

Peaceworks' Child Protection Policy

1. Name of the group: "Peaceworks"

Peaceworks is a faith-based local charity, working for mediation and peacebuilding in the community through a number of activities and projects. Specifically, *Peaceworks Peer Mediation in Schools Programme* (PPMSP) is working with children through the age ranges 7yrs – 17yrs

2. Special Scenarios

The PPMSP only works in school settings and under all circumstances *Peaceworks staff and volunteers are subject to individual schools' Child Protection Procedures*. Peaceworks risk assessment strategy requires that a member of teaching staff is always present when Peaceworks staff or volunteers are working in the school. Peaceworks obtains the written agreement of Head Teachers that these requirements will be met by the participating school.

Should a peaceworks staff member becomes aware of any cause for concern re the safety or well being of a child while working at a school they will ensure that the information is passed on to the designated child protection advisor without delay. A list of the designated advisors from each school is maintained by the Peaceworks nominated Child Protection Officer and every staff member has access to a copy.

3. Legislation and Guidance

Peaceworks seeks to promote the welfare, safety and protection of children at all times. PPMSP staff and volunteers are aware of the different laws on Child Protection. These include: The Children's Act, The Protection of Children Act, The Human Rights Act, the Sexual Offences Act and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Peaceworks' staff and volunteers are aware of why this legislation exists and where to find the relevant Acts and the UN Convention on the Internet if they need to refer to them.

4. Our Organisations' responsibility to child protection

The duty of paid workers and of volunteers to child protection is as follows:

- To be aware of abuse
- Attend a Child Protection Workshop
- Read and understand Peaceworks' Child Protection Policy
- Know the procedure for reporting and recording concerns
- Be familiar with the policy regarding supervision of children and the supervision of staff
- Allow the children to express their views on matters important to them and take those views seriously

5. Policies and Procedures apply to all Children

Peaceworks' policies and procedures apply to all young people regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion. PPMSP is a peer mediation project and open to all parties who volunteer for the mediation process

6. All Activities will be planned and appropriate to PPMSP

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We are committed to the careful planning and supervision of all activities and these will be appropriate to the age range with which PPMSP works.

7. Children and young people are informed of our policies and procedures as appropriate.

PPMSP will inform young people involved in peer mediation of their rights, what they should do if they have any concerns or comments and who the nominated child protection representative (that is, a which member of the school's teaching staff is the nominated child protection representative) if this should become appropriate. *Refer to point no 2 of this policy document "Special Scenarios"*. The children will be encouraged to raise any concerns through this teacher or through another trusted adult who might be a member of the Peaceworks team or a member of the teaching staff at their school.

8. Designated Nominated Child Protection Representative. The nominated Child Protection Representative is Mrs Sharon Rawson whose contact telephone number is 01243 820604.

9. Review of Policies and Procedures

Peaceworks will review policies and procedures as necessary at the quarterly meetings of the Trustees.

10. Associated Procedures

Peaceworks will encourage schools to provide an environment that ensures children are safe from potential abuse, and will respond to any suspicion of potential abuse in a way which respects the child's dignity and reinforces the adult's responsibility to the children. Peaceworks and all providers of services supported by Peaceworks will follow these procedures and guidance. Peaceworks believes that all children deserve the opportunity to achieve their potential and to be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Our policy reflects this belief and is supported by all the points raised in this document.

Associated Procedures

1. Types of Abuse

What is Abuse and Neglect?

A person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, including by fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child. 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 include conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person, age or developmentally

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inappropriate expectations being imposed on children, causing children frequently to feel frightened, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

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 what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non penetrative acts. They may include involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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, such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, or neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse

Visible Signs:

- Injuries to any part of the body
- Children who find it painful to walk, sit down, move their jaws or are in some other kind of pain
- Injuries which are not typical of the bumps and scrapes associated with children's activities
- The regular occurrence of unexplained injuries
- The child who is frequently injured, where even apparently reasonable explanations are given

Behavioural Signs:

- Furtive, secretive behaviour
- Uncharacteristic aggression or withdrawn behaviour
- Compulsive eating or sudden loss of appetite
- The child who suddenly becomes ill co-ordinated
- The child who finds it difficult to stay awake
- The child who is repeatedly absent

What to listen for:

- Listen for confused or conflicting explanations of how the injuries were sustained
- Evaluate carefully what is said and preferably document it verbatim
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- Consider if the explanation is in keeping with the nature, age and site of injury

What to consider:

- What do you know about the family
- Is there a history of known or suspected abuse
- Has the family been under stress recently
- Do you have any concerns about the family

Emotional Abuse

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The recognition of emotional abuse is based on observations over time of the quality of relationships between parent/carer and the child

Watch for the parent/carer behaviours:

- Poor attachment relationship with the child
- Unresponsive or neglectful behaviour towards child's emotional or psychological needs
- Persistent negative comments about the child
- Inappropriate or inconsistent developmental expectations of the child
- Parental problems that supersede the needs of the child
- Dysfunctional family relationships including domestic violence

Watch for child behaviours:

- Emotional indicators such as low self esteem, unhappiness, fear, distress, anxiety
- Behavioural indicators such as attention seeking, opposing, withdrawn, insecure
- Physical indicators such as failure to thrive/faltering growth, delay in achieving developmental, cognitive or educational milestones

Sexual Abuse

There maybe no recognisable signs of sexual abuse but the following indicators maybe signs that a child is or has been sexually abused:

Physical signs

- Signs of blood or other discharge on the child's underclothes
- Awkwardness in walking or sitting down
- Stomach pains
- Regression into enuresis (involuntary urination)
- Tiredness

Behavioural signs:

- Extreme variations in behaviour (e.g. anxiety, aggression or withdrawal)
- Sexually provocative behaviour or knowledge that is incompatible with the child's age and understanding
- Drawings and/or written work which are sexually explicit (indirect disclosure)
- Direct disclosure; It is important to recognise that children have neither the experience nor the understanding to be able to make up stories about sexual assault

Neglect

Indicators of neglect are recognisable in the child, in the parent/carer's behaviour and within the home environment

Physical signs:

- Abnormal growth including failure to thrive
- Underweight or obesity
- Recurrent infection
- Unkempt dirty appearance
- Smelly
- Inadequate/unwashed clothes
- Hunger
- Listlessness

Behavioural signs:

- Attachment disorders
- Indiscriminate friendliness
- Poor social relationships
- Poor concentration
- Developmental delays
- Low self esteem

Environmental signs:

- Insufficient food, heating and ventilation in the home
- Risk from animals in the household
- Inappropriate sleeping arrangements and inadequate bedding
- Dangerous or hazardous environment

2. Procedures to respond to abuse or suspected abuse

If a child discloses abuse whilst the activities provided by Peaceworks are still underway provision needs to be made for the member of staff to be able to listen to the child and pass the information on as soon as possible.

Guidelines**DO**

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times as if you believe what the child is saying
- Do tell the child that they are right to tell you
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why
- Do tell the child what you are doing and when and keep them up to date on what is happening
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent further abuse – tell our nominated person immediately
- Do write down everything that was said and what was done
- Do seek medical attention if necessary
- Do inform parents/carers unless there is suspicion of their involvement

DON'T

- Don't make promises you cannot keep
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to investigate – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse
- **DON'T DO NOTHING** – make sure you tell our nominated child protection representative – she will know how to follow this up and where to go for advice.

Peaceworks' designated staff member for child protection needs to make a judgement as to whether the allegation or concerns need to be passed on to the local West Sussex Social and Caring Children's Services Help desk or be discussed with the parents/carers first. (It is important that *no* assumptions are made that parents could not abuse their child because they appear pleasant).

If the designated staff member for child protection decides to pass on the concern they should contact the local West Sussex Social and Caring Services Children's Help Desk (SCSCHD), the Emergency SW Duty Team or the Police. The designated staff member should contact the Police in the first instance if they believe the child to be in immediate danger. *See flow chart for contact numbers.*

If a staff member or volunteer receives an allegation of abuse against another member of staff/volunteer they should promptly inform the designated person for child protection, unless the allegation is against the designated person in which case they should contact the SCSCHD of the area in which the child lives. See flow chart for contact numbers.

Staff members and volunteers involved with Peaceworks are required to promptly pass on any concerns about possible child abuse or concerns about the welfare and safety of a child to the designated staff member for child protection.

If this designated person is not available, the staff member/volunteer is required to contact at least one of the following: If child in immediate danger start with local Police:- 0845 6070999 Otherwise contact West Sussex Social and Caring Children's Services Assessment Team, Help Desk - see flow chart for area numbers. Emergency Social Workers Duty Team, out of office hours. **A member of Peaceworks Management Committee should also be contacted.**

3. Confidential Records of Concern

It is essential that the staff member or volunteer records what they have seen or hear that had led them to believe that a child's welfare or safety is at risk. The designated person for child protection also needs to keep clear and concise records. There also needs to be a record of the action taken and why.

Staff/ volunteers should bear in mind that it is not their job to investigate an allegation.

Records should include the following details:

- Name of the child
- Parent's/carer's details
- The child's address
- Relevant telephone numbers
- What is said to have happened or what was seen
- When it occurred
- Who else was there
- What was said by those involved
- Whether there is any actual evidence e.g. bruises, bleeding, change in behaviour
- Who has been told about it
- Who was concerned
- Was the child able to say what happened
- Whether the parents have been advised
- Sign and date the record ensuring it is legible and written in black ink
- This must be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet.
- When an incident or event is reported it is paramount that the exact words that the child has used are noted immediately.
- Where the child is situated now.

All information about concerns regarding the welfare of a child needs to be kept confidential and should only be passed on to other staff members/ volunteers if it is essential for them to know

Form for Responding to Abuse – Peaceworkers Action Sheet

CONFIDENTIAL

Name of School _____

Name of Child/young person _____

Address _____

Parent/Carers Details if known _____

_____ Contact nos. _____

Name of Person Reporting incident _____

Date ___/___/___

Time of incident ___:___ am/pm

Sequence of events: What was said to have happened or what was seen. Actual words used - Observations - who else was present? Any evidence; bruising, bleeding, change in behaviour. (use body map below, if appropriate, but do not adjust child/young persons clothing to inspect any injuries.)

Action Taken (including person(s) contacted) Who else has been told about it?

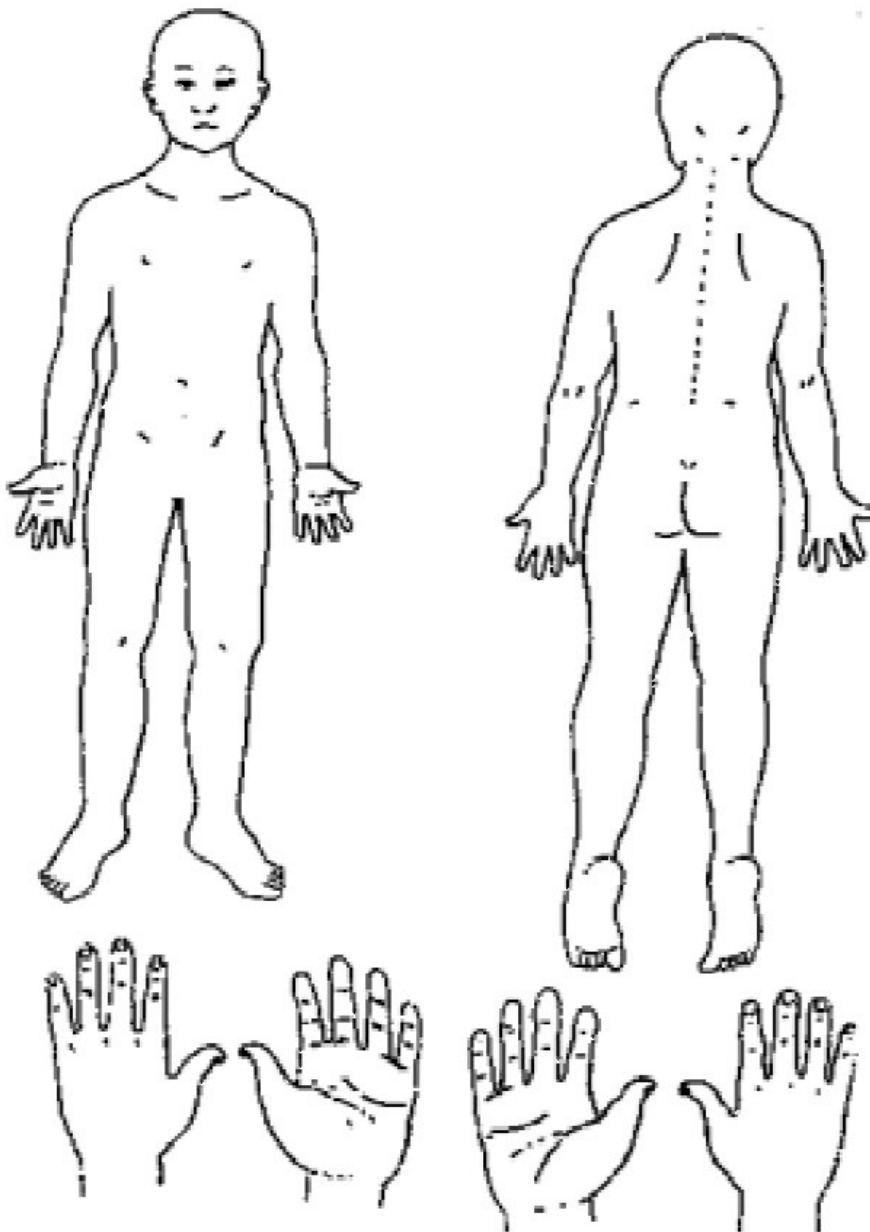
Date ___/___/___

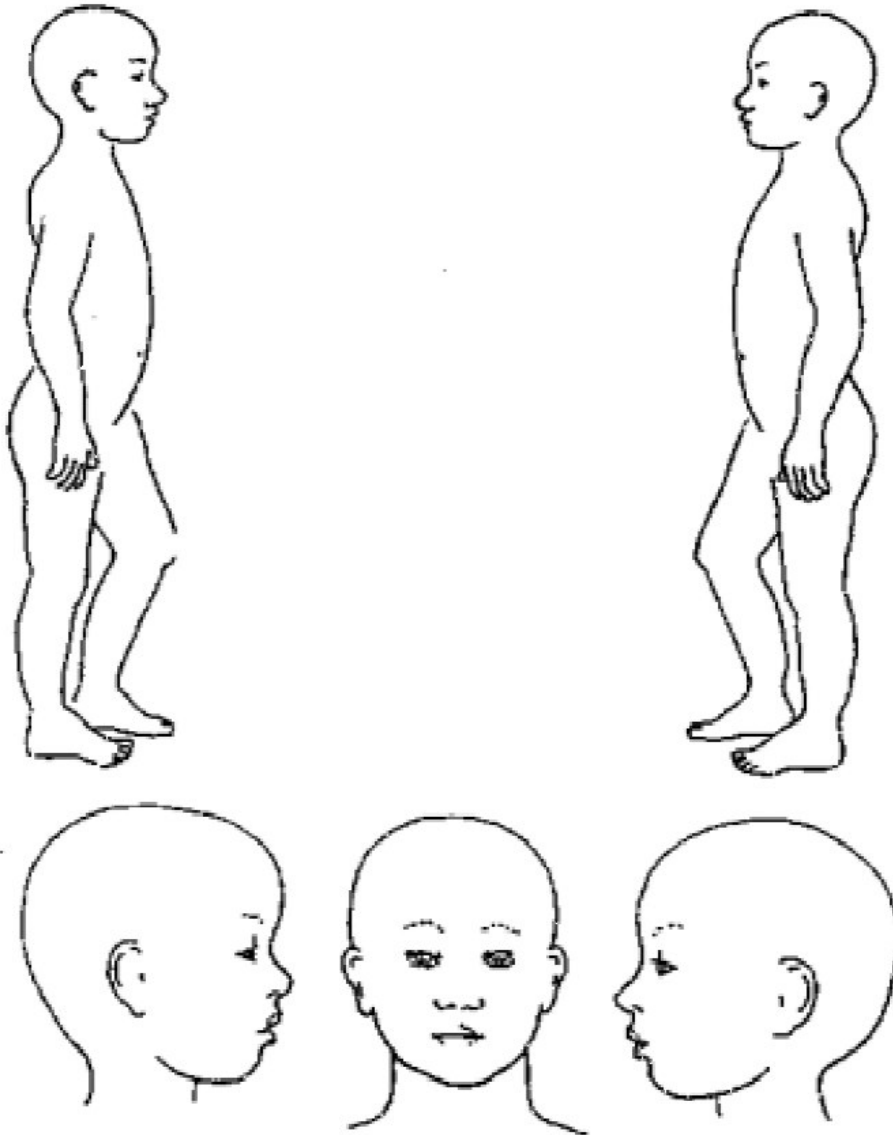
Time ___:___ am/pm

Continue overleaf if necessary

Body Map 1

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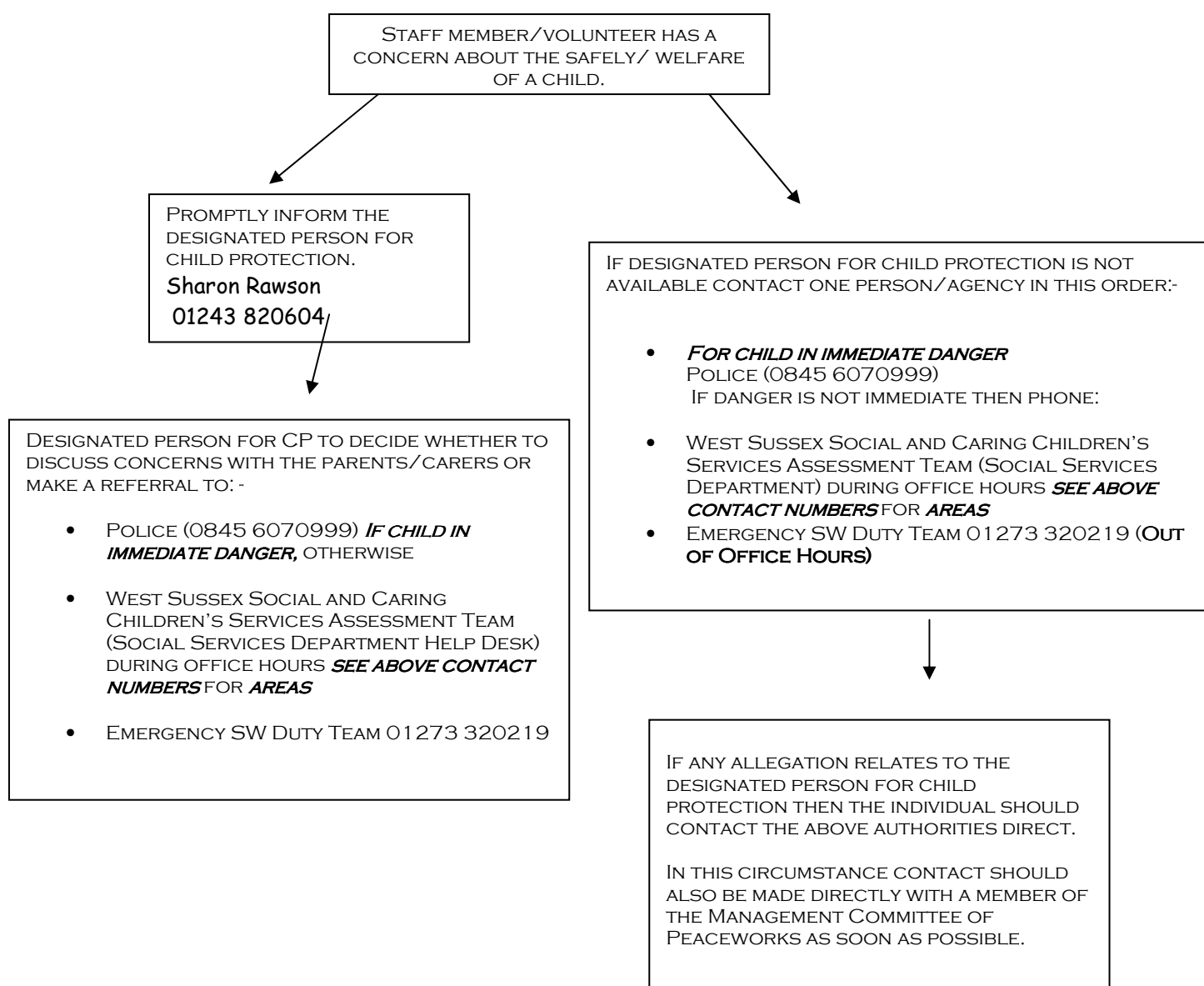
Body Map 1a

4. Contact Names and Details of Outside Agencies

- **Police – 0845 6070999 – (Child in immediate danger)**
- **West Sussex Social and Caring Children’s Services Assessment Team**
Social Services department:
 - *Chichester/Selsey area - 01243 752999
 - *Littlehampton and Bognor Areas – 01903 738905 & 738900
 - *Crawley area – 01293 895100

[Note* these are Help Desk numbers 9.00am – 5.00pm]

- **NSPCC – 0808 800 5000**
- **Childline – 0800 1111**
- **Area Child Protection Committee – 01243 785166**



5. Recruitment and selection of staff

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Peaceworks managers will:

- Ensure that all adults (voluntary or paid) working in the PPMSP are aware of the fact that such work is exempt from the provision laid down in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and will therefore be subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check prior to starting work.
- Require all potential workers to:
 1. complete an application form
 2. provide references
 3. attend an interview preferably conducted by two people
 4. sign an agreement to a Criminal Records Bureau check
 5. work for a probationary period

Qualification certificates will be required and past employers will be contacted directly. Reasons will be identified for gaps in employment or inconsistencies. Original birth certificates or passports will be used to verify dates of birth, as this can be a major risk of evasion from detection.

No unsupervised access to children and young people will be permitted until all checks are completed (e.g. no appointment until references have been reviewed.) There will be a supervised probationary period for new workers to the programme and a comprehensive induction period that includes training in our child protection procedures.

6. Staff Training, Monitoring and Supervision

Peaceworks offers ongoing training to all adults involved with the care and education of children, which will help them recognise and respond to suspected abuse of children whether physical, emotional, sexual or as a result of neglect to include:-

- Basic definition of abuse
- Signs of abuse
- Behaviour of abusers
- What to do if someone tells you they are being abused
- What to do if you suspect abuse

Special training for nominated protection representative who must be checked by Criminal records Bureau to include:

- Signs and symptoms of abuse and how abusers (perpetrators) behave
- Knowing about local Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) guidelines on dealing with concerns about abuse and know who to contact in Social Services so that you can either:
 - ask for advice when you are not sure what to do
 - refer a case without delay where there are child protection concerns
- Making children and young people using the project aware of¹:
 - (1) The child protection policies and procedures

¹ See Special scenario #2 above – Peacework’s Educators are never alone with children. The children are covered under their schools’ Child Protection Policy

- (2) You are the person to speak to if they have any concerns
- (3) Who to speak to if you are not there
- (4) Make sure staff and volunteers know how to respond to a child or young person who talks to them about abuse
- (5) Make sure you have a copy of the project's code of behaviour and guidelines and have understood them

For the foregoing bullet point and sub headings (1) – (5) refer to point number 2 of this policy document “Special Scenarios”

- The responsibility for the provision of information about helplines and other sources of help to young people.
Again, for the foregoing bullet point refer to point number 2 of this policy document “Special Scenarios”
- The awareness of factors that cause children to be vulnerable to abuse.
- Ensure an environment where staff have opportunity to raise any child protection concerns without fear of retribution, recognise the part that racism plays in that children from families in minority ethnic groups often fail to receive an appropriate service from the statutory authorities when concerns are raised about a child's welfare.

Peaceworks Managers:

- Offer ongoing training to all adults involved with the care and education of children, which will help them recognise and respond to suspected abuse of children whether physical, emotional, sexual or as a result of neglect.
- Never allow an unregistered (i.e. not CRB checked or Department of Health checked) adult to be alone with a child or children e.g. going to the toilet or supervising children in a separate room.

Be satisfied that staff and volunteers

- Understand the group's protection policies and procedures
- Adhere to the group's code of behaviour
- Remain vigilant and responsive

Implementation

- Monitoring and supervision may be implemented through discussions and meetings with staff and volunteers.
- Staff evaluations are likely to include Child Protection issues
- Records will be kept of staff training on child protection

Support

- Staff and volunteers will be encouraged to ask questions on child protection issues
- The nominated child protection representative will be available to discuss any concerns related to child protection

The PPMSP aims to provide enriching experiences for children, experiences that will help them to develop socially, mentally and physically. To help meet that aim there

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should be proper supervision at all times. This will ensure that they are less likely to come to harm.

7. Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers

- Avoid initiating physical contact with children
- Avoid physical expressions of emotion such as Kissing or hugging
- Avoid intrusive forms of play (e.g. tickling, rough and tumble.) If physical contact is offered from a child cease it at the earliest possible moment without causing the child to feel rejected.
- Never allow an unregistered (i.e. not CRB checked or Department of Health checked) adult to be alone with a child or children e.g. going to the toilet or supervising children in a separate room.
- Avoid any physical contact when alone with a child
- If a child persists in physical contact which is inappropriate, it must be explained to the child that staff should not kiss/hug people that they work for or with
- If the child continues to persist with inappropriate contact the matter should be brought to the attention of a senior member of staff.

The following are not allowed

- Sexual conduct
- Lending or borrowing money or property
- Giving or receiving of gifts
- Exclusive or secret relationships
- Taking project users to your home

Physical restraint:

Volunteers may be required to restrain a child in order to prevent imminent injury to an individual or themselves, or to prevent serious damage to any property.

Relationships between personnel:

- Relationships between personnel (both paid workers and volunteers) should be based on mutual respect and co-operation
- All employees are expected to take responsibility for their contribution to a positive working environment
- Employees are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the guiding principles contained within this document.