

# DEVON SCIENCE

## Child Protection Policy



### Introduction

Devon Science is committed to a practice, which protects children from harm. Staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues, which cause children and young people harm. We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Adopting child protection guidelines through a code of behaviour for staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of volunteers
- Providing effective management for volunteers through supervision, support and training

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice on an annual basis.

### Statement of Intent

It is the policy of Devon Science to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them from all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm. This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable and secure while engaged in any of our workshops and activities. Personnel should at all times show respect and understanding for individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and principles of Devon Science.

### Guidelines for all Devon Science staff & volunteers

#### ATTITUDES

Staff and volunteers are committed to

- Treating children and young people with respect and dignity.
- Always listening to what a child or young person is saying
- Valuing each child and young person
- Recognising the unique contribution each individual can make
- Encouraging and praising each child or young person

#### BY EXAMPLE

Staff and volunteers will endeavour to

- Provide an example, which we would wish others to follow
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or an adult working with young people.
- Respect a young person's right to privacy

#### ONE TO ONE CONTACT

Staff and volunteers will

- Not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Staff should try to always be visible to others in their contact with children.
- In the unlikely event of having to meet with an individual child or young person make every effort to keep this meeting as open as possible.

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- If privacy is needed, ensure that other staff are informed of the meeting and its whereabouts

### PHYSICAL CONTACT

Staff and volunteers should never

- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay
- Do things of a personal nature for a child or a young person that they can do for themselves. If such an incident arises, for example, where a child or young person has limited mobility, staff should speak to Ruth MacLaren (Director) to deal with such an incident
- Allow, or engage in, inappropriate touching of any kind

### GENERAL

Staff and volunteers should:

- Be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Never draw any conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Never allow ourselves to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking situations such as tantrums or crushes
- Never exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about, or to a child or young person, even in fun

### RELATIONSHIPS

Staff and volunteers who are involved in relationships with other members of staff or volunteers should ensure that their personal relationships do not affect their role within Devon Science or the work of Devon Science

### SHARING INFORMATION

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In Devon Science every effort will be made to assure that, should individuals have concerns, they will be listened to and taken seriously. It is the responsibility of Ruth MacLaren (Director) to ensure that information is available to, and exchanged between all those involved in this organisation and its activities. Some information is confidential and should only be shared on a strictly need-to-know basis.

#### Children & Young People

Children and young people have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. Devon Science will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties. When sharing information, Devon Science personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

#### Parents

Parents / persons with parental responsibility are ultimately responsible for their children's welfare at all times, and they should be assured that their children are involved with a credible organisation. We achieve this by publicising information, including this Child Protection Policy on our website,

#### Staff & Volunteers

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people, it is imperative that each member of Devon Science is aware of their responsibilities under the Child Protection legislation and has a working knowledge of Devon Science's procedures

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### Other Bodies

A copy of our Child Protection Policy will be made available to any other appropriate body.

#### a) PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE

All action is taken in line with the following legislation/guidance:

Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Details must include, as far as practical:

- a. Name of child or young person
- b. Age
- c. Home Address (if known)
- d. Date of Birth (if known)
- e. Name/s and Address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility
- f. Telephone numbers if available

Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details:

- a. What has prompted the concerns?
- b. Include dates and times of any specific incidents
- c. Has the child or young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- d. Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details
- e. Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? E.g. school, designated officer, social services etc
- f. Has anyone else been consulted?

### DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION PERSONS

The designated person will immediately inform MASH by telephone.

**Telephone number: 0345 155 1071**

If not urgent, complete their form online

**Online : <https://devoncountycouncil.outsystemsenterprise.com/MASH/homepage>**

Confidentiality must be maintained and information relating to individual children and young people/families shared with staff on a strictly need to know basis.

### ALLEGED ABUSE BY STAFF, MANAGERS, VOLUNTEERS OR TRUSTEES

When an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, then the allegation must be passed to the designated person for child protection (Ruth MacLaren) or, if the allegation concerns them both, direct to the Local Authority Designated Officer. Your designated person for child protection should Devon Children and Young Person's Referral Team by telephone. The designated officer contacted will record a note of the consultation and will advise on the appropriate action that needs to be taken.

### TRAINING

The designated person and his/her deputy must receive training every 2 years in child protection. All staff and volunteers shall have access to appropriate training on a regular basis, at least every 3 years.

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### RECORD-KEEPING

All records, information and confidential notes will be kept in separate files in a locked drawer or filing cabinet. Only the designated Persons will have access to these files.

### DISCLOSURE

- Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as Child Protection will always have precedence over any other issues.
- Listen to the child, rather than question him or her directly.
- Offer him / her reassurance without making promises, and take what the child says seriously.
- Allow the child to speak without interruption
- Accept what is said – it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on.
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event,
- Use the child's words or explanations – do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child was trying to say.
- Contact Ruth MacLaren for advice / guidance. This Designated Person may then discuss the concern / suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral. If Designated Person is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer / member of staff with the concern should make direct contact with the relevant organisation themselves
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about what to do if you are worried a child is being abused, see the Devon Children 7 families Partnership website: <https://www.dcfp.org.uk/>