

PLASTIC FREE EASTBOURNE CIC ~
SAFEGUARDING POLICY

This Safeguarding Policy will be followed by all those volunteering with Plastic Free Eastbourne and will be followed and promoted by the Directors of the CIC.

Plastic Free Eastbourne is a Community Interest Company which campaigns to reduce single use plastic and works with our community to clean up our environment and achieve Carbon Neutrality for Eastbourne by 2030. We work in conjunction with individuals, families, schools and other groups.

Plastic Free Eastbourne (PFE) does not undertake activities with children under the age of 16 in the absence of their parent/ carer/ teacher or other designated group leader (eg Scout Leader).

Parents/carers/teachers/ designated group leaders remain responsible for children/young people's welfare throughout all work with the organisation. PFE volunteers, however, have the opportunity to observe the child/young person's welfare within their family or educational context. Young People under the age of 18 may volunteer with PFE as part of monitored arrangements which have been agreed with their Education Provider and their parents/carers.

Hundreds of Adults volunteer with PFE each year by participating in our events. This Safeguarding policy also applies to those adults who may be deemed vulnerable and who may be suffering due to neglect (including self-neglect) or abuse and are not able to be empowered to make decisions for themselves.

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to ensure that the actions of any adult in the context of the work carried out by Plastic Free Eastbourne are transparent and promote and safeguard the welfare of all young people and vulnerable adults.

If any person has any safeguarding concerns about the conduct of anyone volunteering with Plastic Free Eastbourne this should be raised with Sue Dixon, the Safeguarding Contact via suedixonjwg@gmail.com or 07736063397.

Principles:

- The welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult will always be paramount.
- The welfare of families will be promoted.
- The rights, wishes and feelings, of children, young people and vulnerable adults will be respected and listened to.
- Those in positions of responsibility within the organisation will work in accordance with the interests of children, young people and vulnerable adults and follow the policy below.
- Those in positions of responsibility within the organisation will ensure that the same opportunities are available to everyone and that all differences between people will be treated with respect.

SAFEGUARDING

1. Immediate Action to Ensure Safety

Immediate action may be necessary at any stage to protect children, young people or vulnerable adults. It is vital to take whatever action is needed to safeguard the child ie

- If emergency medical attention is required this can be secured by calling an ambulance (dial 999) or taking a child to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.
- If a child is in immediate danger necessitating police intervention 999 should be dialled.

2. Forms of Abuse

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse is a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's needs. Children who are being neglected may not get the love they need, may not have adequate clothing, support, supervision, nourishment and medical or health care.

Individuals working with Plastic Free Eastbourne need to be alert to the potential abuse of children both within their families and also from other sources including abuse by members of the organisation. There is an expected responsibility to respond to any suspected or actual abuse of a child in accordance with these procedures.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns. However, you **MUST NOT** discuss your concerns with parents/ carers if you suspect parents or immediate family to be involved in abuse or neglect of the child and/or to do so would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

3. Vulnerable Adults

An adult might be considered at risk if they are aged 18 years or over and:

- have needs for care and support (whether or not the local council is meeting any of those needs) and;
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

An adult at risk may be a person who:

- Is elderly and frail due to ill health
- Has a learning disability
- Has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment
- Has mental health needs including dementia or personality disorder
- Has a long -term illness /or condition
- Misuses substances or alcohol

- Is unable to make their own decisions and is in need of care and support
- Is a young adult, over the age of 18, who has care and support needs and is “in transition”; from children to adult services
- Is a carer (looking after another person with care and support needs)
- Is a victim of domestic violence
- Is subject to modern slavery

4. Guidance on recording abuse

A safeguarding concern could come to your attention via a variety of means. You might observe something, someone might disclose an allegation of abuse about themselves or someone else, or someone might report something to you that they have seen or suspected. In all scenarios it is vitally important to keep a cool head, keep your communication compassionate, objective and honest, and record as much factual information about what has happened as you can. You should not in any circumstance tell someone that you will keep a disclosure a secret, as you have a legal and moral obligation to report any concerns that you have.

The following guidance will help you to engage and record appropriately if a concern comes to your attention.

a) Be a reassuring presence.

One of the most important steps you can take to help children or vulnerable people is to reassure them that they are safe and that they have done the right thing. If you are panicking or appear alarmed, they will be too. Make sure your behaviour mirrors your words.

- Be truthful – never tell a lie to make someone feel better.
- Frame it positively – use constructive, positive, peaceful language.
- Be consistent
- Be compassionate – use appropriate tone of voice and body language.
- Explain – keep them informed of positive developments so they have ownership over their part in the situation.
- Do not have physical contact – regardless of whether it seems appropriate or not, it is best to refrain from physical contact to maintain a professional boundary. This is especially important as you may not know the extent of a person's vulnerability, and to maintain a bond of trust your behaviours must be completely professional.
- Work as a pair with another member of your group or trusted adult.
- Support but don't give advice.
- Avoid commenting on what they have told you. Reporting or disclosing abuse can generate a mix of emotional responses and your reactions may be unwelcome or inappropriate.

