmitted disease
- using bad language
- not wanting to be touched
- behaving in a sexually inappropriate way
- changes in appearance

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### **Institutional abuse**

Institutional abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of an adult at risk by a regime or individuals.

It takes place within settings and services that adults at risk live in or use, **including any organisation**, in or outside the Health and Social Care sector.

Institutional abuse may occur:

- when routines, systems and regimes result in poor standards of care
- when poor practice and behaviours are in place
- within strict regimes and rigid routines which violate the dignity and human rights of the adults and place them at risk of harm
- within a culture that denies, restricts or curtails privacy, dignity, choice and independence

Possible signs are:

- the person has no personal clothing or belongings
- there is no care plan for them
- they are admitted often to hospital
- professionals and volunteers having treated them badly or unsatisfactorily or acting in a way that cause harm to the person

### **Identifying neglect**

Neglect occurs when a person deliberately withholds, or fails to provide, suitable and adequate care and support needed by another adult. It may be through a lack of knowledge or awareness, or through a decision not to act when they know the adult in their care needs help. It may impair the health or well-being of an adult.

Possible signs are:

- having pain or discomfort
- being very hungry, thirsty or untidy
- failing health

### **Identifying exploitation**

Exploitation is the deliberate maltreatment, manipulation or abuse of power and control over another person. It is taking advantage of another person or situation usually, but not always, for personal gain.

Exploitation comes in many forms, including:

- slavery
- being controlled by a person or a group
- forced labour
- domestic violence and abuse
- sexual violence and abuse
- human trafficking

### **Spiritual abuse**

Spiritual Abuse is linked with other forms of abuse, and could be defined as an abuse of power, often in the name of God or religion, which involves manipulating or coercing someone into thinking, saying or doing things without respecting their right to choose for themselves. Some indicators of spiritual abuse might be a leader who is intimidating and imposes his/her will on other people, perhaps threatening dire consequences or the wrath of God if disobeyed. He or she may say that God has revealed certain things to them and so they know what is right. Those under their leadership are fearful to challenge or disagree, believing they will lose the leader's (or more seriously God's) acceptance and approval.

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### **Recognising signs of harm or abuse**

You might become aware that an adult is at risk of harm when:

- you see or hear something
- they tell you about abuse, exploitation or neglect happening to them
- a friend, family member or somebody tells you something that causes you concern
- you notice injuries or physical signs that cause you concern
- you notice the victim or abuser behaving in a way that alerts something may be wrong

## **Attachment 3 – SVV Safeguarding Code of Conduct**

All staff and volunteers are reminded that they have been placed in a position of trust and responsibility and must act in accordance with this code of conduct when carrying out their work.

- DO treat all individuals equally with respect and dignity –offensive, discriminatory or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- DO understand your role in any policies and procedures e.g. child protection, health and safety –be clear about what you should do if a concern about the safety or welfare of an individual arises.
- DO co-operate fully with other volunteers and professionals.
- DO consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.
- DO show respect for all people and treat them how you would want to be treated yourself.
- DO understand that inappropriate behaviour will be followed up by the SVV Senior Safeguarding Lead [SSL] in consultation with Suffolk M.A.S.H. and other agencies.
- DO be vigilant of changes in behaviour and inappropriate conduct in other workers and volunteers and report to the SVV SSL. Do remember that you are in a trusted role and must maintain professional boundaries with all individuals that you work with.

There are a number of things that you must ensure do not happen whilst you are working or volunteering for this organisation:

- Never spend time alone with children out of sight of others.
- Never take or drop off a child alone unless you are following agreed procedures and have agreed safeguards in place.
- Never take children or young people to your home.
- Never engage in rough, physical or sexual provocative games.
- Never allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching or physical abuse.
- Do not take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a person.
- Never make sexually suggestive comments.

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- Do not allow allegations made by an individual to go unchallenged, unrecorded or ignored.
- Never make a child cry as a form of control.
- Do not do things of a personal nature for children or adults that they can do for themselves.
- Do not contact children individually via any social media (including mobile phones).
- Don't make promises that you cannot keep.
- All allegations or disclosures must be reported to the SVV SSL.



## **Attachment 4 – Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of DBS Disclosures Policy**

### **Introduction**

As an organisation that uses the DBS checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants to positions of trust, SVV complies fully with the code of practice regarding the correct storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information.

SVV complies fully with its obligations under the), Data Protection Act 2018 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

### **Storage and access**

Certificate and disclosure information is kept securely, in lockable storage containers with access strictly limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

### **Handling**

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed. We recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

### **Usage**

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

### **Retention**

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary.

This retention will allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints or be for the purpose of completing safeguarding audits.

