



**Safeguarding Policy  
and  
Guidance for Staff**

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

*“Assisting people to identify and achieve their full potential. Respecting people as individuals and using a diverse approach to promote personal development and social inclusion”*

## **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

Active Inclusion has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in its activities from harm. All children have a right to protection, and the needs of disabled children and others who may be particularly vulnerable must be taken into account.

Active Inclusion will ensure the safety and protection of all children involved in its activities through adherence to the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines.

Active Inclusion is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people.

We do this by:

- Recognising that all children and young people, regardless of age, have at all times and in all situations, the right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically harmed.
- Require that those who are employed by Active Inclusion, whether in a paid or voluntary capacity, have undergone a Police Clearance check to enhanced level and that all staff and volunteers assisting with events organised by Active Inclusion are carefully selected and accept responsibility for helping to prevent abuse of children and young people in their care.
- Requiring any group, organisation or agency running an Active Inclusion event to have their own Safeguarding Policy in place, or to adopt the Active Inclusion Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines.
- Responding swiftly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse.
- Providing all those groups, organisations and agencies involved in running events organised by Active Inclusion with the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines.
- Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines annually.

*A child is defined as under 18 years of age- The Children Act 1989*

## Introduction

When engaging with Children and Young People all paid staff and volunteers of Active Inclusion must ensure that:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- All children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse.
- All staff (paid/unpaid) working for Active Inclusion have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to immediately and appropriately.

Staff/volunteers are generally **not** trained to deal with situations of abuse **nor** decide if abuse has occurred.

## Policy Aims

The aim of the Active Inclusion Safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice by:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection whilst involved in its activities.
- All staff/volunteers making informed and confident responses to specific Safeguarding issues.

## What Does This Document Do?

This document has been designed to help you understand and implement the Safeguarding Policy.

It contains the following help and guidance:

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## **A Safe Environment**

Activities engaging children and young people offer a valuable contribution to the social, emotional and educational development of an individual. Through your practices children learn to respect themselves, those around them and you as a worker, which places staff and volunteers in a unique position of trust and confidence.

Such positions of trust may be where a child may feel the need to confide in you for example. Or where you may feel that all is not well in the child's life. Active Inclusion has a duty to ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped with the necessary information, knowledge and supervision to provide the support and guidance they need.

A safe environment is thus not just working to Active Inclusion's safety guidance, ensuring all equipment used and activities engaged in are appropriate and that staff, volunteers and children are competent or qualified to do so. It is also a duty of care to ensure that all aspects of the child's safety and well-being are paramount, and cared for.

## **What is Child Abuse?**

There are four commonly recognised categories of child abuse.  
These are:

**Physical Abuse** – Hurting or injuring a child, for example, by hitting or shaking them. This category is also likely to include bullying.

**Sexual Abuse** – When an adult exploits their power, authority or position and uses a child sexually to gratify their own needs – it could range from sexually suggestive comments to full intercourse.

**Emotional Abuse** – When a child is not given love, help and encouragement and is constantly derided, ridiculed or ignored. This also includes racially and sexually abusive remarks.

**Neglect** – This usually means failing to meet children's basic needs such as food, warmth, adequate clothing, medical attention etc. It could also mean failing to ensure they are safe or exposing them to harm.

## **How Does This Affect Us?**

There may be a time when a child approaches a trusted adult within the Active Inclusion organisation to discuss a problem in their life. It is vital that you know how to react to this in a sensitive and appropriate manner. It may be something outside of the engagements of Active Inclusion, it may however be something relating to relationships and behaviours that you had not been aware of.

## **Promoting Good Practices with Young People**

Child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about any action to take.

Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school or wider environment. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them.

Staff members and volunteers will have regular contact with young people and be an important link in identifying cases where a young person needs protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported immediately following the guidelines in this document. When a child becomes engaged with Active Inclusion members, having been previously subjected to child abuse then the assistance offered can play a crucial role in improving the child's self-esteem, positive self image and overall confidence. In such instances staff must work with the appropriate agencies to ensure the child receives the required support.

