

Status: Approved by Board June 2021	Review Date: June 2022
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## Policy Statement

The Wild Mind Project recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people. We are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice. Child protection forms part of the Wild Mind Project's safeguarding responsibilities, which also includes Health and Safety, and Data Protection, both of which are covered in separate policies.

Safeguarding is everyone's business. This policy aims to provide all members of staff (paid and volunteers) with knowledge of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and safeguarding, and the practical steps they need to take should a disclosure be made.

For the remainder of this document all references to staff encompasses **all** Wild Mind Project CIC directors, staff, volunteers and contractors, students or anyone working on behalf of The Wild Mind Project.

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child as being up to the age of 18 and up to 25 for children who have special needs.

This policy has been written using the legal and social care framework detailed in the following:

- London Child Protection Procedures (revised guidance 2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to interagency working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018
- Children Act 1989/2004
- Children Act 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)
- Children & Families Act 2014- (*SEND Revised code of practice*)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2015) (July 2018)
- The Human Rights Act (1998)
- Prevent strategy (2011)
- Data Protection Act (1998) The GDPR came into effect across the EU on May 25, 2018 and its requirements are part of English law under the Data Protection Act 2018. *Vital interest a term used in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to permit sharing of information where it is critical to prevent serious harm or distress, or in life-threatening situations*
- The Counter- Terrorism & Security Act 2015
- Channel Duty Guidance 2015

## Mission Statement

The Wild Mind Project's mission is that through a collaborative approach to mental health and wellbeing, we support young people, parents and carers, professionals and communities to thrive through creative and nature-based activities.

The Wild Mind Project is committed to safeguarding, protecting and promoting the welfare of all its users, and believes that everyone has the right to feel safe and protected from physical or psychological harm. The Wild Mind Project acknowledges that some participants, including children with special needs, or those from minority or marginalised communities, may be particularly vulnerable to abuse. In the delivery of our activities, we aim to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or belief, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, each and every individual participating in any activity overseen by The Wild Mind Project has a positive, enjoyable experience in an environment that is safe and appropriate to their age and ability.

## **The Wild Mind Project Commitment**

We understand that if there is a concern about the risk of significant harm to the child then our overriding duty is to protect the child. Abuse and neglect is unacceptable in all circumstances. It can be defined in many ways however the Government identifies the following types of abuse and neglect:

- Physical abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or Material abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect & Acts of Omission
- Organisational Abuse
- Self-Neglect
- Domestic abuse
- Modern Slavery
- Discriminatory Abuse

We believe the best defense against abuse is the strength of the values incorporated in The Wild Mind Projects culture, and the practical application of the mechanisms and procedures described in this document to protect children. The Wild Mind Project undertake to ensure:

- Children and Young People feel listened to, valued and respected. We recognise the importance of providing the space for young people to voice their experiences of contact with staff and understand that this is crucial in building and maintaining a safe and responsive environment
- Staff are aware of indicators of abuse and know how to share their concerns appropriately
- All paid and unpaid staff are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures
- All paid and unpaid staff are given appropriate support and training
- All allegations and suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and a Director of The Wild Mind Project CIC who attends multiagency training every 3 years.
- All staff involved in delivering activities to children receive training in basic child protection awareness every three years. This includes the majority of CIC Directors
- We take all reasonable steps to recruit staff safely, taking up references, requesting DBS checks where required, and once in post managing and supervising staff regularly
- All staff have read and understood the child protection policy and are aware of the indicators of child abuse and how to respond to concerns or disclosures of abuse by children
- All staff comply with The Wild Mind Project's code of conduct (see separate document)
- Our policies and procedures are publicised to children, young people and families, and the contact details for the DSL and designated CIC director and how to raise a concern is clearly visible on site and on The Wild Mind Project's website

The child protection and safeguarding policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the DSL and CIC Directors.

### Key Personnel

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:** Berny Simcox

Email: [berny.simcox@thewildmindproject.org](mailto:berny.simcox@thewildmindproject.org) Telephone: 07515 355796

**Chair of Board:** John Anderson

Email: [hello@thewildmindproject.org](mailto:hello@thewildmindproject.org) Telephone: 07951 021655

### Reporting a concern locally

All staff have a crucial role in helping to identify welfare concerns and indicators of abuse or neglect at an early stage. The Wild Mind Project is committed to referring these concerns via the DSL to the:

Richmond and Kingston Single Point of Access (SPA): **020 8547 5008** weekdays 8am -6pm

Out of hours: **020 8770 5000** evenings & weekends

An online SPA referral can be made at [http://www.richmond.gov.uk/single\\_point\\_of\\_access](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/single_point_of_access)

Hounslow Single Point of Access (SPA): 0300 1234 24424

Brighton Single Point of Advice: 01323 464222 Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 4.30pm or email [0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:0-19.SPOA@eastsussex.gov.uk)

### See Appendix B

**\*\*\*ALWAYS PHONE 999 IF THE CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER \*\*\***

### The Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL takes the lead responsibility for child protection including support for other staff and information sharing with other agencies, developing policies and staff training.

The DSL will:

- Refer suspected abuse/neglect of children and young people to Richmond SPA. Urgent concerns must be reported immediately even if the DSL is not available
- Report allegations made against members of staff to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO). This is known as the duty to refer
- Develop and update child protection and other safeguarding policies ensuring staff are made aware of their responsibilities, and families are familiar with how to raise a concern
- Ensure that confidential records are kept of any concerns about a child or young person and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies
- Provide support and advice to all members of staff within the setting regarding safeguarding concerns
- Ensure all staff have appropriate child protection and safeguarding training, and maintain training records

- Develop an e-safety policy and clear rules regarding the use of the internet, social media, mobile phones and any other modern technology tools within the workplace

### **The duty to refer to the role of the local area designated officer (LADO)**

The LADO is employed by the local authority and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

The LADO helps co-ordinate information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible. The LADO will attend local strategy meetings and chair managing allegation strategy meetings. If you have concerns about a staff member or volunteer relating to child protection you are legally obliged to refer the case to the LADO, This is known as “the duty to refer” The ultimate duty to refer rests with the CIC directors, as they are legally accountable for ensuring sufficient safeguarding practice is in place to ensure the safety and welfare of children engaged in The Wild Mind Project activities. Referrals to the LADO should be made through the Richmond and Kingston SPA. (0208 547 5008).

### **Employee and Volunteer Recruitment**

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with The Wild Mind Project:

- The Wild Mind Project’s commitment to safeguarding and child protection will be stated in all job adverts/volunteer recruitment
- A written application form is to be completed for applicants to all posts, including volunteers. The application form will include a question on any past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases
- An awareness of safeguarding and child protection will be part of all job and role descriptions and mentioned at interview
- Prior to appointment two references will be taken and proof of ID required
- Where necessary DBS checks will be required for roles working with children renewable every three years
- All new staff and volunteers will read and understand this policy as part of their induction process. We will ensure all staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of their role and responsibility with regard to confidentiality and safeguarding issues
- Staff and volunteers will be able to identify the signs of abuse and will be confident about the steps to take and to report any concerns (see Appendix A)
- All key staff working with children will receive child protection and safeguarding basic awareness training
- The DSL will receive Level 3 safeguarding training LSCB
- Staff and volunteers will receive supervision, either group or individual depending on role, and this will include safeguarding awareness

## **DBS of staff**

In accordance with the law, and where appropriate, The Wild Mind Project staff who come into contact with clients and/or their children will complete DBS checks. An overview document will be held of the DBS numbers and dates for each person.

The appointment will only proceed if:

- the pre-employment checks prove satisfactory, and
- the Disclosure provides no cause for concern as to their suitability to work with children, in the context of the work that The Wild Mind Project delivers

## **Safe Practice**

Safe working practice ensures that users are safe, and that all staff and volunteers and directors:

- Are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Work in an open and transparent way subject to data protection law
- Discuss and /or refer to the Richmond or Brighton SPA any incident which may give rise to concern. This includes an allegation or disciplinary action regarding the conduct of staff
- Record any decisions made
- Are aware of the need for confidentiality
- Are aware that breaches of the need for confidentiality
- Are aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them

## **Creating a Safe Environment**

- A risk assessment will be completed, with mitigating actions, for all indoor and outdoor activities delivered by The Wild Mind Project
- Employees/volunteers working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, use of equipment, activities undertaken etc.
- We will ensure our insurance policy is up to date, relevant to the activities we are delivering and has adequate cover
- A condition of attendance will be a) a signed consent of parents, guardians or carers for their children to take part in activities b) a completed emergency contact form which includes the child's medical and dietary needs, any allergies or extra support required. Hard copies of records and any portable electronic equipment that holds or provides access to personal information will be stored securely
- We will maintain an accident book for recording incidents or accidents
- Wherever possible we encourage an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations. Ideally employees/volunteers should not be alone with a child at any time. When this is unavoidable it should be done with full knowledge and consent of someone in charge of the activity and/or the children's parent/carer
- Employees/volunteers must treat all children/young people with respect and provide a safe and caring environment
- Treat all users fairly with dignity and respect
- Employees/volunteers must not make racist, sexist or any other remarks which upset or humiliate
- Employees/volunteers must take care to avoid showing any favouritism
- It is the responsibility of employees/volunteers to prevent the abuse of younger or weaker children by older or stronger children through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation
- Arrangements for parents/carers dropping off and collecting children from activities need to be clearly stated and agreed by parents/carers, children and employees/volunteers

- Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member
- Not share personal information and personal e-mail addresses/Facebook friends/personal mobile

### **Responding to allegations or suspicions**

It is not the responsibility of anyone working for The Wild Mind Project, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, we recognize it is our responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

The Wild Mind Project assure all staff /volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Any concerns will be clearly recorded. It is not the DSL's job to investigate any concern or issue raised with them. It is their role record the information as they have been told and to refer this to the Richmond SPA. The DSL's decision and the process that was gone to reach the decision will be scanned and kept in a secure cloud storage. The board member responsible for child protection and safeguarding should be informed of any referral made. Records will be retained for a minimum of 5 years and then destroyed securely.

### **Recording a Disclosure**

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should ideally be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. HOWEVER, do not delay reporting your concern to the DSL verbally and then following up with a written record (see Appendix C) which should include the following:

1. The child's name, age and date of birth.
2. The child's home address and telephone number.
3. Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
4. The nature of the allegation. Include dates, time and special factors and other relevant information.
5. A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Any indirect signs such as behavioral changes.
6. Details of witnesses to the incident/s.
7. The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
8. Have the parents been contacted?
9. If so, what has been said?
10. Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

### **Confidentiality**

Information about abuse must never be withheld intentionally as failure to disclose may have an influence on the future safety of an individual.

Disclosures and concerns should not be treated as confidential. Users who have made a disclosure should be informed of the next steps that will be taken and should be assured discretion.

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns with other agencies. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need-to-know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times



## Appendix A

### TERMINOLOGY

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of **children** is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Children** includes everyone under the age of 18, or under the age of 25 if a child has a disability

**Child Protection** is a part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Prevention** is about putting measures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable **adults and reduce the potential risk of harm or damage.**

**Protection** is specifically about the steps and measures put in place to protect individuals identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer from harm, exploitation, abuse and neglect.

**Abuse** is behavior towards a person that deliberately or unintentionally causes harm. Abuse can take different forms, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect.

### Types of Abuse

Child Abuse is generally divided into four categories

#### 1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse 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 feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

