



*Supporting all those affected by craniosynostosis and rare craniofacial conditions*

## **Safeguarding Policy & Procedures**

Date Created:	January 2015
Date of Last Review:	Oct 2023
Next Review Due:	Oct 2024
Designated Safeguarding Lead:	Darren Sloan
Contact Details:	Headlines Arquen House 4-6 Spicer Street St Albans Hertfordshire AL3 4PQ

## **Introduction**

A key objective of Headlines is to serve the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults and to promote their wellbeing in body and mind. We value the contribution made by all those who offer to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults and commit ourselves fully to supporting them in every way. We take seriously the welfare of all who are part of our charity and are involved in our activities. Our aim is to ensure that they are welcomed into a safe and protected environment.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to anyone working or volunteering on behalf of Headlines, including the Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to;

- protect all children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Headline's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services,
- provide staff and volunteers with clear guidelines and principles that overarch our approach to safeguarding and child protection,
- provide staff and volunteers with the knowledge and confidence to recognise abuse and take immediate and appropriate action.

Headlines believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We recognise that we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

We understand that it is the personal responsibility of all members, young and old, whether they hold office or not, to take all reasonable steps to prevent the neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults, whatever their age, gender, race, culture, religion or ability, and to report any abuse discovered or suspected.

## **Legal framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (revised 2014)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Charity Commission Safeguarding Strategy 2017

Headlines recognises that safeguarding is not just about protecting persons from deliberate harm or the prevention of abuse. It also encompasses, for example, health and safety, fire procedures, bullying, harassment, discrimination, appropriate use of physical intervention, meeting the needs of children with medical needs, providing first aid, drug and alcohol abuse, internet and social networking safety and premises security.

## **Policy Statement**

Headlines will seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to them and respecting them.
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL) and a lead board member with safeguarding responsibility.
- Developing safeguarding procedures which are communicated to and understood by staff and volunteers.
- Creating a culture of safeguarding through robust procedures
- Adopting and publishing a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Developing and implementing an e-safety policy and related procedures.
- Safely recruiting staff and volunteers, ensuring that those who are carrying out or likely to carry out 'regulated activity' with children and vulnerable adults undergo an enhanced disclosure and barring service check (DBS)
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers, including trustees, complete adequate safeguarding training
- Promoting information about safeguarding and good practice with all members through newsletters, social media and training.
- Using safeguarding procedures to manage any allegations against staff or volunteers.
- Ensuring that there are effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies as appropriate, e.g. Children and Adult Services
- Ensuring that we have a safe physical environment for our children and vulnerable adults by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidelines.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely.

## **Key personnel**

### **Lead Board Member with Safeguarding Responsibility:**

Darren Sloan [darrenrsloan@gmail.com](mailto:darrenrsloan@gmail.com)

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (staff)**

Karen Wilkinson-Bell [karenwilkinson-bell@headlines.org.uk](mailto:karenwilkinson-bell@headlines.org.uk) T: 07768 994436

**NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000**

## Safeguarding Procedures

The following safeguarding procedures apply to all staff and volunteers who work for or on behalf of Headlines.

### Definitions

*Child* – the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as everyone under the age of 18

*Vulnerable Adult* – is a person over the age of 18 who is or may be for any reason, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

*Regulated Activity* – is work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups including children and which cannot be undertaken by a person who is on the Disclosure and Barring Service's Barred List.

*Physical Abuse* – this may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, or suffocating or any action intended to physically harm someone. It may be done deliberately or recklessly or be the result of a deliberate failure to prevent injury occurring.

*Neglect* – this is the persistent or severe failure to meet a child's, young person's or vulnerable adult's physical and/or psychological needs. It can result in serious impairment of their health or development.

*Sexual abuse* – this involves a child, young person or vulnerable adult being forced or coerced into participating in or watching sexual activity. It is not necessary for the child, young person or vulnerable adult to be aware that the activity is sexual, and the apparent consent of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is irrelevant.

*Emotional abuse* – this occurs where there is persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection. It causes severe and adverse effects on the child's, young person's and vulnerable adult's behaviour and emotional development, resulting in low self-worth. Some level of emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse. This would include potentially abusive or offensive electronic communications.

*Extremism and Radicalisation* - We will help support children, young people and vulnerable adults who may be at risk of being radicalised. Where we believe they are being directly influenced by extremist materials or influences, we will ensure that the concern is reported to the appropriate agencies. In such instances, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek external support from the Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator. If the risk is seen to be serious and dangerous behaviour imminent, the matter will be reported to the police.

*Other types of abuse* – financial, honour-based violence, fabricated or induced illness, forced marriage, female genital mutilation.

## Dealing with Suspected Abuse and Disclosures of Abuse

If you suspect that a child or vulnerable adult may have been abused you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead, (DSL) or the board member with safeguarding responsibility immediately. Their contact details can be found within the Safeguarding Policy.

If a child or vulnerable adult discloses to you that they have been abused, it is important that you follow these simple rules;

<b>Receive</b>	Listen carefully, make notes if you can, ask open questions and do not make assumptions about what might have happened, that is not your role.
<b>Reassure</b>	Thank them for telling you and reassure them that they have done the right thing and that you will help. Do not promise to keep it a secret, you cannot do this. Tell them that you will have to pass the information on to someone else.
<b>React</b>	Beware of your own emotions, try not to show anger or disgust. The child or vulnerable adult may be feeling upset, angry, afraid or ashamed. They need reassurance.
<b>Record</b>	Either during the discussion or as soon as practicable afterwards, make notes of what has been said. Use their words and their language. Record the time and date. Keep the notes safe, they may be required as evidence.

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is to ensure that action is taken in accordance with statutory guidance. They will, as appropriate report the matter to the relevant agencies.

However, if you think a child is in immediate danger, you should contact the police on 999.

## Complaints and Whistle-Blowing

If any member suspects that another member may be involved in any form of abuse, they must report the matter to the DSL. Provided the disclosure is made in the interests of safeguarding, they will be treated fairly, and confidentiality will be assured. The DSL has a responsibility to investigate the matter fully and take appropriate action, including notifying the Charity Commission. If the complaint or allegation is about the DSL, then the matter should be referred to the board member with safeguarding responsibility.

## Supervising Children's Activities

Only people approved by Headlines Executive Committee (Board of Trustees) may work unsupervised with children or vulnerable adults. All such people **MUST** possess an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate for regulated activity.

If someone else (e.g. a parent or volunteer) is asked by a member of the Board of Trustees to assist in special circumstances that person **MUST** be supervised by someone possessing an Enhanced DBS certificate and never be left alone with children. Ideally, these other persons should have a Standard DBS certificate or should be risk assessed before taking part in any activity. This rule applies to all activities referred to in this policy.

## Supervising Ratios – Children

The required ratios of supervision to children vary according to age and the following figures must always be adhered to as a minimum. If they cannot be adhered to, then the activity must **NOT** take place.

Indoor Activities	
Children's Age (yrs)	Adults per Child Required
0-2	1 per 3
2-3	1 per 4
3-7	1 per 8
8+	1 per 10
Outdoor Activities	
Children's Age (yrs)	Adults per Child Required
0-3	1 per 3
3-7	1 per 6
8-13	2 for first 15 and 1 for every 8 thereafter
13+	2 for first 20 and 1 for every 10 thereafter

Where possible, it is good practice to have at least two adults planned for every activity regardless of the number of children taking part. If both male and female children are taking part it is advisable to plan for a male and female adult to be present.

If any unusual activity is planned, the leaders must decide if additional adults will be required. If the activity could be construed as potentially hazardous, leaders must consult the DSL to ensure it is approved and complies with our insurance cover.

## Planning Safety

Activities must be planned so that no adult is alone with children where the activity cannot be easily seen by others.

If children need to be transported, a minimum of two adults, one of whom has an Enhanced DBS certificate, must be present and permission of the parent/carer must be obtained.

One-to-one meetings with children are to be avoided. If considered essential in the child's interest, full consent must be obtained beforehand from the project leader/DSL (as appropriate).

Up-to-date parental consent forms must be obtained for each child. (see below)

## **Practical Safety Matters**

An attendance register must be maintained for every meeting. Leaders must ensure the premises are safe and equipment etc. is in good condition. A responsible adult must carry a mobile phone for all activities isolated from other Headlines activities.

All adults must understand evacuation procedures and what to do in the event of an accident, fire or illness. All accidents must be recorded in the accident book and also reported to the DSL.

## **Staff/Volunteers: Approval Procedure**

1. All staff who are carrying out or who are likely to carry out 'regulated' activity with children, young people and vulnerable adults, on behalf of or for Headlines will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check(DBS) in accordance with the Charity Commission's guidelines. Headlines will ensure that all Trustees and relevant staff are subject to an enhanced DBS check.
2. For all other recruitment, the project leader and DSL will identify the job to be done and agree the job description, where appropriate.
3. The project leader discusses the names of person(s) or type of skills (e.g. qualified nannies at the Family Weekend) with the DSL, in confidence if appropriate, before an approach is made to the persons concerned. A decision will be made whether a formal interview is required and how it will be conducted.
4. A meeting will be arranged between the person(s) and their prospective project leader to explain the role and to assess their skills against the requirements of the role. This discussion must include the applicant's experience of working with children or vulnerable adults. At the meeting the project leader will hand the applicant:
  - a copy of the job description;
  - staff and volunteer code of conduct
  - a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures document to read, sign and return
5. The DSL will obtain references and arrange for a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to be carried out as necessary. In the case of workers from other agencies, who have already been checked and who have unsupervised access to children/vulnerable adults, presentation/confirmation of the enhanced DBS certificate will be required.

6. Records of all DBS documentation will be held securely by the DSL for no longer than six months after the person(s) cease the activity. They will then be destroyed within 6 months.
7. Staff/volunteers must NOT take part in any project involving children or vulnerable adults until all necessary checks have been satisfactorily carried out.
8. Any volunteers or staff who reside outside of England or Wales will be required to undergo the equivalent DBS check for the country in which they reside and ensure they are covered for activities in England and Wales.

## **Parental Consent Forms**

Headlines needs reliable up-to-date information for each child who participates in activities when they are not accompanied by their parents. For legal protection, we also need written parental consent.

*A Parental Consent/Information form* is to be completed when a child joins in activities where the parent will not be present. This form must be renewed for each event, e.g. one for the Family Weekend and a different one for another activity weekend.

*A Specific Activity Consent form* must be completed for all activities away from a main Headlines Activity (such as a visit away from Headlines Family Weekend) and any unusual activities. The activity consent form must be signed by the parent. It includes medical and behavioural information. After the event, the Activity Consent forms will be given to the DSL, who will secure them and then destroy them after six months.

The project leader (or specific activity organiser) is responsible for collecting Parental Consent/Information forms and maintaining attendance registers. The Parental Consent/Information forms must be kept by the project leader as confidential documents, seen only by people entitled to see them. When a completed form becomes obsolete (i.e. the child is no longer a member, or a later form has been received), it must be destroyed immediately

For activities away from a main Headlines activity, a list of everyone attending (children and adults) together with appropriate contact phone numbers must be passed beforehand to the DSL.

N.B. The Parental Consent/Information forms include permission for children to appear in photographs or other media.