## **Good Practice Guidelines**

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to safeguard children and ensure their welfare, and also to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate in the engagement of children.

### **Good practice means:**

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults equally, and with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of the child paramount.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with young people (e.g. it is not appropriate to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and according to guidelines. Care is needed, as it is difficult to maintain hand positions when a child is constantly moving. Young people should always be consulted and their agreement gained. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Keeping up to date with the technical skills, qualifications and insurances in the activities engaged in.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible.
- If groups have to be supervised in changing rooms, always ensure parents/teachers/coaches/staff/volunteers work in pairs.
- Ensuring that if mixed gender groups are engaged in off-site activities, they should always be accompanied by a male and female member of staff. (NB Same gender abuse can also occur)
- Ensuring that during residential events, adults should not enter children's rooms or invite children into their rooms.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people and disabled adults – avoiding excessive training or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Securing parental consent in writing to *act in loco parentis (in the place of the parents)*, if the need arises to give permission for the administration of emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Requesting written parental consent if staff/volunteers are required to transport young people in their cars.

## Practices To Be Avoided

The following should be **avoided** except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable they should only occur with the full knowledge and consent of a supervisor or the child's parents. For example, a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital, or a parent fails to pick a child up at the end of a session:

- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others.
- Avoid taking children to your home where they will be alone with you.

Practice never to be sanctioned.

The following should **never** be sanctioned.

You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay.
- Share a room with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do things of a personal nature for children or disabled adults, that they can do for themselves.
- Invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised.

*NB It may sometimes be necessary for staff or volunteers to do things of a personal nature for children, particularly if they are young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents and the child involved. There is a need to be responsive to person's reactions. If a person is fully dependant on you, talk with him/her about what you are doing and give choices where possible. This is particularly so if you are involved in any dressing or undressing of outer clothing, or where there is physical contact, lifting or assisting a child to carry out particular activities. Avoid taking on the responsibility for tasks for which you are not appropriately trained.*

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to another colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the parents/carers of the child are informed.

- If you accidentally hurt a young person.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a young person appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done or said.

## **Photographic and Video Guidelines**

There is evidence that some people have used activity based engagements and sporting events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young people. Staff and volunteers must be vigilant of this, with any concerns to be reported to Active Inclusions Child Welfare Officer.

Photography is monitored at Active Inclusion events. Official photography is by approved persons, familiar with Active Inclusions standards.

Videoing at events held by Active Inclusion is also only allowed by approved and authorised persons. All video and/or photographs must be of a wholesome and positive nature, avoiding emphasising inappropriate body areas, postures, underwear or taken from inappropriate angles.

Representatives from the media must first seek permission from Active Inclusion before coming to events, where they will be monitored by Active Inclusion event staff.

Parental consent will be sought to obtain agreement of any photographs or video material taken at events to be allowed for publicity, evaluation or recording purposes by Active Inclusion.

Parents wishing to obtain photographs or video material of their child whilst engaged in events may request such material, which will then be given to them by Active Inclusion. Photographs or video material containing images of other children will not be released unless written permission is first obtained by persons holding parental consent for the other child(ren) included in the images.

## **Website Guidelines**

The Internet is a means of accessing information. The content of some external material can be highly unsavoury. The following guidelines are used by Active Inclusion in making our web resource informative whilst being wholesome safe and secure, and follow these principles:

- No personal information about a child, or contact details shall be contained on the website.
- All Active Inclusion website content is produced directly by Active Inclusion, is fully checked, wholesome, and suitable for the youngest of on-line visitors.
- All photographs are reproduced with permission, selected to show the organisation in the best image and integrity, and are of a positive and wholesome nature (see above). Wherever possible professional photographers familiar with Active Inclusion standards are used.
- Links to external sites are always fully vetted for content and suitability, with these links being re-checked on a regular basis.

Staff, parents and young people alike can visit the wealth of the Active Inclusion website information with confidence that children will not be exposed to unsavoury content, nor be redirected to such content via any of our web pages.