We will not retain any paper or electronic image of the disclosure information. We will, however, record the date of issue, the individual's name, date of birth, the disclosure type and the purpose for which it was requested, the unique reference number of the disclosure and details of our decision. The same conditions relating to secure storage and access apply irrespective of the period of retention.

### **Disposal**

We will ensure that disclosure information is destroyed in a secure manner i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. We will ensure that disclosure information which is awaiting destruction will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. a waste bin or unlocked desk/cabinet).

## **Attachment 5 – Anti Bullying Policy and Procedures**

### **Definition of bullying**

The Anti-Bullying Alliance defines bullying as:

*The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face to face or through cyber space.*

### **Objectives of this policy**

- All children, workers, parents and carers should be aware of the anti-bullying policy within the organisation and what they should do if bullying arises.
- All workers should have an understanding of what bullying is, be aware of possible signs if it is happening and follow the policy when it is reported.
- Children and parents/carers should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

### **Procedures**

- Report the bullying incident to leaders.
- Ensure that details are carefully checked before action is taken.
- In all cases of bullying, the incidents should be recorded by the leader.
- Consideration should be given to informing the parents/carers of the bully, but this should only be done if leaders are satisfied there is no bullying/abuse going on at home that might exacerbate the situation.
- If it is thought that an offence has been committed, consideration should be given to contacting the Police.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and stopped quickly.
- Help should be offered to help the bully address his/her behaviour.

### **Outcomes**

- The leader involved in dealing with the incident should issue a warning to the child concerned.
- An apology should be given by the child who has bullied another.
- If possible, those involved will be reconciled.
- After the incident has been investigated and dealt with, the situation should be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
- After the incident(s) have been investigated parents/carers should be informed of the action taken.
- All incidents must be reported to the safeguarding team.

## **Attachment 6 – Recruitment of Ex-Offenders**

### **Our Commitment**

SVV is committed to being an Equal Opportunity Employer. This policy aims to ensure that ex-offenders receive fair treatment throughout their experience of recruitment and employment within our organisation. We will treat all DBS applicants who have a criminal record fairly and will not discriminate because of a conviction or other information revealed.

### **Policy**

This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders, is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

1. As an organisation assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), SVV complies fully with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
2. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against anyone who is the subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
3. SVV can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that we are legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and where appropriate Police Act Regulations as amended).
4. SVV can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
5. We are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of our services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical / mental disability, or offending background.
6. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all to achieve the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applicants from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview on the basis of their aptitude, skills, qualifications and experience in relation to the requirements of the post.

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7. A DBS check is only requested when it is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a DBS check is required, the recruitment information will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.
8. Where a DBS check is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of any criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
9. We ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process will have suitable guidance to enable them to identify and assess the relevance of the offence in relation to the position applied for. We also ensure that they receive appropriate guidance on the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
10. At interview or in a later separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. **Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position applied for could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.**
11. We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
12. We make every subject of a DBS check aware of the existence of the DBS Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
13. **Once in employment**, staff should inform their line managers, and/or Human Resources, in confidence, of **any changes to their circumstances which affects their criminal record status**, in order that the impact upon their suitability to undertake their role may be reviewed.

### Assessment criteria

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us.

This will depend on the offence and the relevance of the offence in relation to the position applied for. The factors taken into account will include the responsibilities of the position, the vulnerability of the customer group, the nature of the offence(s), the number and pattern of the offences (if there is more than one), how long ago the offence(s) occurred and the age of the offender when the offence(s) occurred.

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### **Procedure**

In the event that relevant information (whether in relation to previous convictions or otherwise) is volunteered by an applicant during the recruitment process or obtained through a disclosure check, SVV will carry out a risk assessment by reference to the criteria set out above and a decision will be made and communicated back to the person concerned.

## **Attachment 7 – Guidelines for Creating an Event Risk assessment to include Safeguarding Considerations.**

### **Risk assessments**

Risk assessments should be implemented for activities, identifying any risks that could be encountered, the action required, and the person responsible to carry this out and when any action has been completed.

### **The following are some areas that should be considered:**

- Identification of hazards.
- Consider who might be harmed and how this might happen.
- **Safeguarding considerations**
- Assess the risks and take action to remove or reduce them as far as possible.
- Record details of the action taken.

### **Safeguarding principles**

- a) Ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and respect in attitude, language and actions.
- b) Consideration for the number of workers needed to run the group and whether they should be male, female or both.
- c) A clear strategy for summoning additional help (if needed) in situations where a worker is working alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- d) The level of personal care (e.g. toileting) required appropriate to the needs of the individual.
- e) Clear guidelines on personal privacy e.g. when working with children avoiding questionable activity such as rough or sexually provocative games and comments.
- f) Not allowing anyone under 16 years of age to be left in charge of children of any age or those attending the group being left unsupervised.
- g) Only workers assigned to the group being allowed to participate in the activity. Other adults should not be allowed free access.
- h) Making a note of other people in the building during the activity and any other events taking place at the same time.