Some examples of reassuring things to say include: “You've done the right thing by asking us for help, we are going to make sure you get the help you need”. “If you wait here with us you will be safe until more help arrives” or “This is a safe place to wait until more help arrives”.

b) Recording and reporting

You may need to record an incident that you have observed or that someone else has reported or note down a disclosure prior to notifying Plastic Free Eastbourne's Safeguarding Team. Always follow

these guidelines to ensure that your information is as accurate as possible, and you are supporting the person appropriately.

- Never promise that you will keep it a secret. Ensure you inform anyone about to give you information that you will share it with the relevant people to ensure the safety of everybody involved. If this means that they then do not tell you something, you must accept this. Please record the incident anyway and report it to Plastic Free Eastbourne.
- Listen attentively, and if you are unsure about any details someone is telling you, ask for clarification (without making suggestions). For example, you may say “please could you repeat that last bit” or “what do you mean by that?”. You should NOT say “so, you mean that

such and such happened?” because that is suggesting your version, and not listening to their facts.

- Listen and record in chunks, rather than trying to listen to the whole lot and then writing everything down once the individual has gone. If another group member or trusted adult is there with you, it may be easier for one of you to talk and one of you to keep notes.
- If applicable, repeat the record you've taken back so the person giving the information can check the accuracy.

c) Key information to record:

- The date, time and location your notes were taken.
- Make sure you record the identity of the person supplying the information, or the identity/description of the subject of your observations.
- Record the name and contact details if possible of anyone else present during the record taking.
- Record as much factual information about the incident, report or concern as possible. Take care to only record what is said or what is observed – do not draw conclusions or include your opinions in your report.
- Record any action that you took as a result of the report or observation.

Plastic Free Eastbourne is also committed to the principles of empowerment for adults at risk and to making safeguarding personal, ensuring that adults at risk are asked what they want to happen

following a concern, that their wishes are taken into account and they are informed of actions being taken). Wherever possible an adult should be empowered to take action on their own behalf.

Reporting a safeguarding concern

If you suspect that a young person or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm or is the victim of abuse, you

must report it as soon as possible.

In the first instance, unless someone is at immediate risk of harm, please report all safeguarding concerns to the Plastic Free Eastbourne Safeguarding Team led by our Safeguarding Officer Sue Dixon by emailing suedixonjwg@gmail.com or ringing her on 07736063397 or 01323 739087. This should be done within 24 hours of the incident or concern being raised. We will then work with you to identify appropriate next steps – including contacting the local authority. All Safeguarding concerns will be treated seriously and information will be shared with others on a need to know basis.

5. Consulting with or making a Referral to East Sussex Children's Services

In an emergency call 999.

Otherwise, after discussion with the Plastic Free Eastbourne Safeguarding Team, the next step may be to contact the Single Point of Advice (SPOA) team at East Sussex Children's Services.

Phone: 01323 464222

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm, Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Children's services – Emergency Duty Service

Call the Emergency Duty Service out of hours from 5pm to 8.30am (after 4.30pm on Fridays) and during the weekends and bank holidays if you have a serious concern about a child's welfare that cannot wait until the following working day.

This out of hours service covers East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

- 01273 335906 or 01273 335905

The Single Point of Advice Team will offer advice and guidance. If they feel that a Referral should be made they will explain the next steps.

If you are worried about an adult who may be being abused, neglected or exploited, please contact East Sussex Adult Social Care and Health on 0345 60 80 191 or report your concern online.

6. Key behaviours for Prevention

A key element of safeguarding at any activity or event is prevention. To ensure everyone feels safe

and risk of harm is minimised, volunteers should always adhere to the following behaviours and practices. If you are ever unsure if a young person is under 18 and you are unable to ask, please act as if they are.

Never work alone. Ensure that you are never in an enclosed or isolated space alone with children, young people or adults at risk. Children and young people under the age of 16 should be accompanied by their parent/ carer or other responsible adult eg teacher.

Maintain appropriate boundaries.

Do not give a young person gifts or money, even to access transport or buy food at an event.

Do not arrange to meet a young person alone outside of an event or activity.

Do not offer a young person a lift in a private car.

Do not give out or accept personal contact details from under 18s. This includes “friending” on social media through personal accounts.

With adults we do not suggest that you withhold contact details, but if you are concerned about someone’s vulnerability try to adhere to the guidance above (eg. always cc: another group member into any communications with them). In all cases you should ensure that you are complying with GDPR.

Photography

When working with under 18s you must gain opt-in permission to use their digital images and be clear about what the images will be used for. This includes photographs, videos or screenshots of online calls. Permission must come from their parent or responsible adult.

Safeguarding is the responsibility of all of us. Please consult with us at any stage and never feel that a concern is too minor to be raised. Staff at Children’s Service and Adult Social Care and Health are always available to help and support.

PLASTIC FREE EASTBOURNE CIC

Directors:

Oliver Sterno

Sue Dixon

Andrew Durling

This policy was adopted on 15th March 2021

It will be reviewed annually

Review Confirmation

Date.....20th December 2022.....

Name: OLIVER STERNO

Signature (Chair)...*Oliver Sterno*.....

Name: SUE DIXON, ANDREW DURLING, CHRIS MASON

Signature (Director(s)) *Sue Dixon, Andrew Durling, Chris Mason*