

OUR YARD

at Clitterhouse Farm

Policy and Guidelines for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults (February 2021)

1) Policy Statement

Our Yard believes that children and vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind, and we have a duty of care and will do everything we can to provide a safe, caring and secure environment for them whilst they are engaged in Our Yard programmes and activities.

We recognise that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do, and in all the decisions we take all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sex, or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.

We recognise that some children and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

We are committed to practice that protects children and vulnerable adults from harm and recognise our duty to ensure that appropriate action is taken where a child or vulnerable adult is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm.

We recognise that working in partnership with children and vulnerable adults, their parents and carers, partner organisations and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

We will ensure that our policy and any associated procedures and training comply with statutory requirements and reflects available guidance on good practice in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, and that safeguarding arrangements are proportionate to the risks involved.

2) Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy and guidelines is to:

- protect children and vulnerable adults who volunteer at Our Yard (Clitterhouse Farm) and/or participate in any of our programmes and activities from harm and to promote their welfare
- provide staff members, volunteers, partner organisations, children and vulnerable adults and their families and carers with the overarching principles and procedures that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

The policy and guidelines apply to everyone at Our Yard, including founding members, staff members and volunteers.

3) Definitions

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable

adults and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse and maltreatment;
- preventing harm to health or development;
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children and vulnerable adults have the best outcomes.

As per the definitions set out in the Children Act 1989, a 'child' is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. It also includes unborn children.

As per the definition set out in "Who Decides?" (Lord Chancellor's Office 1997) a 'vulnerable adult' is anyone who is over 18 who:

- is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and
- is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself; or
- is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

4) Legal Framework

Everyone has a right to be safeguarded from abuse or neglect. There is a legislative framework in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults through The Children Act 1989 (as amended by section 53 of the Children Act 2004) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Further guidance that sets out the requirements and expectations on professionals to work together to effectively safeguard children include *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2015), *Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance* (2009) and *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (2015) (Department for Education 2015).

5) Policy Commitments

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them;
- appointing a nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads;
 - Thomas Ball / Anika Bakirtzidis (Farm Garden)
 - Paulette Singer (café)
 - Project: Thomas Ball & Paulette Singer
- adopting safeguarding and child protection best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently;
- recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know;
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately;
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise;

- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place;
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children and vulnerable adults, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance;
- building a safeguarding culture where staff and volunteers, children, vulnerable adults and their families and carers, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

6) Types of Abuse

Abuse can take a number of forms including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and neglect. Examples of such abuse (as noted in the Department of Education publication “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015”) are contained in Appendix 2.

Abuse neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events and, in most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.

Abuse: a form of maltreatment of a child. 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 (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

Physical abuse: 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: the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and 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, although 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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child sexual exploitation: is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships may receive gifts, money or affection in return for performing sexual activities. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

Neglect: the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Disabled children and vulnerable adults are particularly vulnerable to abuse in any form. Safeguards for disabled children and vulnerable adults are essentially the same as for non-disabled children and vulnerable adults. Staff and volunteers must maintain high standards of practice, remain vigilant to the possibility of a child being abused and minimise situations of risk. Where there are concerns about the welfare of a disabled child, they should be acted upon in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy. The same thresholds for action apply. Where concerns are raised about a child who has communication difficulties, appropriate support, interpreting services and communication aids must be secured.

7) The Designated Safeguarding Lead Role and Responsibilities

Our Yard's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is given a high priority within Our Yard. This includes:

- receiving and dealing with any safeguarding concerns;
- ensuring that safeguarding procedures are kept up to date and reviewed regularly;
- providing training, support and information for staff and volunteers;
- keeping up to date with new developments in this field and undertaking training where necessary.

The DSLs will liaise with Senior Leadership staff and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead at any partner organisation where a programme/activity is taking place regarding any concerns. They will ensure that correct information is shared with the police or local social services as necessary and that any referral is confirmed in writing within 24 hours.