## **How To Listen and React**

Staff and volunteers must acknowledge the age group that they are working with, and never trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues. If a child confides in you about a sensitive issue of concern you should:

- Allow the child to speak without interruption or in leading them by making suggestions.
- Do not try to interrogate other than to clarify your understanding.
- Reassure the child that you are glad that they have told you and that they were right to do so.
- Be honest in telling the child that you cannot keep it a secret, and that you will have to tell someone who can help (also refer to Active Inclusions Guide to Confidentiality).
- Remain calm, no matter how difficult it may be to listen. You have been chosen because the child feels they can talk to you. Do not show anger, disgust, disbelief or negative feelings.
- Really listen. Take in what they say seriously.
- As soon as practical afterwards write down everything the child has told you, but remember that this is highly confidential.

## **What To Do**

### **Problems outside Active Inclusion's involvement.**

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused should be reported to Active Inclusion's Child Welfare Officer, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- Active Inclusion's Child Welfare Officer will refer the allegation to the social services department, who in turn may involve the police.
- The parent or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

Every effort should be made to ensure the confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a strictly *need to know basis* only.

### **Problems within Active Inclusion's involvement.**

The same principles will apply, but in addition Active Inclusions Child Welfare Officer will be notified as soon as practical to ensure any appropriate steps to safeguard children involved can be effected with advice from social services.

If Active Inclusions Child Welfare Officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to an appropriate manager who will refer the allegation to social services.

- The Active Inclusion Child Welfare Officer will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services enquiries.
- Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police enquiries Active Inclusion will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, Active Inclusion will reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true.

**The welfare of the child should *a/ways* remain paramount.  
It is not the responsibility of those working for Active Inclusion to decide that child abuse  
is occurring. However, it is their responsibility to refer any concerns on.**

## **Discipline**

Involvement in some engagements offered by Active Inclusion involves times where for safety reasons control and attention has to be maintained. Non physical discipline may be required on occasions due to inappropriate or unsafe behaviour of children/young people.

When discipline is used it should be done so appropriately and with the clear intention of teaching or reinforcing appropriate behaviour. It must not be used impulsively, to gain power, or to embarrass or humiliate a child/young person.

Discipline should only be used to:

- Develop a sense of responsibility for behaviour.
- Develop respect for others and their property.
- Reinforce the rules or values of the activity engaged in.
- Reinforce positive behaviour or attitudes.
- Reinforce awareness of health and safety aspects of the activity.

## **Physical Contact**

Many activities, by their nature, require a degree of physical contact between adults and children. Physical contact can be used appropriately to instruct, encourage, protect or comfort. The aims of guidelines relating to physical contact are to provide adults and children with appropriate types and contexts for touching.

Physical contact between adults and children should only be used when the aim is to:

- Develop activity skills or techniques.
- To treat an injury.
- To prevent an injury.
- To meet the requirements of the particular activity.

Physical contact should not involve touching genital areas, buttocks or breasts.

Physical contact should always meet the need of the child and not the need of the adult.

Physical contact should be fully explained to the child and prior consent sought from parents, except in cases of an emergency.

Physical contact should not take place in secret or out of sight of others.

Records of injuries should be fully recorded in Active Inclusion's accident record book.

## **Bullying**

Bullying is often defined in terms of three components.

- It must occur over time, rather than being a single aggressive act.
- It involves an imbalance of power - the powerful attack the powerless.
- It can be psychological, verbal, or physical in nature.

### **Action if bullying is suspected.**

The same procedure should be followed if bullying is suspected. All settings in which children are provided with services or are living away from home should have rigorously enforced anti-bullying strategies in place.

Action to help the victim and prevent bullying in activities:

- Take all signs of bullying very seriously.
- Encourage all children to speak and share their concerns (it is believed that up to 12 children per year commit suicide as a result of bullying, so if anyone talks about or threatens suicide seek professional advice immediately). Help the victim to speak out and tell the person in charge or someone in authority. Create an open environment.
- Investigate all allegations and take action to ensure the victim is safe. Speak with the victim and the bully(ies) separately.
- Reassure the victim that you can be trusted and will help them, although you cannot promise not to tell someone else.
- Keep records of what is said (what happened, by whom, when).
- Report any concerns to Active Inclusions Child Welfare Officer or the school (wherever the bullying is occurring).

