

Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedures

Southsea Green Community Garden Association (SSGCGA)

Statement of Purpose

The introduction of this 'Child safeguarding policy and procedures document' should highlight the fact that the SSGCGA is determined to ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect from harm, those children and young people who participate in activities put on by the SSGCGA

This policy establishes the SSGCGA position, role, and responsibilities and clarifies what is expected from everybody involved in the project. It very clearly highlights the importance placed by the SSGCGA on the protection of children and young people.

Every child and young person who participates in the activities of the project should be able to participate in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from abuse. This is the responsibility of every adult involved in this organisation. We recognise, however, that child abuse is a very emotive and difficult subject. It is important to understand the feelings involved but not to allow them to interfere with our judgment about any action to be taken.

SSGCGA recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and neglect. It is determined to meet its obligation to ensure that SSGCGA provides opportunities for children and young people to do so, with the highest possible standard of care.

Definitions of abuse and neglect can be viewed in the Appendix at the bottom of this policy.

This **Safeguarding children policy** is based on the fact that: **Children will always be supervised by their own parent/carer/teacher whether volunteers or members of the public are using the facility. We strongly recommend that volunteers are never alone with the children/young people and there is always another adult present.**

The SSGCGA will 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 suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- all members, volunteers, and staff have a responsibility to report concerns to the designated safeguarding officer.

Key principles

SSGCGA will take responsibility for:

- respecting and promoting the rights, wishes, and feelings of children and young people
- abide by the appropriate codes of conduct and the Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures outlined within this document
- respond to any allegations appropriately
- review the policy bi-annually.

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).

Promoting good practice

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

There may be some people in the organisation who will have regular contact with children and young people and provide an important link in identifying cases where they need protection. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported to the organisation's designated child safeguarding officer and the guidelines in this policy should be followed.

Good practice means:

- always working in an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations, and encouraging open communication
- treating all young people equally with respect and dignity
- always putting the welfare of each child or young person first.
- maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with service users (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child)
- building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering children to share in decision making
- keeping up to date with training qualifications and insurance.
- involving children/young people/ parents/carers wherever possible.
- recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people, including any special educational needs or learning disabilities
- keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any

treatment given

- As an organisation using the DBS to assess at least 2 main lead volunteers' suitability for positions of trust, the SSGCGA complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of a conviction or any other information revealed.

The SSGCGA Organising Group will endeavour to ensure all volunteers follow the procedures set out by the Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- ensure we have a designated child safeguarding officer who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- ensure every member and volunteer knows the name of the designated child safeguarding officer and their role.
- ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated child safeguarding officer.
- keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- ensure all records are kept securely and in a locked location.
- develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.

The procedure - what you should do if a young person reports abuse to you: If someone

discloses that they are being abused, then upon receiving the information you should:

- react calmly and reassure the child that they were right to tell and that they are not to blame and take what the child says seriously
- keep questions to an absolute minimum to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Don't ask about explicit details
- reassure but do not promise confidentiality, which might not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments
- inform the child/young person what you will do next
- make a full and written record of what has been said/heard as soon as possible and don't delay in passing on the information.
- talk to your designated officer as soon as possible

The report will include the following:

- the child's name, age, and date of birth
- the child's home address and telephone number
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and special factors, and other relevant information. Include quotes where relevant.
- make a clear distinction between what is a fact, opinion, or hearsay
- a description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- details of witnesses to the incidents

What SSGCGA will do next:

It is not our responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place or not, however, if we have a concern about a child or children we will telephone the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on 0344 800 8021 immediately. We will be put through to a Social Worker who will take all of the relevant details. We will make sure we are prepared with full details of the child and family, plus what our concerns are, details of any support we have provided to the child/family, and what we would like to happen. We will ensure we gain consent from the parent/carer unless doing so would place the child at further risk of harm or undermine a criminal investigation. If we have not sought consent from the parent/carer we will inform the CADS worker of this and the reason for this.

The CADS worker will agree on a way forward with us and keep us informed. They will send us a written record of our conversation within 5 working days. The outcomes could include a full referral to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for further investigation, the Police, or for work with Early Help. We will not investigate and will be led by the Local Authority and/or the Police.

We will make careful records of all conversations, in ink, including the dates and times with who we spoke, the information shared and the action agreed upon. We do not need to send a written referral. If disclosure is to be made, you will need to decide if it is to be made by you or the designated child safeguarding officer. Ensure that the child or young person subject to the alleged abuse is safe and supported before proceeding with any other action. Where a child or young person is at risk of immediate harm, immediate action should be taken to protect the child or young person by calling the police on 999.

A direct call to the police on the non-urgent number 101 is appropriate if the child or young person

wishes to talk to the police at that time, and/or there is evidence to preserve and/or the alleged perpetrator of the offense may return before you can act to protect the child or young person.

The protection of children is paramount and if we have any concerns about a child being abused or neglected we will contact the SSGCG designated child safeguarding officer.

In Summary

As a volunteer, you must take responsibility and report all concerns to the designated child safeguarding officer immediately making sure to record all the necessary details in the Safeguarding Logbook which is kept securely in the Garden Cabin. A concern is defined as “Are they experiencing or at risk of experiencing abuse /neglect?”

Children must always be supervised by their own parent/carer/teacher whether volunteers or members of the public are using the facility. Volunteers are never to be left alone with the children/young people and there must always be another adult present.

All SSGCGA workshop leaders must be DBS checked and as per this policy there must always be at least one other adult present at all times.

All volunteers will undergo an induction when they join where this Safeguarding Policy will be discussed fully and the location of the Safeguarding Logbook will be communicated with details of the information you will need to collect.

You must contact the Police, Safeguarding Officer and other agencies if you have any concerns, contact details are listed below.

Designated safeguarding child safeguarding officer name: Steve Baker

Mobile: 07867520952

Email address: steve@justgoodcompany.org

Children’s Advice and Duty Service (CADS) 0344 800 8021

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0344 800 8020

Police emergency number: 999 Police non-emergency number: 101

This policy and procedures will be reviewed annually, agreed upon by the SSGCGA Organising group and signed and dated by the nominated representative

Signed and reviewed 21st November 2022. Next review 20th November 2023

Signed (on behalf of the Organising Group):



Sue Stokes

Founder

Date 22nd November 2022

Appendix: definitions of abuse & neglect

What are abuse and neglect?

It is a form of mistreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse may take place in a family, 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

Is a form of abuse that 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

Emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. It is the persistent emotional mistreatment of a child that can cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, such as:

- feeling worthless, unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.
- opportunities to express their views deliberately prevented. Silencing them or 'making fun of what they say or how they communicate.
- imposing inappropriate expectations that are beyond a child's developmental capability,
- overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction.
- seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing a child to frequently feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

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.

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? Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. 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 caregivers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs