

## Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Children, Young adults and Adults at risk

### 1. Policy Statement.

Gympanzees is committed to safeguarding all those who use its services. 'Safeguarding' of children, young adults and adults at risk is a term that relates to the action taken to promote their welfare as well as protecting them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Gympanzees recognises that the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk is paramount and that they all have equal rights of safeguarding regardless of ability or culture. Gympanzees will do everything it can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities, though throughout their time at our centres they will remain the responsibility of their parents/carers.

Gympanzees is a member of SAFE CIC. We aim at all times to attain the SAFE standards in all our activities with children, young people, adults at risk and their families/carers. We will achieve this by adhering strictly to this policy and all associated policies.

### 2. Equal Opportunities statement.

Gympanzees recognises that anyone can become subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of:

- age
- culture
- disability
- gender
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnerships
- religion or belief

Comments and actions that contribute to discrimination, harassment or victimisation are not acceptable and will be challenged. Such incidents will be recorded and shared with parents and carers, and the relevant agencies when necessary and appropriate.

### 3. Policy Aim

When there are concerns about the welfare of any, child, young person or adult at risk, all responsible adults in our organisation are expected to share those concerns, without delay, with the Lead for Safeguarding (or the Deputy, if the Lead is unavailable).

This policy is approved by board and will be reviewed and updated annually. Gympanzees will publish and promote this policy to all staff, paid or unpaid, through induction, training and supervision. We endeavour to disseminate, as appropriate, this policy to all who come into contact with Gympanzees e.g. the children, young people, adults at risk, their families/carers and others such as our partners and fundraisers.

Gympanzees holds current Public Liability Insurance that covers all our activities.

## **Gympanzees Safeguarding Officers**

The Lead Person for Safeguarding is: Elizabeth Scholey  
(DSO) [liz@gympanzees.org](mailto:liz@gympanzees.org)  
Tel: 07773 132748 / 0117 9683627

The Deputy Person for Safeguarding is: Stephanie Wheen  
(Deputy DSO) [steph@gympanzees.org](mailto:steph@gympanzees.org)  
Tel: 07773 553112

### **4. Role of the safeguarding policy.**

The 'Every Child Matters' agenda 2003 and Children Act 2004 detailed five main outcomes to be achieved:

1. Being healthy
2. Staying safe
3. Enjoying and achieving
4. Making a positive contribution
5. Economic well-being

Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of the child from all forms of abuse and Article 23 recognises the right of the disabled child to enjoy a full and decent life in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

**The Care Act 2014** has six key principles which should inform the way in which all of the workforce should work with adults. They are:

1. Empowerment
2. Prevention
3. Proportionality
4. Protection
5. Partnership
6. Accountability



**Mental Capacity Act 2005** gave 5 key principles. Gympanzees will recognize these in all aspects of its work by:

- Presuming each adult at risk has capacity
- Supporting individuals to make their own decisions
- Recognising the right for individuals to make their own decisions, even if they may seem eccentric
- Making sure what we do for adults at risk (without capacity) is in their best interests
- Making sure that anything we do is the least restrictive action for the individual

Government guidance is clear that all organizations working with children, young people and adults at risk, their families, parents and carers have responsibilities for Safeguarding. It is also important to remember that children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

In order to have effective safeguarding procedures Gympanzees:

- Has senior managers committed to safeguarding
- Is clear about people's responsibilities and accountability
- Has a culture of listening to children, young people and adults at risk.
- Has safe recruiting practices for all those working within the organization whether paid or unpaid.
- Has procedures for dealing with allegations and concerns about staff and volunteers
- All staff and volunteers have mandatory induction, safeguarding training, supervision, reviews and support
- Has agreements about working with other organizations and agencies.

#### **Definition of a child.**

There is no single law that defines the age of a child across the UK. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK government in 1991, states that a child "means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier" (Article 1, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989).

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (16th in Scotland).

#### **Definition of an adult at risk.**

There is no single law that defines an adult at risk across the UK. In general terms, an adult at risk is a person over the age of 18 years (16 in Scotland) and is:

- having needs for care and support, and;
- experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse and neglect and;
- as a result of those care needs, is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

As part of this policy Gympanzees will:

- Promote and prioritize the safety and well-being of its children/adults at risk.



- Ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities in this regard.
- Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns and provide support to the individual/s who raise or disclose a concern
- Ensure that confidential, detailed, contemporaneous and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- Prevent the employment/engagement of unsuitable individuals.
- Gympanzees aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, all those using its services
- Have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe environment whilst being the responsibility of their parents / carers at all times.
- Are protected from abuse whilst participating in the activity or outside of the activity

Compliance with this policy and these procedures is mandatory for all those involved with Gympanzees. Failure to comply will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organization.

## 5. Abuse in Adults.

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014 outlines how abuse may take many forms and how individual circumstances should be considered. The different forms of abuse are not mutually exclusive and are not easily recognized. Exploitation is a particular theme in the following list of abuse.

- Physical
- Domestic violence, including "honour" based violence
- Sexual
- Psychological
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory
- Organisational or institutional
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self-neglect and hoarding
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Hate and "mate" crime
- County Lines

Adults with disabilities are more vulnerable to abuse than their peers for many reasons. Some of the reasons may be:

- They have fewer outside contacts than other adults.



- They receive intimate care from a number of carers, increasing the risk of exposure to abuse and making it difficult to set physical boundaries.
- They may have impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse
- They may be inhibited about raising concerns for fear of losing services.
- Carers may lack the ability to communicate adequately with the adult.
- Some abusers may target disabled adults in the belief that they are less likely to be detected.

## 6. Child Abuse.

Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Disabled children have additional needs and face both additional and specific risks and barriers to their protection including:

- Attitudes and assumptions such as a reluctance to believe disabled children are abused, minimising the impact of abuse and attributing indicators of abuse to a child's impairment without an exploration of possible causes or reasons underlying these.
- Barriers to the provision of support services that lead to the disabled child and their family being isolated with few outside contacts.
- Impairment-related factors such as dependency on a number of carers for personal assistance, impaired capacity to resist/avoid abuse, communication impairments and an inability of the child to understand what is happening or to seek help
- They may be inhibited about raising concerns for fear of losing services.
- Some adult abusers may target children with disabilities in the belief that they are less likely to be detected.
- eSafety risks as many children with disabilities live their lives online.

Child abuse has 4 broad types, physical, sexual, emotional and neglect, though they are not mutually exclusive and are not easily recognized. Recent reviews report 44% of cases involve more than one category of abuse.

Safeguarding Disabled children in England 2016:

- disabled children are three to four times more likely to be abused and neglected than non-disabled children (Jones et al 2012; Sullivan & Knutson 2004);
- are more likely to experience multiple types and occurrences of abuse (Sullivan and Knutson 2000)

Prevalence rates of abuse in Children with disabilities (Jones et al 2012):

- 20% for physical violence,
- 14 % sexual violence,
- 18% emotional abuse
- 9.5% for neglect.



1. **Physical**- hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning or biting. Giving children drugs and alcohol is also abusive. Force feeding, rough handling and unjustifiable physical restraint is also abusive.
2. **Sexual**- where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This may involve physical contact, assault, kissing, rubbing and touching or non-contact activities such as watching pornographic material or encouraging them to behave in a sexually inappropriate way, 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 well as other children.
3. **Emotional**- persistent emotional maltreatment of a child causing severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.  
It may involve:
  - conveying to the child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of the other person.
  - Not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing/making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
  - Imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations on the child. This can be interactions above their age, or overprotection and preventing the child from normal exploration, learning or social integration.
  - Seeing or hearing ill-treatment of another e.g. domestic violence or abuse.
  - Serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing the child to feel frequently frightened or in danger.
  - Some form of emotional abuse is involved in all other forms of child maltreatment, though it may occur alone.
4. **Neglect**-persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to cause serious impairment of the child's health and development. It may involve failing to:
  - Provide adequate food, clothing, shelter (including exclusion from home/abandonment)
  - Protect the child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
  - Ensure adequate supervision (including that of care givers)
  - Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
  - Neglect or unresponsiveness to the child's basic emotional needs.

No single professional can have a full picture of any child or adult's needs or circumstances, so all those who come into contact with the child/adult have a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action and so fulfil the purpose of safeguarding legislation. The arrangements should also have a child/adult-centred approach, whereby effective services are based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of the children or adults.

### **Recognizing abuse:**



Recognizing abuse is important in safeguarding. Often it is physical signs but it can be behaviour changes that raise the concern i.e.