### **Action towards the bully(ies)**

- Talk with the bully(ies), explain the situation, and try to get the bully(ies) to understand the consequences of their behaviour. Seek an apology to the victim(s).
- Inform the bully(ies) parents.
- Insist on the return of *borrowed* items and insist that the bully(ies) compensate the victim.
- Impose sanctions as necessary. Encourage and support the bully(ies) to change their behaviour.
- Hold meetings with the families to report on progress.
- Keep a written record of action taken.
- Inform appropriate staff members of action taken.

## **Positive Vetting**

### **What is positive vetting?**

Positive vetting is a process in which staff and volunteers with access to children and young people are cleared by the appropriate authorities, in this case the Criminal Records Bureau. Clearance is effected by establishing identity and checked with the CRB against police, Department of Health, and Department of Education records.

### **Who will be checked?**

Adult staff with direct access to children or young people, as well as Active Inclusions Child Welfare Officer. Such staff and volunteers will be checked against the CRB's Enhanced level of disclosure.

### **Existing clearance**

Some staff and volunteers will already have been cleared by the CRB e.g. Teachers, social workers, and those cleared through CRB registered activity providers. In this case Active Inclusion will accept the existing valid disclosure certificate in place of separate Active Inclusion clearance, following a risk assessment carried out in line with the governments Criminal Records Bureau recommendations. If the decision is made to accept an existing CRB clearance in consideration of a risk assessment the applicant will be checked against List 99 prior to any employment commencing. Private arranged 'Police Checks' will not be accepted as this system is being phased out. During consideration of whether

### **What happens with my form?**

Details on your form will be verified by CRB registered Active Inclusion Counter Signatories, i.e. Active Inclusion Child Welfare Officer. The Active Inclusion Child Welfare Officer will sign and send your form to an umbrella body registered with the CRB. Copies of the Disclosure Certificate will be sent to the applicant and Active Inclusion. If you have concerns regarding previous criminal convictions contact the Active Inclusion Child Welfare Officer who will seek guidance on the matter.

Active Inclusion will securely retain copies of the Disclosures Certificate for staff members and volunteers employed. If the results deem employment to work with children and young people to be inappropriate the forms will not be retained beyond a four-week query period after clearance had been sought, only the reference of the clearance and date will be recorded.

## **Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

Active Inclusion recognises that some individuals may pose a risk to children and young people and that all reasonable steps are to be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

The Criminal records Bureau has been established to provide organisations with relevant information to assist in the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers working with young people. Active Inclusion require all those holding recognised positions to undertake a CRB disclosure. Active Inclusion are registered with an umbrella body who themselves are registered with the CRB to undertake these checks. Applicants will also be checked against List 99 during the CRB Disclosure process.

When undertaking pre-selection checks the following should be included:

- All applicable staff/volunteers should complete a CRB application form if an existing one is not held, or if a new application is relevant. The application form will elect information about the applicant's identity and a self disclosure about any criminal record.
- Consent should be obtained from an applicant to seek information from the Criminal Records Bureau and against List 99.
- Confidential references, preferably including any previous work with children and young people. These references will be taken up and confirmed through telephone contact.
- Evidence of identity (valid passport, birth certificate, or driving licence with photograph).
- The form is to be sent to the Active Inclusion Child Welfare Officer, who will process the application through the relevant authorities (see above).
- Active Inclusion staff designated to process such applications are themselves vetted.

All applications will be treated in confidence by Active Inclusion. Details of successful information will be recorded only by Active Inclusion.

- Active Inclusion appoint a Child Welfare Officer, to whom matters may be referred. The designated person should be a responsible person, and must first be cleared themselves.
- The Child Welfare Officer should be selected and appointed with due care for the responsibilities involved.
- Active Inclusion will undertake to give the Child Welfare Officer guidance and support, provide information and access to training.

All staff and volunteers who work with children should receive training in recognising and understanding possible signs of child abuse and know what steps need to be taken to provide Safeguarding.