#### 2. Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

#### 3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.



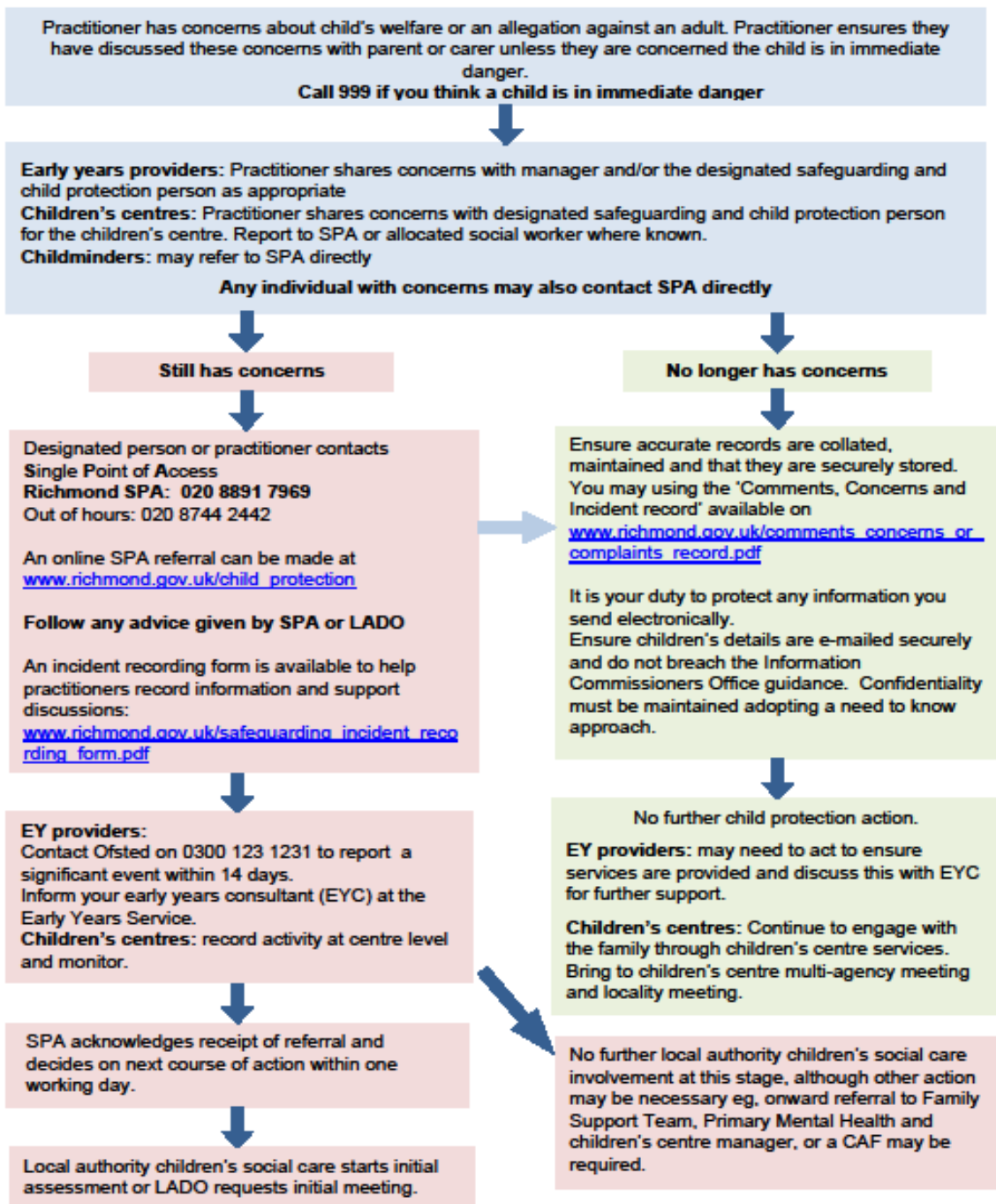
#### **4. Neglect**

Neglect is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix B



**Safeguarding processes flowchart – Richmond**



The Early Years Service is available for advice and support at any point during this process.  
This is a reference document that you should adapt for your own provision (updated February 2015)

## Appendix C

## The Wild Mind Project - Incident Reporting Form

Your name:	Name of organisation:
Your role:	
Contact information (you): <i>Address:</i> <i>Postcode:</i> <i>Telephone:</i> <i>Email address:</i>	
Child's name:	Child's date of birth:
Child's ethnic origin:	Does child have a disability:
Child's gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	
Parent's / carer's name(s): <i>Address:</i> <i>Postcode:</i> <i>Telephone:</i> <i>Email address:</i>	
Have parent's / carer's been notify of this incident? : <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If YES please provide details of what was said/action agreed:	
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else: <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else	
If responding to concerns raised by someone else: <i>Name:</i> <i>Relationship to the child:</i> <i>Telephone number:</i> <i>Email address:</i>	
Date and times of incident:	

Details of the incident or concerns:

*Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay.*

Child's account of the incident:

Please provide any witness accounts of the incident:

Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident:

*Name:*

*Relationship to the child:*

*Date of birth (if child):*

*Address:*

*Postcode:*

*Telephone:*

*Email address:*

Please provide details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury:

<p><i>Name:</i></p> <p><i>Relationship to the child:</i></p> <p><i>Date of birth (if child):</i></p> <p><i>Address:</i></p> <p><i>Postcode:</i></p> <p><i>Telephone:</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Email address:</i></span></p>
<p>Please provide details of action taken to date:</p>
<p>Has the incident been reported to any external agencies? : <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>If YES please provide further details:</p>
<p><i>Name of organisation / agency:</i></p> <p><i>Contact person:</i></p> <p><i>Telephone:</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Email address:</i></span></p> <p><i>Agreed action or advice given:</i></p>

<b>Print Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Signature:</b>			

**Please contact your organisation’s Designated Safeguarding Officer in line with The Wild Mind Project’s reporting procedures.**