### **Safe recruiting and Criminal records check for appropriate roles**

Safe recruitment, selection and vetting procedures that include checks into the eligibility and the suitability of all trustees, staff and volunteers who have direct or indirect (e.g email) contact with children are essential. There are some roles and some settings for which DBS

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checks are a legal requirement. Each role must therefore be assessed on its own merits based upon the details contained within the job description to understand whether such checks are required. This will follow the guidelines mentioned earlier in this document detailing safer recruitment.

All DBS original certificates will be viewed by a SVV Thirtyone:eight trained recruiter.

Certificates must have been issued within the last 3 years or be registered, and live, on the DBS Update Service. Any individual that does not have a valid certificate within this criteria will need to apply for a new check through SVV before they can be appointed to a team.

### **Training of staff and volunteers**

Ensure that relevant role specific training is available for those who work with the children and adults. The frequency of training needs to be such that workers are competent and knowledgeable in relevant legislation and practice (for safeguarding this will be at least every 3 years). Children's workers, leaders and those with specific safeguarding responsibility e.g. the Safeguarding Lead and Deputy should undertake more specific training. Ensure that new workers are given induction training and supervision during the first 6 months so that the organisation is supportive of those who are new to any role.

### **Working safely with those with disabilities**

Workers should be aware that any child, young person or adult attending an activity who has a disability may need extra help in areas such as communication and mobility (e.g. use of sign language and assistance in going to the toilet). Ask the child, young person or adult attending the activity, and parents or carers how their needs can be met, ensuring all workers involved with them are aware of their expectations. This includes the number of workers needed to assist for a specific activity to prevent injury.

### **Adult to child ratios**

In order to supervise activities safely, it is necessary to have sufficient adult leaders and helpers. These ratios need to be agreed in advance of the activity. There are legal requirements for certain activities involving children aged 8 and under.

### **Responding to challenging behaviour**

Sometimes children and young people become angry, upset or disruptive. Occasionally their behaviour may endanger themselves or others. The Government has developed national standards in relation to early years and day care and the guidelines can be adopted by SVV if deemed necessary. If someone is being disruptive:

- Ask them to stop.

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- Speak to them to establish the cause(s) of the upset.
- Inform them they will be asked to leave if the behaviour continues.
- Warn them if they continue to be disruptive, this might result in longer-term exclusion from the group.
- If they are harming themselves, another person or property then others in the group should be escorted away from the area where the disruption is occurring. At the same time, and with a second worker present, request them to STOP. If your request is ignored, you might need to warn the individual that you will consider calling the Police. As a last resort, in the event of them harming themselves, other people or property, physical restraint may be needed until the Police arrive.

### **Parents / Carers who wish to stay with their children in groups**

There may be occasions where parents ask if they can stay to watch the children's group's activity. It is important not to appear guarded but there may be concerns, particularly where the expectation is that all adults who work with children in any capacity should undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. There should be clear procedures for this situation. **[This area is recognised and will be subject to further discussions]**

### **Filming and Taking Photographs**

Permission must be obtained of both children and adults before a photograph is taken or film footage recorded. However, it is perfectly acceptable to ask parents/carers to let the organisation know if they do NOT want their child photographed or filmed. If an event is being filmed "Notice of Filming" signs should be posted at all entrances to any filming locations

### **Tobacco**

Consider a designated external smoking area that can be used.

### **Solvents and illegal substances**

It is important to adopt zero tolerance on all illegal substances.

### **Reporting requirements**

Under no circumstances should a volunteer or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. All volunteers and workers should follow the procedures as set out below.

### **Documenting a concern**

- The worker or volunteer should make a report of the concern in the following way:
  - The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to the SSL. The above is nominated by the event leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.



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- The SSL may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern:
  - Seek the advice of the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499 if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.
  - A Trustee responsible for safeguarding who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place in accordance with UK data protection legislation and the SVV Data Protection Policy.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the SSL, the absence of the SSL or Deputy SL should not delay referral to the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:eight on 0303 003 1111 .
- The event leadership will support the Safeguarding Lead/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.

## Attachment 8 – Procedures when there is a concern about a child or adult

### Procedures when there is concern about a child.

#### Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse

**Where there is a physical injury or symptoms of neglect the safeguarding lead should do the following:**

**If you are concerned about an immediate risk** to the safety of a child call Suffolk Customer First on 0808 800 4005, in an emergency, call the Police on 999 If there are concerns that a child may have been deliberately hurt, is at risk of 'significant harm' or is afraid to return home.

Do not tell the parents/carers in such circumstances.

It may also be helpful to have the contact number of Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499, Customer First 0908 800 4005.

If a child needs urgent medical attention an ambulance should be called or they should be taken to hospital, informing the parents/carers afterwards of the action that was taken. The hospital staff should be informed of any child protection concerns. They have a responsibility to pass these concerns on to the statutory authorities.

If the concerns are about poor parenting it may be appropriate to speak to the parent/carer, offer practical support such as domestic help and suggest, for example, a chat with the health visitor, doctor or Suffolk M.A.S.H.

If a parent/carer is unwilling or frightened to seek help, then offer to accompany them. If they still fail to acknowledge the need for action it is possible to informally discuss the situation with Suffolk M.A.S.H without divulging their personal details (such as names and addresses) unless, of course, Suffolk M.A.S.H consider the situation to be serious enough to do so. In these circumstances it is important to realise there may be a bigger picture. Information may have come to light that might be a vital missing piece in the jigsaw.

Thirtyone:eight is available to give advice in these situations.

It is important to take older children's wishes into account when deciding whether to talk to parents/carers unless other children are potentially at risk.

#### Allegations of sexual abuse

**Where the concern or allegation of abuse is sexual, the safeguarding lead should do the following:**

1. If you are concerned about **an immediate risk** to the safety of a child call Customer First on 0808 800 4005. In an emergency, call the Police on 999.  
Or seek the advice of the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499.  
**Do not try to investigate the matter.** The important thing is to relay the information to Children's Social Services and/or the Police so they can carry out an investigation and take appropriate action, as they are mandated to do under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

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2. In the case of very severe sexual assault (such as rape), which may have occurred over the last few days, contact the Police using 999. Do not touch or tamper with any evidence, such as clothing and dissuade the child from cleansing themselves.
3. Remember to make a note of what the child alleges and the circumstances surrounding the allegation because of the possibility of being called to give evidence at court.
4. Do not tell the parents/ carers, as they could be involved. It is also important no one else who might be involved is inadvertently alerted to the situation because this might lead to the child being 'silenced' or potentially incriminating evidence being destroyed. Allegations of sexual abuse are usually denied and often difficult to prove. Remember, the child's welfare must be the first consideration at all times.
5. Keep information confidential and share on a need to know basis only so that any alleged perpetrator is not warned or 'tipped off'. The child or young person also has a right for their privacy to be respected as much as is possible.
6. Should the safeguarding lead not feel it necessary to refer the matter to Suffolk M.A.S.H but the worker (or anyone else) has serious concerns for the child's safety, then they should contact the relevant authorities themselves. The safety of the child overrides all other considerations and it is important to remember that sexual abuse of children is a serious crime.
7. If the allegation is made against someone who has responsibility for implementing the safeguarding policy or plan, the referral should be made directly to Suffolk M.A.S.H or appropriate professional advice sought from Thirtyone:eight.
8. Other people within the organisation may need to be informed e.g. Area leader and/or the Chair of the Trustees. Additionally, the insurance company may also need to be contacted, and then the charity regulator (The Charity Commission) will need to be informed of any Serious Incident.

### Procedures when there is concern about an adult.

#### Allegations of abuse or harm

*Including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.*

Where possible, concerns should be passed to the Senior Safeguarding Lead or Deputy but difficulty in contacting these individual(s) should not delay action being taken. If the Safeguarding lead is concerned that an adult may have been or is in danger of being abused, they should contact the Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499.

If they are not sure whether an official referral is warranted but they nevertheless have legitimate concerns, they should still contact Suffolk M.A.S.H to discuss their concerns. Alternatively they can contact Thirtyone:eight for advice (0303 003 1111).

**We have a duty to act** on any concern of abuse of an adult to ensure that the situation is assessed and investigated. The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and

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protection of the person concerned. The primary responsibility for managing any investigation process rests with Adult Social Care. Upon receiving a referral, they will action an adult safeguarding alert.

When the concern is about someone in residential care, the Care Quality Commission, which is the independent regulator of health and social care in England, will be involved.

Where a crime may have been committed, the Police will investigate.

## **Contact numbers for both Adults and Young People's Services in Suffolk:**

**Suffolk Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0345 606 1499**

**If you are concerned about an immediate risk call**

**Customer First on 0808 800 4005.**

**In an emergency, call the Police on 999.**

**Online reporting in Suffolk:**

**<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/keeping-children-safe/reporting-a-child-at-risk-of-harm-abuse-or-neglect-safeguarding>**

**<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/care-and-support-for-adults/protecting-people-at-risk-of-abuse/report-abuse-of-an-adult>**

**For an independent national helpline:**

**Thirtynine:eight     0303 003 1111**