Active Inclusion will make all staff, volunteers and parents/carers aware of the Active Inclusion Safeguarding Policy, and its purpose in protecting children from harm. Each staff member/volunteer will be given a copy and further copies are available from Active Inclusion on request.

Awareness and guidance on Safeguarding issues helps safeguard young people, which is the collective responsibility of everyone involved with Active Inclusion.

## **References and Contacts**

### **South West Safeguarding & Child Protection Group**

<http://www.online-procedures.co.uk/swcpp>

#### Local Area Contacts:

#### **Bath and North East Somerset**

Bath Locality, referral and assessment team: **01225 396312**

North East Somerset, referral and assessment team: **01225 396313**

BANES and other Local Authority Disabled Children's team: **01225 825307**

BANES Emergency Out of Hours Duty team: **01454 615165**

#### **Bristol**

North Bristol, Social Work Assessment team: **0117 903 8700**

East/Central Bristol, Social Work Assessment team: **0117 903 6500**

South Bristol, Symes House (Near Hartcliffe), Social Work Assessment team: **0117 353 2200**

South Bristol, Broadwalk, (Near Knowle), Social Work Assessment team: **0117 903 1414**

Bristol Emergency Duty Team: **01454 615 165**

#### **Gloucestershire**

Gloucestershire Children and Young Person's referral team: **01452 426565**

Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Service: **01452 583636**

#### **South Gloucestershire**

South Gloucestershire Children and Young People Information Service: **01454 868008**

## **North Somerset**

North Somerset Children's Service, Advice and Assessment Service: **01275 888222**

North Somerset Out of Hours Service: **01454 615165**

Local Safeguarding Child Care Co-ordinator, Julie Bishop: **01275 888211**

Local Authority Designated Officer, Linda Bunting: **01275 884952**

Local Police, central referral unit: **101**

Steve Robinson, Detective Sergeant, Child Abuse Investigation Team: **01934 638169**

## **Somerset**

Somerset Direct (Somerset Children and Young People's Services, Referral Team): **0845 3459122**

Somerset Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team: **0845 3459122**

Local Safeguarding Board Business Manager: **Matthew Turner, 01823 357868**

Local Authority Designated Officer: Claire Winter, **01823 357823**

Avon and Somerset Police, non-emergency number: **101**

## **Swindon**

Swindon Children and Families referral team: **01793 466903**

Swindon Out of Hours emergency duty service: **01793 436699**

Swindon list of child protection plans: **01793 466928**

Local Authority Designated Officer: **Steph McQuade, 01793 466849**

Independent Reviewing Manager: **Agnes Gault, 01793 466958**

## **Wiltshire**

Wiltshire Referral and Assessment Team: **01380 733 567**

Wiltshire Out of Hours Emergency Duty Service: **0845 607 0888**

Local Safeguarding Board Development Manager: **Rachel Hull, 01225 713304**

Local Safeguarding Board Business Manager: **Angie Hael, 01225 718093**

Police non-emergency contact number: **101**

## **Criminal Records Bureau**

[www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

## **Gb Recruitment (Staffs) Ltd**

[www.crbdisclosures.co.uk](http://www.crbdisclosures.co.uk)

01782 620000

If you do not know who to turn to for advice  
or are worried about sharing concerns with a senior colleague,  
you should contact the South West Safeguarding & Child Protection Group directly,  
or

NSCPP                    0800 800 500

Childline                0800 11 11

## **Active Inclusion Safeguarding Officer**

### **Steve Breakwell**

[stevebreakwell@activeinclusion.com](mailto:stevebreakwell@activeinclusion.com)

Office : 0117 927 9995

Mobile: 07796 162899

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### **This Policy Also Links in with Active Inclusion's:**

1. Confidentiality Policy
2. Health & Safety Policy
3. Behaviour management Policy
4. Staff Supervision Policy
5. Step by Step Guide to Direct Working with Young People
6. Appropriate Activities with Young People
7. Contact with Young People Outside of Normal Working Duties
8. Active Inclusion's Code of Conduct for Staff
9. Duty of Care Policy Statement
10. Completing Individual Risk Assessments for Young People
11. Reporting Risks & Serious Incidents
12. Lone Working Policy
13. Employment & References Policy