The DSLs is currently: Paulette Singer and Thomas Ball (Directors)

The Deputy DSL is currently: Anika Dehne (Farm Garden)

8) Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities and Code of Conduct

All Our Yard staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults with whom they work; to promote good practice; and minimise and manage potential risks.

All staff and volunteers must be aware of their role and responsibilities under this policy and guidelines and adhere to it at all times.

If delivering a programme at a partner organisation premises, Our Yard will conduct a risk assessment and request a copy of the organisation's Safeguarding Policy and the name of the organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead. All programme staff and volunteers will be required to make themselves aware of the partner organisation's Safeguarding Policy before they enter their premises.

Any partner organisation or workshop facilitator delivering a programme at Our Yard premise, must conduct a risk assessment and provide Our Yard with a copy before any activities begin. The partner organisation or workshop facilitator can request a copy of Our Yard's Safeguarding Policy.

The following **Code of Conduct** must be adhered to by all staff and volunteers.

They must:

- listen to and respect children vulnerable adults all times;
- ensure that they safety of the child and vulnerable adult is paramount;
- not knowingly place themselves in a situation where they are alone with any child/vulnerable adult;
- endeavour to ensure that they work with groups of children/vulnerable adults supported by another staff member/volunteer/workshop facilitator;
- use inappropriate language in front of, about or to a child/vulnerable adult;
- be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child/vulnerable adult, observers or by anyone to whom this action is described. Never make physical contact with a child in a way which may be construed as being indecent. Be aware of cultural or religious views about physical contact and always be sensitive to issues of gender;
- not give individual children/vulnerable adults a lift in a car. Groups may be transported where there is suitable insurance cover in place;
- not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with children/vulnerable adults outside the Our Yard activities;
- not share any personal information with children/vulnerable adults and not request, or respond to, any personal information from them unless it is appropriate as part of their role within Our Yard;
- not send personal notes/letters/emails/texts or other forms of social media communications to children and vulnerable adults. Seek advice and guidance where necessary. Do not give out personal contact details. All communications must be transparent and open to scrutiny;
- not offer or accept personal gifts;

- understand that bullying will not be accepted but condoned.

Social Media Guidelines

Staff and volunteers using social media should be aware of the potential risks to children. Staff and volunteers should also be aware of potential indicators of online grooming and sexual exploitation of children.

Any potential illegal/abusive content or comments on Social Media should be reported to the DSL immediately.

Photographic and Video Images

Staff and volunteers must not take photographic or video images of children in regards to Our Yard activities, events, social media sites and promotional material.

9) Non-compliance

Staff and Volunteers within Our Yard are placed in a position of trust with regard to the children/vulnerable adults taking part in Our Yard programmes and activities. Any staff member who abuses that trust will be subject to disciplinary action, or in the case of a volunteer will be required to cease volunteering activities. Abuse may be reportable to the police.

10) How to deal with a Safeguarding Concern

Any member of staff or volunteer who has a safeguarding concern should inform Our Yard's Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Please refer to Appendix 1.

You may become aware of suspected or likely abuse through:

- your own observations and concerns;
- being told by another person that they have concerns;
- the abused person telling you;
- the abuser telling you.

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses that they are being abused, you should:

- listen to the child or vulnerable adult in whichever way they choose to communicate – e.g. drawings, behaviour, emotional responses;
- tell the child or vulnerable adult that you are taking what they are saying or expressing seriously;
- reassure the child or vulnerable adult that they are right to talk to someone and that you will need to tell someone who can help. **Do not promise them full confidentiality.**

Remember:

- do not delay in reporting your concern;
- do not investigate;
- carefully record anything you observe or are told;
- seek advice from Designated Safeguarding Lead at the partner organisation, if a partner organisation is involved.

If appropriate, Our Yard's DSLs will make a written referral to Social Services within 24 hours. Our Yard will take part, as appropriate, in any investigation and will co-operate with any partner organisation, police and Social Services in the course of their enquiries. Children's Social Services have a duty under Section 47 of the Children Act to investigate suspected and actual cases of child abuse where there is a likelihood of children suffering significant harm.

11) Allegations against Our Yard staff or volunteers and non-compliance

Any suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a child or vulnerable adult by a staff member or volunteer must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Leads immediately. Disciplinary procedures will be invoked immediately or in the case of a volunteer will be required to cease volunteering activities.

If there are concerns that abuse has taken place the DSLs will pass this information to the Local Authority Designated Officer for investigation.

The DSL will refer staff or volunteers to the Disclosure and Barring Service if they are dismissed or permanently removed as per legal requirements.

12) Confidentiality

The interests of the child are paramount. Confidentiality is vital and is a right for children and parents (Data Protection Act 1984; 1998). Information is shared on a need-to-know basis.

13) Whistleblowing

All Our Yard staff and volunteers have a duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice should be sought initially from the DSLs.

14) Staff and Volunteer Recruitment, Induction and Training

Our Yard's recruitment practices aim to prevent unsuitable people working with children and vulnerable adults and include the use of the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for enhanced disclosure for staff and volunteers depending on the nature of their role.

When recruiting staff, we will request an up-to-date CV; two references; and conduct a formal interview process. A DBS check (full or partial) will be required depending on the nature of the role.

All staff and formal volunteers will receive a clear induction and training process which will include:

- role description and responsibilities;
- training appropriate to their role;
- all relevant policies and procedures, including clear guidance as to when and whom a safeguarding concern is to be reported.

15) Record Keeping

All safeguarding related records will be kept securely by Our Yard's DSL and will only be kept for as long as required by law.

All records held should be factual and will also include the decision-making undertaken to determine whether an individual is suitable for volunteering or employment with Our Yard.

16) Safeguarding Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Paulette Singer

Director
102 Clitterhouse Crescent
London, NW2 1DA

Thomas Ball

Director
146 Clitterhouse Road
London
NW2 DN

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:

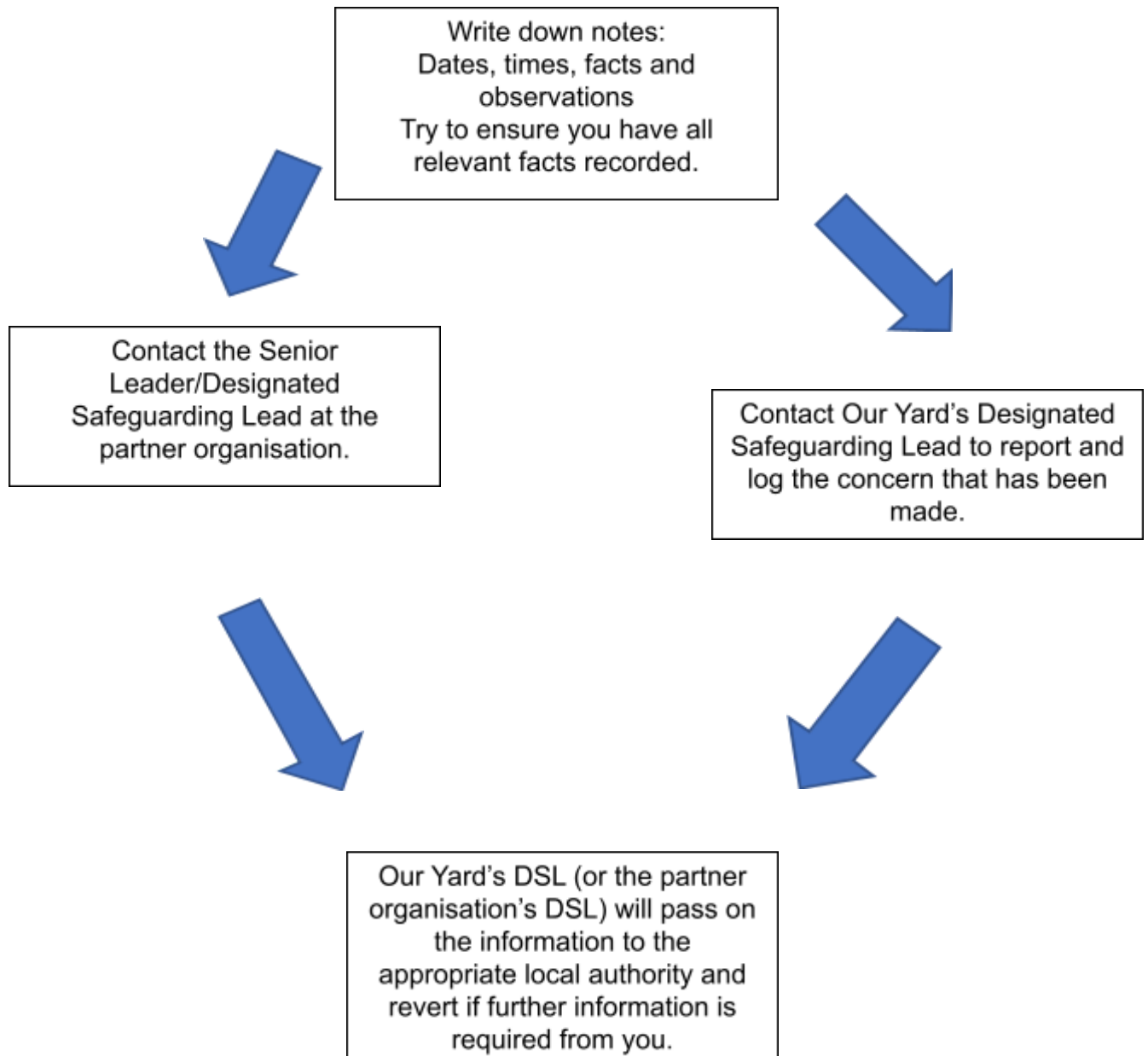
Anika Bakirtzidis

Farm Garden and Outreach Manager
6 Cheviot Gate
London
NW2 1QG

Date policy updated: 13th February 2021

Appendix 1:

**Important Information for Staff and Volunteers
What to do if you have a Safeguarding Concern?**



Appendix 2:

Specific Safeguarding Issues

All staff and volunteers should have an awareness of safeguarding issues, some of which are listed below. Staff and volunteers should be aware that behaviours linked to the areas of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truanting and sexting put children in danger.

Safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse. This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to bullying (including cyber bullying), gender-based violence/sexual assaults and sexting.

Staff and volunteers can access government guidance as required on the issues listed below via GOV.UK and other government websites but if you are unsure please contact the DSO:

- Bullying including cyber bullying
- Children missing education
- Child missing from home or care
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic violence
- Drugs
- Fabricated or induced illness
- Faith abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Forced marriage
- Gangs and youth violence
- Gender based violence/violence against women and girls
- Hate
- Mental Health
- Missing children and adults
- Private fostering
- Preventing radicalisation
- Relationship abuse
- Sexting
- Trafficking

Appendix 3:

Sources of additional information and advice / Helplines

Brook Advisory Centre Helpline

0800 0185 023 - www.brook.org.uk

Kidscape

08451 205 204 - www.kidscape.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre Helpline	01206 873 873 www.childrenslegalcentre.com
ChildLine (Free phone)	0800 1111 - www.childline.org.uk
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	0808 800 5000 – www.nspcc.org.uk
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222 - www.parentlineplus.org.uk
Samaritans National Helpline	08457 909 090 – www.samaritans.org.uk
Internet Watch Foundation Hotline	08456 00 88 44 – www.iwf.org.uk
Mind	0845 766 0163 – www.mind.org.uk

Appendix 4:

**Safeguarding Poster to be displayed at Events
(see next page)**

