

## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Our staff and volunteers form part of the wider safeguarding system for children. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

This Child Protection Policy is for all staff, parents, Directors', volunteers and the wider WE ARE THRIVE community. It forms part of the safeguarding arrangements for WE ARE THRIVE. It should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

The development of appropriate procedures and the monitoring of good practice in Essex are the responsibilities of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In Essex, all professionals must work in accordance with the SET Procedures (ESCB, 2016).

WE ARE THRIVE works in accordance with the following legislation and guidance:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex (ESCB, 2017)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)
- Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015)
- Sexual Offences Act (2003)
- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2015)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (HMG, 2015)

### **2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to protect them and to provide a safe environment where they can achieve their full potential. However, there are key people within WE ARE THRIVE and our Local Authority who have specific responsibilities under child protection procedures.

The names of those in WE ARE THRIVE with these specific responsibilities are:

- Safeguarding Director – xxxx
- Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Lisa Jeremy

### **3. DIRECTORS**

The Directors' will ensure that the policies, procedures and training in our workplace are effective

and comply with the law at all times. It ensures that all required policies relating to safeguarding are in place and that the child protection policy reflects statutory and local guidance and is reviewed at least annually.

- The Directors' ensure there is a named designated safeguarding lead and deputy safeguarding lead in place.
- The Directors' ensure that WE ARE THRIVE contributes to inter-agency working, in line with statutory and local guidance. It ensures that information is shared and stored appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.
- The Directors' ensure that all staff members undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction and that it is then regularly updated. All staff members receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates, at least annually, to provide them with the relevant skills and knowledge to keep our children safe.
- The Directors' and WE ARE THRIVE leadership team are responsible for ensuring WE ARE THRIVE follows recruitment procedures that help to deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children. It adheres to statutory responsibilities to check adults working with children and has recruitment and selection procedures in place (see WE ARE THRIVE's 'Safer Recruitment' policy for further information).
- It ensures that volunteers are appropriately supervised in WE ARE THRIVE.

#### **4. THE DESIGNATED LEAD (and Deputy)**

- The Safeguarding Lead takes lead responsibility for managing child protection referrals, safeguarding training and raising awareness of all child protection policies and procedures. They ensure that everyone in WE ARE THRIVE (including temporary staff, volunteers and contractors) is aware of these procedures and that they are followed at all times. They act as a source of advice and support for other staff (on child protection matters) and ensure that timely referrals to Essex Children's Social Care (Family Operations Hub) are made in accordance with current SET procedures. They work with the local authority and other agencies as required. If for any reason the designated safeguarding lead is unavailable, the deputy designated safeguarding lead will act in their absence.

#### **5. WE ARE THRIVE STAFF**

WE ARE THRIVE has a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which our children can thrive. WE ARE THRIVE (as set out in this policy) are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so.

#### **6. TYPES OF ABUSE / SPECIFIC SAFEGUARDING ISSUES**

"Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or 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”

The four main types of abuse are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect

WE ARE THRIVE is aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so we are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection.

#### *Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)*

CSE is a form of abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It is understood that a significant number of children who are victims of CSE go missing from home, care and education at some point. WE ARE THRIVE is alert to the signs and indicators of a child becoming at risk of, or subject to, CSE

and will take appropriate action to respond to any concerns. The designated safeguarding lead is the named CSE Lead in WE ARE THRIVE on these issues and will work with other agencies as appropriate.

#### *Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)*

FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse. As of October 2015, the Serious Crime Act 2015 (Home Office, 2015) introduced a duty on teachers (and other professionals) to notify the police of known cases of female genital mutilation where it appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. WE ARE THRIVE will operate in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to this issue, and in line with existing local safeguarding procedures.

#### *Forced marriage*

A forced marriage is one entered into without the full consent of one or both parties. It is where violence, threats or other forms of coercion is used and is a crime. Our staff understand how to report concerns where this may be an issue.

#### *Prevention of Radicalisation*

As of July 2015, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015) placed a new duty on WE ARE THRIVE and other providers. Under section 26 of the Act, WE ARE THRIVE is required, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

It requires WE ARE THRIVE to:

- promote community cohesion
- offer a safe space in which children / young people can understand and discuss sensitive

topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas

- be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues

CHANNEL is a national programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people identified as vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. WE ARE THRIVE staff understand how to identify those who may benefit from this support and how to make a referral.

## **7. PROCEDURES**

All action is taken in accordance with the following guidance;

- Essex Safeguarding Children Board guidelines - the SET (Southend, Essex and Thurrock) Child
- Protection Procedures (ESCB, 2017)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2015)
- 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2017)
- PREVENT Duty - Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (HMG, 2015)

When new staff, volunteers or regular visitors join WE ARE THRIVE, they are informed of the safeguarding arrangements in place and the name of the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) and how to share concerns with them.

Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to WE ARE THRIVE who receives a disclosure or allegation of abuse, or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (or, in their absence, the deputy designated safeguarding lead).