- Becoming aggressive/withdrawn/clingy
- Seeming to keep a secret
- Deterioration in general well being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or poor personal hygiene
- Unreasonable fear of certain places or people
- Acting out inappropriately with adults, other children, toys or objects.
- Sexually explicit language or actions

Not all concerns relate to abuse, they may well be other explanations e.g. family breakup.

The general problems encountered in recognizing and acting on abuse and neglect are compounded when the person is disabled.

### **Gympanzees will keep children and adults safe by:**

- Acknowledging that their welfare is paramount.
  - Affirming that all children/adults have the right to protection regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation.
  - Value them, listen to them and respect them.
  - Recognize that some disabled children and adults may have speech and language issues that make it difficult for them to tell others what is happening.
  - All staff and volunteers will be recruited by following our safe recruiting guidelines and ensure all necessary checks (including Disclosure and Barring Service) are made.
  - Share information about safeguarding and good practice with the children, adults, their parents/carers, staff and volunteers.
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- Share information with relevant agencies and involve parents/carers and children/adults appropriately.
  - Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.
  - Ensure that all staff/trustees/regular volunteers at Gympanzees have current Child Safeguarding training.

## **7. What to do if abuse is suspected or disclosed.**

Disclosure of abuse may be made verbally, through play or through the behaviour of the child/adult. Suspicion of possible abuse can arise by:

- Your own observations and concerns
- Being told by a third party of their concerns
- The child/adult tells you.
- The abuser tells you.



If these concerns arise it is important that the information is communicated to the DSO/Deputy DSO without delay.

Concerns may also arise because of difficulties experienced by the persons caring for the child /adult e.g. Domestic violence, mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse etc.

If abuse is disclosed, the recipient must stay calm, listen and reassure them that they have done the right thing in telling and will not ask leading questions. Be honest with them about who you will need to talk to in order to keep them safe.

It is not the role of volunteers or staff at Gympanzees to investigate the allegation of abuse, and so decide whether or not it has taken place, but it is their responsibility to act on the disclosure. It must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) (Elizabeth Scholey) or her deputy (Stephanie Wheen).

All involved must make a careful record of anything they are told or observe, and date and sign this record.

If abuse is disclosed, the safeguarding officer will contact the local social services to discuss the situation with them and act on their advice.

If abuse is suspected, the DSO /Deputy DSO will discuss the concerns and seek guidance from social services before actual reporting any safeguarding issues.

In all situations the parents/carers will be informed, unless to do so would put the child /adult at risk in danger.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

## **8. Alleged abuse by staff or volunteers.**

Gympanzees does not believe that it is in anyone's interests for staff or volunteers with knowledge of wrongdoing to remain silent. It will take any reports of wrongdoing seriously and will support those who report the concerns as well as those about whom the allegation is made.

An allegation or concern must be taken to the DSO or deputy DSO. If it concerns either of these people, it will be taken directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

## **9. Record Keeping.**

At all times when required, and especially where there is a safeguarding concern, we are committed to keeping records which are:

- recorded on a safeguarding incident form
- of sufficient details of child, young person or adult at risk to identify the individual who is subject of concern and any significant others
- accurate and factual/based on fact, as a true record of:
  - what has been monitored/observed
  - what has been said and by whom
  - what has given cause for concern





- what action has or will be taken including the reason for those actions
- the reason stated for no action being taken and by whom
- non judgmental
- timely - within 24 hours
- signed and dated by the writer and co- signed by the Lead or Deputy
- All hand-written records will be retained even if they are later typed for more formal reporting.
- shared as appropriate by the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding
- stored safely and securely by the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding in a locked cabinet at Gympanzees registered offices: 236 Henleaze Road, Bristol. BS9 4NG. Only the safeguarding lead and her deputy will have access to them and they will be kept only as long as necessary.

## **10. Data Protection.**

We will treat any personal information by which an individual can be identified (i.e. name, address, email etc.) in accordance with the provisions of Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018), and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and will not share information with any third party, except where required by law.

See additional policy for more detail.

## **11. Confidentiality.**

This policy is in line with government guidance about confidentiality and these details will be made available to all staff, children, young children, adults at risk, parents and carers.

We fully endorse the principal that the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, override any obligations of confidence we may hold to others. No one working, or involved, with our organisation can promise absolute confidentiality. Individual cases will only be shared or discussed on a “need to know” basis.

## **12. Whistleblowing.**

Whistleblowing is when someone raises a concern externally about a person or practice within the organisation, which will affect others in an illegal and or harmful way.

Our organisation promotes the sharing of any concerns regarding the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk as soon as possible with the Lead or Deputy for Safeguarding.

If individuals reporting their concerns within our organisation do not feel they have been acted upon then we support their right to report these concerns to social care services, the police, and /or the relevant Regulatory Authority.

## **13. Bullying and Harassment.**

Bullying and harassment can take many forms and include:

- physical violence including threats, verbal assaults and taunts, the destruction of property, extortion, unwanted sexual interest or contact
- indirect forms of bullying including ignoring a person and the withdrawal of friendship, malicious gossip and spreading rumours, abusive or oppressive graffiti, the use of social media, electronic messages and websites.



- it is often motivated by prejudice against certain groups for example on the grounds of race, religion, gender and disability

Whether directed at children, young people, adults at risk, staff, volunteers, parent and carers, bullying and harassment, physical and/or emotional abuse will not be tolerated. All such behaviour will be treated as a safeguarding concern when aimed at children, young people and or adults at risk.

We will:

- provide a culture of equality and respect for all, with zero tolerance to any form of bullying or harassment
- report all incidents of bullying or harassment observed or disclosed, to the Lead or Deputy
- take immediate steps to stop the behaviour and mitigate the effects of bullying and harassment
- record all incidents with observations and witness statements, and actions taken. The record to be signed, timed and dated.

#### **14. Safer Recruitment.**

Our organisation is committed to safe recruitment in line with the relevant legislation and guidance from government and Regulatory Authorities for recruiting all staff, paid or unpaid. See policy document for further details.

#### **15. Disclosure and Barring Service.**

All staff and volunteers will be subject to DBS checks according to the criteria set out by that organization. Bristol City Council are providing the Umbrella body for these checks. See DBS policy for further details.

#### **16. Induction and Training.**

We have a clear induction and training strategy with clear job descriptions and responsibilities and all relevant procedures. All new staff, paid and unpaid, will receive induction training as soon as possible and sign to record they have:

- received and understood this policy and all those mentioned within.
- been given any relevant resources
- understood the commitment to safeguarding training
- received and understood Gympanzees Code of Conduct.

When needed, staff will receive further safeguarding training, at the appropriate level, as soon as possible.

Updated training requirements will reflect DBS criteria i.e. working in the same place on 3 or more days in any 30 days.

Updated training is required every 2 years (on-line) or three years (face to face).

#### **17. Working Practices.**



- Staff Ratios
- Lone or one to one working
- Home visits
- Transport
- Events or activities
- Late pick up.

All children, young adults and adults at risk attending Gympanzees are looked after while at our centre by their families or carers. Gympanzees does not provide a respite service thus none of the above policies are required for our organization.

- Missing child/adult at risk.

If a child, young person or adult at risk goes missing from the group or organisation it should be reported to the police. Use 999 where there is a concern that they cannot be found or are vulnerable. The Lead or Deputy should be informed, as soon as possible and all details and actions recorded dated timed and signed.

## **18. Buildings and Venues.**

Safeguarding risk assessments will be carried out on all buildings and all spaces connected to them that are used by Gympanzees. The safeguarding risk assessment should cover:

- access especially how people enter and leave the building
- signing in protocol
- use of keys
- toilets and changing rooms
- any outside space
- car parks
- any other relevant issues

## **19. Film and Photography.**

The use of photography is really important to record the successes and achievements of children, young people and adults at risk in their lives and activities. However, it is vital to remember that photography can be used and distributed inappropriately including on the Internet.

See Film and Photography policy for full details and procedures.

## **20. eSafety.**

### **Why do we need eSafety?**

Recent advances of the internet, mobile phones and other electronic technology has made access to information and communication increasingly easy for everyone. This is especially so for those who cannot always go out to socialise and rely on websites for social networking, watching films, downloading music, buying lottery tickets, shopping etc. Government guidance is clear, that all organisations working with children, young people adults at risk, families, parents and carers have responsibilities. It is also important to remember, children, young people and adults at risk can also abuse and such incidents fall into the remit of this policy.

See eSafety Policy for full details.



**POLICY DATE.**

This policy was agreed and disseminated on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2020 and will be reviewed annually, when there are substantial organisational changes, in response to significant events or to incorporate new gold standard guidelines.

**Policy Review Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021**

**Signed:**

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**Date:**