The designated safeguarding lead or the deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Children and Families Hub by telephone and in accordance with the procedures outlined in the SET procedures (ESCB, 2017) and in 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' (ESCB, 2017).

The telephone referral to the Children and Families Hub will be confirmed in writing within 48 hours with the Family Operations Request for Support form. Essential information will include the child's name, address, date of birth, family composition, the reason for the referral, whether the child's parents are aware of the referral plus any other relevant information or advice given.

WE ARE THRIVE will always undertake to share an intention to refer a child to Children's Social Care with the parents or carers, unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. It may be necessary to seek advice from the Family Operations Hub and / or Essex Police in making decisions about when it is appropriate to share information with parents / carers.

If a member of staff continues to have concerns about a child and feels the situation is not being addressed or does not appear to be improving, the staff member concerned should press for re-

consideration of the case with the designated safeguarding lead. Safeguarding contact details are displayed in the WE ARE THRIVE reception area to ensure that all staff members have unfettered access to safeguarding support.

## **8. TRAINING**

The Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) undertake Level 3 child protection training at least every two years. The staff and Directors' receive appropriate child protection training which is regularly updated and in line with advice from the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB). In addition, all staff members receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. Records of any child protection training undertaken is kept for all staff and Directors'.

WE ARE THRIVE ensures that the designated safeguarding lead (and deputy) also undertakes training in interagency working and other matters as appropriate

## **9. PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality is an issue, which needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those working with children, particularly in the context of child protection. A member of staff must never guarantee confidentiality to a client and will not agree with a client to keep a secret as, where there is a child protection concern, this must be reported to the designated safeguarding lead and may require further investigation by appropriate authorities.

All staff members are informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only. Any information shared with a member of staff in this way is treated confidentially.

## **10. RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING**

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child, the sharing of information in a timely and effective manner between organisations can reduce the risk of harm. Whilst the Data Protection Act 2018 places duties on organisations and individuals to process personal information fairly and lawfully, it is not a barrier to sharing information where the failure to do so would result in a child or vulnerable adult being placed at risk of harm.

Similarly, human rights concerns, such as respecting the right to a private and family life would not prevent sharing where there are real safeguarding concerns. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of abuse or neglect.

Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. WE ARE THRIVE is clear about the need to record any concern held about a child or children within WE ARE THRIVE, the status of such records and when these records should be shared with other agencies.

Any member of staff receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, will make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen (if appropriate, using a body map to record), giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken. This is then presented to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), within 48 hours, who will decide on appropriate action and record this accordingly.

Any records related to child protection are kept in an individual child protection file for that child in chronological order. All child protection records are stored securely and confidentially and will be retained according to GDPR protocol.

### **11. INTERAGENCY WORKING**

It is the responsibility of the designated safeguarding lead to ensure that WE ARE THRIVE is represented at, and that a report is submitted to, any child protection conference called for children referred by WE ARE THRIVE.

Where possible and appropriate, any report will be shared in advance with the parent(s) / carer(s). Whoever attends will be fully briefed on any issues or concerns that WE ARE THRIVE has and be prepared to contribute to the discussions at the conference.

### **12. ALLEGATIONS ABOUT MEMBERS OF THE WORKFORCE**

All staff members are made aware of the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct. These matters form part of staff induction and are outlined in the Staff Handbook / Code of Conduct.

WE ARE THRIVE works in accordance with statutory guidance and the SET procedures (ESCB, 2017) in respect of allegations against an adult working with children (in a paid or voluntary capacity). Section 7 of the current SET procedures provides detailed information on this.

WE ARE THRIVE has processes in place for reporting any concerns about a member of staff (or any adult working with children). Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff will be referred to the Centre Management. Staffing matters are confidential and WE ARE THRIVE must operate within statutory guidance around Data Protection.

Where the concern involves the management, it should be reported direct to the Chair of Directors'. SET procedures (ESCB, 2017) require that, where an allegation against a member of staff is received, the Chair of Directors' must inform the duty Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the Children's Workforce Allegations Management Team on 03330 139 797 within one working day. However, wherever possible, contact with the LADO should be made immediately as they will then advise on how to proceed and whether the matter requires Police involvement. This will include advice on speaking to clients and parents and HR. WE ARE THRIVE does not carry out any investigation before speaking to the LADO.

### 13. WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing is ‘making a disclosure in the public interest’ and occurs when a worker (or member of the wider WE ARE THRIVE community) raises a concern about danger or illegality that affects others, for example clients at WE ARE THRIVE or members of the public.

All staff are made aware of the duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of staff in line with WE ARE THRIVE’s Code of Conduct / Whistleblowing policy.

We want everyone to feel able to report any child protection / safeguarding concerns. However, for members of staff who feel unable to raise these concerns internally, they can call the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline on: 0800 028 0285 (line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Parents or others in the wider WE ARE THRIVE community with concerns can contact the NSPCC general helpline on: 0808 800 5000 (24 hour helpline) or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

Signed: L.J.Jeremy

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018

### Appendix A:

