

Volunteer Handbook



**Organisation Details**

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**Welcome!**

Thank you for choosing to volunteer with the Down Syndrome Training and Support Service. In joining this organisation, *you* will be helping to further our mission, to build a better future for children and young people with Down syndrome in the district and beyond. As a registered charity, we rely on our volunteers to help us continue to deliver a high quality service to the children and families who attend our sessions – we greatly appreciate you choosing to contribute your time and efforts to help us keep achieving our goals.

It is really important to us, that our volunteers know how valuable they are to the DSTSS. This handbook is here to address any concerns you may have about volunteering, your role and responsibilities, what we expect of you and what you can expect of us. Please do not hesitate to talk to any of the team if you have any questions. The handbook is not intended to be your only guide!

Lastly, we cannot thank you enough for helping to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people with Down syndrome.

**About Us**

**Our People**

We are a team of dedicated individuals, some of us are paid employees and some of us are volunteers. Many of the team have immediate relatives with Down syndrome, but there are several who do not. We are all dedicated to our work, and we all believe in promoting better access to support services and improving the public perception and understanding of Down syndrome.

**Our Aim**

Our aim is to improve the education, development and inclusion of children with Down syndrome. We pursue this goal through a variety of activities and interventions, which are outlined below.

**Our Objectives**

* To assist in the care of children with Down syndrome by the provision of support, advice and training to those responsible for their care and to health and educational specialists, with the aim of improving the health and education of children with Down syndrome.
* To provide support, training and relief to families who care for children with Down syndrome.
* To promote awareness of Down syndrome
* To organise regular sessions open to all families of children with Down syndrome and other events.
* To provide a library of informative and educational items, including producing newsletters, booklets, posters etc.
* To liaise with health and education professionals and provide training.
* To train parents and helpers through courses and conferences for the benefit of the entire group as well as the individual families
* To promote the charity to the general public and our local community

**What We Do**

* We deliver Early Development Groups for children with Down syndrome aged 12 months to 5/6 years of age and their parents and school support staff
* We deliver a range of training courses in the specific learning needs of children with Down syndrome. As a volunteer you are welcome to attend these courses. The Introduction to Down Syndrome and the Signing for children with Down syndrome courses may be particularly useful
* A weekly youth club, the WisH Club, for young people 11+
* Weekly dance sessions for children aged 5-11 and young people aged 11+
* Monthly speech and language group sessions
* A monthly family Saturday session
* A monthly newsletter
* A library of resources

**How Will You Get Involved?**

We have a variety of opportunities for volunteers to contribute to our work. Below is a list of some of the roles available, along with the accompanying job descriptions.

1. Early Development Group Volunteer
2. Volunteer Administrator
3. Youth Club Volunteer
4. Family Saturday session volunteer helper
5. Help out at fundraising events

**Early Development Group Volunteer**

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday (9:30 - 12:30 approx.)**

***Job Description:***

* To help with preparation of resources for groups, including: photocopying, laminating, cutting and sticking.
* To help set up the space for early development groups.
* To support the practitioner in the delivery of the early development group session.
* To help with kitchen duties, this includes: washing up, making drinks, and tidying up after groups.
* If comfortable, to work on a computer to prepare relevant documents, such as leaflets and reports.
* If you are available, to occasionally provide support in crèches when necessary.

**Volunteer Administrator**

**Flexible Hours (usually during school hours)**

***Job Description:***

* To help with preparation of resources for groups, including: photocopying, laminating, cutting and sticking.
* To help with kitchen duties, this includes: washing up, making drinks and tidying up after groups.
* To prepare outgoing mail for postage (stuffing envelopes, franking, stamping, etc.). Includes taking mail to the post office.
* To work on a computer to prepare relevant documents, such as leaflets and reports.

**Youth Club Volunteer**

**Friday (18:00 – 22:00)**

***Job Description:***

* To help deliver our weekly youth club for young people with Down syndrome aged 11+.
* To interact with the young people, to encourage them to engage with activities and socialise amongst themselves appropriately.
* To oversee the safety of the people in attendance, by ensuring correct use of equipment and safe interpersonal interaction.
* Training in behaviour management, safeguarding and appropriate touch is compulsory and will be provided.
* A Touch Policy will be provided for you to read in addition to the policies in this handbook.

**Family Saturday Session Volunteer Helper**

**Usually Second Saturday of the month (9:45 – 12:30)**

***Job Description:***

* To play with and support the children on a one to one basis.
* To play with the children in a group activity.
* To be comfortable introducing parents to the activities, when desired.
* To help set up activities, if you’re able to arrive by 9.00am.
* To tidy up after activities, and keep the toys clean.
* To help with washing up.
* To help keep kitchen clean and tidy.

**Help out at a fundraising event**

Throughout the year we hold/take part in a number of fundraising events – these are usually stalls, raffles and tombolas. All volunteers will be asked of they should like to be involved in the event. You are welcome to accept or decline the invitation. Guidance on fundraising events can be found in our fundraising policy.

**Our Policies**

The rest of this booklet is devoted to providing information that must be understood by any individual who wishes to volunteer with us. These policies are related to best practice, and all the information is important to ensuring that staff and volunteers are all fully aware of their legal obligations and how to maintain a safe environment for other staff, volunteers and for the children under our supervision.

You MUST read these documents in their entirety, before you are legally allowed to start volunteering with the DSTSS. It is your responsibility to complete this process, before you come to work with us.

The policies herein are:

* Code of Conduct
* Volunteer Policy
* Social Media Policy
* Confidentiality Police
* Child Protection Policy
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy

It is your responsibility (as well as ours) to confirm that you have both read and understood the implications of these documents. You are required to sign a statement that you have fully read these policies. At the end of the handbook is a form to sign and return to us once you’ve read all the policies.

Lastly, please do not hesitate to ask if you are struggling to understand any of the information included within these policies. We acknowledge that there is a lot to digest, and we are here to help if necessary!

Thank you!

**Code of Conduct**

**Why it is essential that you read our code of conduct**

All members of staff (including volunteers) are expected to follow a specific code of conduct, which is there to mutually protect the children, young people and staff. When caring for other people’s children, you are in a position of trust and you have a responsibility to know how to behave appropriately in this capacity. Whilst the vast majority of the rules are common sense, DSTSS would rather specify anything which constitutes unacceptable practise, in order to reduce the risk of potential harm to the children and to you – our volunteers.

**Code of Conduct for all Staff and Volunteers**

Always remember that while you are caring for other people’s children you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

**Do Not:**

* Use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting
* Smoke in front of any child
* Use non-prescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol
* Behave in a way that frightens or demeans any child
* Use any racist, sexist, discriminatory or offensive language
* Invite a child to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times
* Engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a child you meet through your duties or start a personal relationship with them, this would be an abuse of trust
* Engage in rough or physical games, including horseplay
* Let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
* Rely upon good nature to protect you or believe “it could never happen to me”
* Give children presents or personal items \*

*\*(Exceptions to this could be a custom such as: buying children a small birthday token or leaving present, help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity. Both types of gift should come from the organisation and from a professional capacity and be agreed with the named person for safeguarding children and the child’s parent/carer. Similarly do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the activity leader.)*

**Do:**

* Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.
* Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child’s needs, e.g. for a hug when upset or help with toileting. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help
* Talk explicitly to children about their right to be kept safe from harm
* Listen to children and take every opportunity to raise their self esteem
* Work as a team with your co-workers/volunteers. Agree with them what behaviour you expect from children and be consistent in enforcing it
* Remember if you have to speak to a child about their behaviour you are challenging ‘what they did’, not ‘who they are’
* Make sure you have read the organisations’ Child Protection Procedures and that you feel confident that you know how to recognise when a child may be suffering harm, how to handle any disclosures and how to report any concerns
* Seek advice and support from your colleagues and your designated champion for safeguarding children
* Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well being of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself
* Seek opportunities for training
* Where possible encourage parents to take responsibility for their own children
* Make sure you are clear about your organisations’ Confidentiality Policy and Bradford’s Local Area Information Sharing Protocol.

**VOLUNTEER POLICY**

1. **Introduction**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd recognises that there can be situations in which Volunteers can help can make an appropriate and significant contribution to the work and service objectives of the Charity. This document defines the term and sets out the principles, practices and procedures which Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will follow in the appointment, management and supervision of volunteers.

**2. Definition**

Volunteers may be described as individuals who put their experience, knowledge and skills at the disposal of the group, free of charge, with the primary aim of helping the Group to achieve its aims and objectives and/or with the primary aim of bringing some benefit to the local community. In this sense, Volunteers are to be distinguished from student and other work placements where the primary aim is usually for the student to obtain certain work experience or to carry out work or research in certain areas. Volunteering is non-obligational, a volunteer is allowed to refuse hours of work.

**3. Recruitment of Volunteers**

Volunteers will be selected through the following process:

**Step 1:**

An application form will be sent upon request so that we can gather details of experience, skills, knowledge, abilities and references.

**Step 2:**

1. Upon return of application the prospective volunteer will be invited for an interview with the line manager and asked to bring documents for identification – passport, driving licence, utility bill to confirm address.
2. Using the *job descriptions – youth worker, admin, Saturday helper, early development group helper (see appendix A)* the parties will engage in a two-way discussion of the proposed role, of its requirements and of each other’s expectations, with a view to assessing mutual suitability. This will include discussion of our services, hours, duration, expenses, insurance etc.
3. The applicant will be given copies of our child protection policy, vulnerable adults policy, volunteers policy, confidentiality policy, social media policy and safeguarding procedures.
4. If they have a valid CRB/DBS a copy of this will be taken and filed for our records. If not ID will be used to start the procedure.
5. Applicants will also be given details of safeguarding training to be completed online.

**Step 3**

References will be taken up to ensure the applicant is trustworthy and safe to work with children and vulnerable adults.

**Step 4:**

Upon receipt of a valid CRB and references a start date will be set and the successful Volunteer shall be allocated to a particular employee who will manage and supervise the Volunteer throughout the duration of her/his placement at the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. The manager's responsibilities will include ensuring that the Volunteer receives the following:

(i) An introduction to the Group.

(ii) Regular supervision and support;

(iii) Positive feedback on their contribution;

(iv) Adequate training to perform their task satisfactorily.

**4. Equal Opportunities**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd recognises that the activity of volunteering can provide a volunteer with experiences and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd Equal Opportunity Policy, volunteer placements will be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status. In addition, the *Specification* must set out the equal opportunity dimension and any specific equality requirements of the role. Where a Volunteer demonstrates hostility to, or a clear lack of support for equal opportunity policy, she/he will be deemed automatically to be unsuitable for a volunteer position at the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. **. Termination** Where appropriate, the role and placement of the Volunteer may be terminated by the Coordinator at one week’s notice, or immediately, where behaviour equivalent to gross misconduct has occurred. In all cases the Volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken. The volunteer is also entitled to appeal, give their own explanations and argue their own case, with support/representation if requested. The Coordinator will report any such terminations to the Directors of the Board.

**5. Termination**

Where appropriate, the role and placement of the Volunteer may be terminated by the Coordinator at one week’s notice, or immediately, where behaviour equivalent to gross misconduct has occurred. In all cases the Volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken. The volunteer is also entitled to appeal, give their own explanations and argue their own case, with support/representation if requested. The Coordinator will report any such terminations to the Directors of the Board

**6. Discipline and Grievance**

Volunteers will not be subject to the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd’s disciplinary procedures. Correspondingly, Volunteers will not have access to the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd’s grievance procedures. However, Volunteers will be entitled to use the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd’s Complaints Procedure. Where appropriate, the complaint will be investigated fully by the Coordinator or her/his representative.

**7. Expenses**

Volunteers will be entitled to travel expenses up to the value of a daily travel card. Subsistence allowance of up to £3.00 may be claimed for lunch. Forms must be submitted on a weekly or monthly basis.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | First 10,000 miles | 10,001 plus miles |
| Cars and vans | 45p | 25p |
| Motorcycles | 24p | 24p |
| Bicycles | 20p | 20P |

**8. Insurance**

Volunteers will be covered by the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd’s employers public liability, professional indemnity where appropriate, and personal accident insurance. If your car is used for business during working hours your car must be insured for business use and this must be arranged by the volunteer.

**9. Training and Involvement**

Volunteers can attend any of our training at the centre for FREE. We particularly recommend you attend the Introduction to Down syndrome and the Signing and children with Down syndrome courses. Other training such as safeguarding/health & safety training is also recommended but will have to be done in your own time. Anything other, eg First Aid, planning meetings etc this needs to be documented and justified. Volunteers can ask to be sign posted to relevant training opportunities.

**10. Monitoring and Review**

It will be the responsibility of the Board to regularly review the operation of the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd’s Volunteer Policy to ensure that it is in accordance with the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd’s Equal Opportunity Policy.

**Social Media Policy**

The DSTSS likes to use social media to share information with the community. We encourage our employees to use Facebook, Twitter, and other online applications – to make it easier to meet, connect and share information with our members. However, we are aware that the misuse (intentional or unintentional) of these public platforms can incur violations of privacy, intellectual property, general liability and other various legal issues that could cause harm to the organisation and/or its employees. It is for this reason that we insist on making sure our staff have read and understood our social media policy – to protect themselves, the organisation, the members, and any other third parties which may sustain damage should an infringement be made.

**Social Media Policy**

**Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd** believes that social media is an important form of communicating. Web content created through collaboration on blogs, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other online technologies make it easier for employees to identify, meet, connect and share information with members, prospects, and the community at large. Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd promotes activities and accomplishments of the organization through its official Facebook pages, blogs and other social media. However, it is recognized that unrestrained use of social media and its nature as a virtually permanent public forum can pose issues of privacy, intellectual property, general liability and other legal issues that can harm the organization and the employees using social media. We expect all employees who participate in social media for work-related and/or personal purposes to understand and follow this policy.

**Compliance with Relevant Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd** **Policies When Participating in Social Media**

The same principles and guidelines that apply to Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd employees’ activities in general apply to their activities online, both at work and outside of work. This includes all forms of online publishing and discussion, including blogs, wikis, file-sharing, user-generated video and audio, social networks, and other social network applications when employees are discussing Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd -related topics. Violation of the Social Media policy, or any other policy, may subject an employee to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

**Participating in Social Media on Behalf of Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd**

Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd recognizes the opportunity and benefit social media provides to have a real-time conversation with a wide audience of members, prospects and others. Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd does pre-screen employee-posted content and regularly review other posted content on all Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd social media sites and has the right in its sole discretion to remove any content that it considers spam, an invasion of privacy, false, misleading, fraudulent, defamatory, profane, illegal, not in agreement with Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd policies and/or standards, or otherwise found to be objectionable and to violate the terms of this policy. If you are leading, facilitating, writing or administrating an official Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd social media page or blog, please also remember the following:

* Employees must obtain permission from their department head to participate on behalf of the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. Any messages that might act as the “voice” or position of the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd must be approved by Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd senior staff, as appropriate.
* Do not share private or confidential information. The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd Confidentiality Policy defines confidential information and supplements this policy
* Never comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties we are in litigation with.
* By posting content, you are granting Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd a non-exclusive, royalty-free, perpetual, and worldwide license to use your content in connection with Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd, including, without limitation, the license rights to copy, distribute, transmit, publicly display, publicly perform, reproduce, edit, translate and reformat your content, and/or to incorporate it into a collective work.
* When publicly displaying, performing, reproducing or distributing copies of your content, or content as incorporated into a collective work, Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will make best efforts to credit your authorship. You grant Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd permission to use your name for such attribution purposes.
* Unauthorized use of the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd name to endorse or promote any product, opinion, cause, issue or political candidates is prohibited.
* Employees should not respond to negative comments or criticism posted about Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd unless permission has already been granted to that employee for responding.

**Personal Use of Social Media**

Remember these are public forums and be thoughtful about how you present yourself in online social media. The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in social networks. As a general rule, it is expected that all employees will use common sense and sound judgment when utilizing any social media tool. Personal use of social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and personal blogs) during working hours is prohibited. Use personal e-mail addresses on social networking sites when you are not participating on behalf of Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. All electronic communications and stored information transmitted, received, or archived in Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd information system are the property of Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd reserves the right to access and disclose any information or messages in its possession. In your personal use of social media, please also remember:

* Do not use logos, trademarks, or other intellectual property of Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd without written approval from Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd senior staff, as appropriate.
* If you chose to discuss Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd initiatives or programs, disclose your connection to and role within Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. Use good judgment and strive for accuracy in these communications. Write in the first person and use a disclaimer approved by Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. The disclaimer should clearly state that the content is the opinion of the author and does not necessarily represent the views of Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd as appropriate. However, even with a disclaimer, do not share private or confidential information of Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd on a personal page or blog nor ever comment on anything related to legal matters, litigation, or any parties we are in litigation with. The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd Confidentiality Policy defines confidential information and supplements this policy.
* Do not use social media for internal communication among fellow employees. Social media forums are public and not the place to communicate Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd policies or resolve internal workplace conflicts.
* Be respectful of our members, business partners, vendors, other employees and stakeholders in our organizations.
* By virtue of their position in the organization, Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd directors, managers, and supervisors must consider whether personal thoughts they publish might be misunderstood as official Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd positions. Always assume that members of your team will read what is written.

**Confidentiality Statement Policy**

Employees and workers (including volunteers, temporary, agency, contractors and consultants) of DSTSS Ltd must at all times be aware of the importance of maintaining confidentiality of information gained by them during the course of their duties. This will in many cases include access to personal information relating to service users. Staff must treat all information in a discreet and confidential manner, and particular attention is drawn to the following:

1. Information regarding service users must not be disclosed either orally or in writing to unauthorised persons. It is particularly important that staff should ensure the authenticity of telephone enquiries.
2. Written records, computer records and correspondence pertaining to any personal information gained during DSTSS Ltd activities must be kept secure at all times.
3. You have an obligation to ensure that computer systems which you use are protected from inappropriate access within your direct area of practise e.g. by ensuring that they are protected by personal access codes and that the codes are kept secure.
4. All data held, its management and procedures must conform to the requirements of the Data Protection Act (1998). Under the act, service users and staff have a right to access their records on application to the appropriate manager.
5. Sometimes confidentiality can be broken, for example in relation to the safety and protection of children or vulnerable adults. If it is appropriate to share information gained in the course of your work, with other education, health or social work practitioners, you must ensure that, this information will be kept in strict professional confidence and be only used for the purpose for which the information was given.
6. Conversations relating to confidential matters affecting clients should not take place in situations where they may be overheard by passers-by e.g. in corridors, reception areas, lifts and cloak rooms.
7. The same confidentiality must also be preserved in dealing with work related matters appertaining to work colleagues.
8. Any breach of discipline may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct and may be subject to disciplinary action.

**Child Protection Policy**

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**Section 1 Introduction**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd (DSTSS) provides support, information, activities and training for families caring for children with Down syndrome and also the professionals who work with them. At the many events arranged to meet this provision the children are accompanied by their parents and/or family members or by a designated one to one carer. The children range from birth to 18+ years of age. On occasions when training is for practitioners/parents only and parents wish to bring along their children, if we are unable to arrange a creche with suitably qualified workers, we always state that their care and supervision is the responsibility of the parents.

These procedures have been designed to ensure the welfare and protection of any child and/or young person who accesses the services provided by Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd. The procedures recognise that child protection can be a very difficult subject for workers to deal with to the extent that it is sometimes easier to close your eyes to what is happening or believe that it is somebody else’s problem to deal with. The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd is committed to the belief that protecting children and young people is everybody’s responsibility and therefore the aim here is to provide guidelines that will enable all workers and volunteers to act appropriately to any concerns that arise in respect of a child/young person.

**Section 2 Our ethos**

Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people. DST&SS has a duty to be aware that abuse, neglect and radicalisation does occur in our society. It recognises its responsibility to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse and exploitation, prevent the impairment of children’s health or development and ensure that children are in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. DST&SS takes action to ensure all children have the best outcomes and ensures staff are aware of the systems in place to safeguard children.

Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

Paid staff, volunteers and directors will endeavour to work together to encourage the development of an ethos which embraces difference and diversity and respects the rights of children, young people and adults.

Everyone working in our setting recognises their responsibilities towards the children attending our centre. We understand that safeguarding is not just about protecting children from deliberate harm but it relates to all aspects of care and education relating to children’s wellbeing, health and safety.

Children have the right to be treated with respect and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

The DST&SS will work with children, parents, carers, school, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children.

**Section 3 Implementing the policy**

In implementing this child protection policy Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will:

* train all staff to understand our safeguarding policy and procedures, and ensure that all staff have up to date knowledge of safeguarding issues.
* ensure that all workers understand their legal and moral responsibility to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation;
* ensure that all workers understand their duty to report concerns that arise about a child or young person, or a worker’s conduct towards a child/young person, to the safeguarding officer, SO, (also known as the child protection officer)
* aim to provide a safe, respectful and supportive environment for children to allow them to feel confident to approach adults and feel secure in the knowledge that they will be listened to.
* ensure that children and young people are enabled to express their ideas and views on a wide range of issues and give feedback on these issues.
* aim to ensure that adults talk and listen to children where they have concerns about their safety and wellbeing.
* ensure that parents/carers are encouraged to be involved in the work of the organisation and, when requested, have access to all guidelines and procedures;
* create an environment to encourage children to develop a positive self-image and self esteem.
* encourage children to develop a sense of independence and autonomy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage of development
* endeavour to keep up-to-date with national developments relating to the welfare and protection of children and young people.

**Section 4 DBS clearance and safeguard training**

We aim to provide a secure and safe environment for all children. DST&SS will therefore not allow an adult to be left alone with a child who has not received their DBS clearance.

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will ensure that all staff receive copies of policies and procedures relating to the safety and protection of children and sign to say that they understand their responsibilities under these procedures. See Appendix F.

DBS checks will take place at the start of a workers employment, paid or voluntary, and prior to any contact with children. This can be initiated online, see appendix D.

***DBS checks will be renewed every three years for voluntary staff, directors and Speech and Language Therapists and every six years for paid members of staff.***

If any issues or queries are raised DSTSS have the right to request a new DBS check at any time on any member of staff, volunteer or director.

All staff, volunteers, Directors and therapists are responsible for notifying the SO in person should any circumstances arise that may affect their suitability to work with children/young people or carry out their role within the charity. This will include any incidents occurring outside the setting. Staff will face disciplinary action should they fail to notify the manager in a reasonable timescale.

Down syndrome training and Support service abides by the employer’s responsibilities relating to informing the Independent Safeguarding Authority of any changes to the suitability of their staff, whether this member of staff has left the setting or is still under investigation.

**Training**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will ensure that all staff members whether paid or unpaid, undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of child abuse

At induction all staff will receive Basic Level 1 training via the BSCB e-learning site. See Appendix E. Refresher training will be annual.

Annual in-house training, monthly staff meetings and annual appraisals will be used to update the staff team’s knowledge and understanding of safeguarding issues.

The SO will be responsible for any support the staff/volunteer team may have between these reviews. This includes mentor support, one-to-one training sessions, on-going supervision, work-based observations and constructive feedback.

Should staff have to deal with any possible abuse or neglect issues they will receive emotional support from the management team or external agencies if required.

**Section 5 Safe recruitment**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd is striving to be an equal opportunity employer. Therefore we will aim to treat all workers and job applicants equally. There will be no discrimination in respect of marital status, gender, sexuality, disability, age, colour, race, religion or belief (or lack of belief), nationality, ethnic or national origins. There will be no discrimination on these grounds in the terms and conditions offered to workers or job applicants.

**Preventing unsuitable people from working with children**

DST&SS has a duty to ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements for their role. We will follow Safer Recruitment practices including verifying qualifications and ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken. We will not allow people whose suitability has not been checked, to have unsupervised contact with children. We will:

* Prepare clear job descriptions; person specifications; develop standardised questions for interview purposes.
* All publicity/the application form will clearly state that the position will involve working with children and will require an enhanced BDS Disclosure. A self declaration will also be used for screening applicants prior to the interview stage.
* Check full employment histories which should cover *at least* the previous 5 years. Any gaps in employment should be explained.
* Check Identities and Qualifications. At least 2 forms of identification provided at interview and certificates relating to qualifications. This could also be supplemented with a check to the awarding body if any doubts exist.
* Obtain references. The referee should be informed the person has applied for a post that involves contact with children/young people. They should be asked to comment on the candidate’s **suitability** to work with children and an opinion on their suitability within this role. See appendix G.
* Inform successful candidates that the appointment will be subject to satisfactory references and a clear enhanced DBS check.

Staff are expected to disclose any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands and warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children (whether received before or during their employment at the setting).

DST&SS will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the setting and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant agencies, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and included in references where applicable.

**Section 6 Code of conduct for staff, volunteers and Directors**

The DSTSS will ensure that the code of conduct for workers training with young people is followed at all times.

The code is designed to minimise situations where abuse may occur by stipulating that:

* Exercise caution about being alone with a child. In situations where this is unavoidable, ensure another worker or volunteer knows what you are doing and where you are.
* Ensure that any physical contact is open and initiated by the child’s needs, e.g. for a hug when upset or help with toileting. Always prompt children to carry out personal care themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help
* Where possible encourage parents to take responsibility for their own children
* all activity, as far as possible, is publicly observed or conducted in a group setting;
* inappropriate touching of any form is never permitted; See touch policy.
* Be clear with anyone disclosing any matter that could concern the safety and well being of a child that you cannot guarantee to keep this information to yourself
* You should not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect your ability to care for children.
* Seek opportunities for training
* appropriate action will be taken in all cases and instances of child protection concerns involving young people;
* a ‘**whistle-blowing’ policy** will be adhered to. This will ensure that staff who make bona fide complaints about colleagues’ behaviour will not be punished, even if the concerns prove unfounded

In addition to this the DSTSS has a **Complaints and Compliments Policy** that covers situations of inappropriate conduct by staff and the mechanisms for complaining about this.

**Section 7 Recognising safeguarding issues**

**Definition of Abuse**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However we believe that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations.

Abuse refers to:

* Physical abuse – e.g. being kicked, shaken, beaten or punched;
* Sexual abuse – e.g. being touched inappropriately;
* Emotional abuse – e.g. being called insulting names
* Neglect – e.g. not being given enough to eat or having inappropriate clothing.

An additional appendix of the full revised definitions as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015) is attached. (See appendix A)

All staff need to familiarise themselves with these definitions.

It is not the responsibility of the staff to investigate welfare concerns or determine the truth of any disclosure or allegation. All staff however have a duty to recognise concerns and maintain an open mind. All concerns regarding the welfare of children must be recorded and discussed with the SO and prior to any discussion with parents/carers. The SO will monitor vulnerable children and any changes or concerns will be reported.

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd has an **Incident Book** where the SO, will record any reported incidents or breach of Child Protection policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential

**Section 8 Role of safeguarding officers**

Wendy Rhodes, Wendy Uttley, Peter Murray and Jenny Rowlands, DST&SS are the nominated Safeguarding Officers, with Wendy Rhodes the lead officer. Her responsibility it is to ensure that all necessary measures are in place to safeguard children. In her absence, a deputy will always be available for workers to consult with. The named persons for Child Protection within the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd are:

Lead contact person: Wendy Rhodes

Work telephone number: 01274 561308

Mobile number: 07426 540271

Emergency contact no: 01132 554436 (home)

Name of contact person: Wendy Uttley

Work telephone number: 01274 561308

Mobile number: 07816 465845

Emergency contact no: 07816 465845 (home)

Name of contact person: Jenny Rowlands

Mobile number: 07850 654667

Emergency contact no: 01423 610255 (home)

The Safeguarding Officer should inform the Safeguarding Board of any allegation of serious harm against, or abuse of a child reported by any person looking after them at the centre, (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed at the centre or elsewhere), and the action taken in respect of these allegations needs also to be reported and if necessary; any other significant event that is likely to affect their suitability to look after children at our centre.

Notification must be made as soon as is reasonably practicable, but always within 14 days. A safeguarding officer, without reasonable excuse, failing to comply with these requirements is committing an offence.

**Responsibilities of the SO**

It is the overall responsibility of the SO to ensure that all necessary measures are in place to safeguard children and that all staff adhere to the policy and procedures. The Safeguarding Officer’s responsibilities are as follows:-

* To have completed the required BSCB training in safeguarding and to keep this up to date with all current training.
* To ensure that there is a suitable policy in place which is updated and reviewed annually and with current BSCB guidance.
* To follow and carry out all BSCB procedures.
* To ensure staff are fully trained and equipped to fulfil their role with regards to safeguarding children and that they have a refresher training annually
* To ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed when recruiting and monitoring ongoing staff suitability.
* To deal with all allegations against staff or persons working within the setting.
* Liaising with other agencies and services where appropriate
* To seek advice and support for staff from relevant agencies where appropriate.
* To talk to parents about concerns (where appropriate)
* Keeping up-to-date records and to ensure they are stored securely.
* To refer a child to Children’s and Families Services if there are any concerns about suspected abuse or neglect by telephone and followed up in writing.
* To attend multi-agency strategy meetings, child protection meetings, contribute to a children in need or child protection plan and attend case conferences when necessary.

Any child protection concerns should only be shared with staff on a ‘need to know’ basis. Consideration should be taken as to which staff this concerns and how much information needs to be shared. This is usually information that staff will require to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.

**Section 9 What to do if you are worried about a child**

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy. However the Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd believes that the safety of the child should override any doubts or hesitations. When worrying changes are observed in a child’s or young person’s behaviour, physical condition or appearance staff will:

**Stage 1**

* Initially talk to a child/young person about what you are observing. It is okay to ask questions, for example: “I’ve noticed that you don’t appear yourself today, is everything okay? But never use leading questions
* Listen carefully to what the young person has to say and take it seriously;
* Never investigate or take sole responsibility for a situation where a child/young person makes a disclosure;
* Always explain to children and young people that any information they have given will have to be shared with others;
* Record what was said as soon as possible after any disclosure;
* The person who receives the allegation or has the concern should complete the pro-forma and ensure it is signed and dated. See appendix C
* Respect confidentiality and file documents securely;
* Notify and pass on the concern to the organisation’s Named Person for Child Protection –SO.

**Stage 2**

* The SO will take immediate action if there is a suspicion that a child has been abused or likely to be abused. In this situation the SO will contact the police and/or Children’s Social Care. If a referral is made direct to Children’s Social Care this must be followed up in writing as soon as possible.
* The SO can also seek advice and clarity about a situation that is beginning to raise concern through the NSPCC National Child Protection Helpline on 0800 8800 5000

A flowchart outlining these stages is included, see appendix B

**Section 10 Allegations against a member of staff, volunteer or director**

It is the duty of all staff to report to the SO anyone working at the setting who is:

* Not following set policies and procedures.
* Displaying inappropriate conduct e.g. inappropriate sexual comments and behaviours, sharing or discussing sexual photos or images
* Giving excessive 1:1 attention beyond the requirements of their usual role and responsibility
* Taking and/or sharing child abuse images
* Any concerns of radicalisation shown in a change of behaviour

The Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will ensure that any allegations made against members or a member of staff will be dealt with swiftly and in accordance with these procedures:

* The worker must ensure that the child is safe and away from the person whom the allegation is made
* The SO should be informed immediately. In the case of an allegation involving the SO, alternative arrangements should be sought to ensure that the matter is dealt with by an independent person. (Note: this could be a director or anyone within the organisation that is in a senior position and believed to be independent of the allegations being made)
* The SO should contact the local area children’s department for advice on how to proceed with the immediate situation. Outside of working hours the Emergency Duty Team can give advice and/or in the event of an emergency situation arising, the police
* The individual who first received/witnessed the concern should make a full written record of what was seen, heard and/or told as soon as possible after observing the incident/receiving the report. It is important that the report is an accurate description. The named person (if appropriate) can support the worker during this process but must not complete the report for the worker. This report must be made available on request from either the police and/or social services
* Regardless of whether a police and/or social services investigation follows, Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd will ensure that an internal investigation takes place and consideration is given to the operation of disciplinary procedures. This may involve an immediate suspension and/or ultimate dismissal dependant on the nature of the incident.
* The member of staff will remain employed on full pay and benefits but on ‘Garden Leave’ until a full investigation has been carried out, and a decision has been made as to whether the complaint or allegation was justified or not. If the member of staff is not deemed to pose a risk to children, staff or parents/carers then they will remain on the premises and continue to work whilst the complaint/allegation is investigated.
* **Staff must not make any comments either publicly or in private about a parent’s or staff’s supposed or actual behaviour**.

**Section 11 Useful contacts**

**Useful Contacts/Support Organisations**

* During office hours (8.30 - 5.00 Tuesday to Thursday, 4.30 on Friday) call Children's Social Care Initial Contact Point - 01274 437500 to refer any child in need, including child protection concerns.
* At all other times, Social Services Emergency Duty Team - 01274 431010
* If you have reason to believe that a child is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police on 999
* Specific advice about issues concerning South Asian children can be sought on the NSPCC National Child Protection Asian Helpline on 0800 096 7719.

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline

The NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24-hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to anyone concerned about a child at risk of abuse. Telephone: 080 8800 5000 - Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

**Other areas Social Services:**

* Leeds Referral hotline 0113 376 0336 or outside office hours 0113 240 9536
* Wakefield Child Protection Unit 01924 302628
* Social Care Direct free on 0845 8 503 503 24
* Kirklees Duty and Assessment Service 01924 326097, 01924 326076 or 01924 431429
* Kirklees Emergency Duty Service 01484 414933 (outside office hours)
* Calderdale Initial Response Team 01422 393336

**Section 12 – Reviewing Policies and Procedures**

This policy is to be reviewed annually in January of each year.

Any changes/amendments will be clarified and shared with staff and where significant changes appear they will be relayed to parents/carers.

Dated……………………………..Signed……………..……………………..

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Version** | **Date** | **Reason for Update** |
| 1.0 | Updated January 2014 |  |
| 1.1 | Updated November 2015 | Review |
| 1.2 | Updated February 2016 | Updated legistlation  CRB to DBS  DBS for S&L Therapists |
| 1.3 | Updated May 2017 | Full Review |

Date of Next Review: May 2021

**Appendix A Definitions of abuse**

Children may be abused within a family, institution, or community setting by those known to them or a stranger. This could be an adult or adults, another child or children. The signs and indicators listed may not necessarily indicate that a child has been abused, but will help us to recognise that something may be wrong, especially if a child shows a number of these symptoms.

**Indicators of child abuse**

* Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones
* Fearful or withdrawn tendencies/change in behaviour
* Aggressive behaviour
* Unexplained injuries to a child with conflicting/suspicious reports from parents/staff
* Repeated injuries
* Unaddressed illnesses or injuries
* Being exposed to any form of pornographic material
* Sexualised behaviour, language, drawing or play
* Significant change in behaviour
* Care seeking behaviour
* Radical and extremist behaviour
* Any unexplained absences or regular repeated absences
* Any form of bullying or harassment
* Any form of abuse regarding race or disability
* Gender based violence towards girls (Female genital Mutilation)

**If anyone has any concerns they must discuss this with the SO**

**Physical abuse**

Action needs to be taken if staff have reason to believe that there has been a physical injury to a child, including deliberate poisoning; where there is definite knowledge, or reasonable suspicion that the injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented. These symptoms may include bruising or injuries in an area that is not usual for a child, e.g. fleshy parts of the arms and legs, back, wrists, ankles and face.

Many children will have cuts and grazes from normal childhood injuries – these should also be logged and discussed with the SO.

Children may be abused physically through hitting, shaking or throwing. Other injuries may include drowning, suffocating, burns or scalds. These are not usual childhood injuries and should always be logged and discussed with the SO.

**Fabricated illness**

This is also a type of physical abuse. This is where a child is presented with an illness that is fabricated by the adult carer. The carer may seek out unnecessary medical treatment or investigation. The signs may include a carer exaggerating a real illness or symptoms, complete fabrication of symptoms or inducing physical illness e.g. through poisoning, starvation, inappropriate diet. This may also be presented through false allegations of abuse or encouraging the child to appear disabled or ill to obtain unnecessary treatment or specialist support.

**Sexual abuse**

Action needs be taken under this heading if the staff member has witnessed occasion(s) where a child indicated sexual activity through words, play, drawing, had an excessive pre-occupation with sexual matters, or had an inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour or language.

This may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual online images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

This may include acting out sexual activity on dolls/toys or in the role play area with their peers, drawing pictures that are inappropriate for a child, talking about sexual activities or using sexual language or words. The child may become worried when their clothes are removed, e.g. for wet clothes changes.

The physical symptoms may include genital trauma, discharge, and bruises between the legs or signs of a sexually transmitted disease (STD). These symptoms would not be seen by a member of staff at any time, however if these symptoms are discussed by the child they must be recorded. Emotional symptoms could include a distinct change in a child’s behaviour. They may be withdrawn or overly extroverted and outgoing. They may withdraw away from a particular adult and become distressed if they reach out for them, but they may also be particularly clingy to a potential abuser so all symptoms and signs should be looked at together and assessed as a whole.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female Genital Mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is carried out on children between the ages of 0 and 15, depending on the community in which they live. FGM is extremely harmful and has short and long term effects on physical and psychological health.

FGM is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.

DST&SS takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. Any indication that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be dealt with under the Child Protection procedures outlined in this policy.

**Emotional abuse**

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there is a severe, adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of a child, caused by persistent or severe ill treatment or rejection. This may include extremes of discipline where a child is shouted at or put down on a consistent basis, lack of emotional attachment by a parent, or it may include parents or carers placing inappropriate age or developmental expectations upon them. overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. Emotional abuse may also be imposed through the child witnessing domestic abuse and alcohol and drug misuse by adults caring for them.

 The child is likely to show extremes of emotion with this type of abuse. This may include shying away from an adult who is abusing them, becoming withdrawn, aggressive or clingy in order to receive their love and attention. This type of abuse is harder to identify as the child is not likely to show any physical signs.

**Neglect**

Action should be taken under this heading if the staff member has reason to believe that there has been persistent or severe neglect of a child (for example, by exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation and failure to seek medical treatment when required on behalf of the child), which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

Signs may include a child persistently arriving at the centre unwashed or unkempt, wearing clothes that are too small (especially shoes that may restrict the child’s growth or hurt them), or a child having an illness that is not being addressed by the parent. A child may also be persistently hungry if a parent is withholding food or not providing enough for a child’s needs.

Neglect may also be inadequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) and ensuring appropriate medical care or treatment.

Neglect may also be shown through emotional signs, e.g. a child may not be receiving the attention they need at home and may crave love and support. They may be clingy and emotional.

**Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Additional Needs**

We recognise that, statistically, children with behavioural difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. Setting staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

**Prevention of Radicalisation**

The Government Prevent Strategy has raised awareness of the specific need to safeguard children, young people and families from violent extremism. The Counter-terrorism and Security Act, 2015 places a duty on professionals to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

If a member of staff has concerns that a child, parent or staff member may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they will speak with the SO.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming.

**Frequent absences**

If a child is absent from the setting and there has been no telephone call or explanation from the parent/carer then every effort will be made to contact the family to find out the reason for the absence. If there are frequent, regular periods of absence from the setting the SO will contact the parent for an explanation.

Appendix B Flow chart of procedure

Child Protection & Vulnerable Adult Procedures Flow Chart

(REVISED: MAY 2021)

**On discovery or suspicion of child abuse**

**If in doubt – ACT**

**⭣**

**Inform your Named Person for Child Protection**

Wendy uttley Jenny Rowlands Wendy Rhodes

A person wearing glasses

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

A close-up of a person smiling

Description automatically generated

A person with long hair

Description automatically generated with low confidence

07816 465845 07850 654667 07426 540271

**Who should then take following steps**

One of the named persons will take a written record of concerns from you (or you can write your own record and pass it to them) This will be kept confidential in a locked file.

**⭣**

Where it is clear that a Child Protection Referral is needed they will contact Children’s Initial Contact Point without delay **Tel No 01274 437500**

Out of hrs Emergency Duty Team **Tel No 01274 431010**

Named Persons may also seek advice from the Children’s Specialist Services

**Tel 01274 435600**

**IF THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM CALL 999**

**⭣**

If you are asked to monitor the situation, make sure you are clear what you are expected to monitor, for how long and how and to whom you should feedback information to.

**⭣**

**Remember** always make andkeep a written record of all events and action taken, date and sign each entry to this record. Keep records confidential and secure.

Ensure immediate completion and dispatch of the ‘form for recording safeguarding concerns’.

Send copies to:

* Children’s Social Care
* Principal Education Social Worker Future House, Bolling Road, Bradford BD4 7EB

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

Children’s Social Care Initial Contact Point: 01274 437500

Emergency Duty Team: 01274 431010

Childrens Specialist Service: 01274 435600

Police**:** Bradford Safeguarding Unit: 01274 376116

**Appendix C Form for recording safeguarding concerns**

Recording is a valuable tool in child protection; any concerns for the welfare of a child or young person should be recorded on the recording pro-forma.

The purpose for these recordings are to accurately register and pass on information to other professionals in order that informed decisions can be made and that should patterns emerge they do not go unnoticed. Every worker who has cause for concern / suspicion of harm or who directly takes a disclosure must make a recording. Recordings will also be made by the manager of any action taken.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

This pro-forma must be completed by any worker who receives an allegation/disclosure of abuse from a child/young person or who has concerns about a child/young person. Fill in the information given to you or write down your concerns. Do not try to ascertain further details, or ask investigating questions. If you do not know then leave the section blank.

**Details of the young person:**

Name………………………………………… Date of Birth………………..

Address…………………………………………………………………………………

**Who has parental responsibility: …………………………………………………..**

Address…………………………………………………………………………………

**Name & address of other significant adults:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Relationship | Address | Date of Birth |
|  |  |  |  |

**Details of siblings:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Address | Date of Birth/or age |
|  |  |  |

What professionals are you aware of that are currently in contact with the child/young person e.g. teacher, youth worker, social worker, health visitor, doctor etc?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Agency | Address | Contact Number |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| Please record the details of what information was given/shared with you by the child/young person, you must use their words. Alternatively please record in detail your concerns about the child/young person |
| **Please read the above and ensure that it contains fact and not workers opinion.**  **State date & time of the above.**  Date……/……../……….. Time…………… Venue……………………………………………… |

**APPENDIX D online application for DBS check**

We require all our staff and volunteers to have a DBS check (formerly called CRB). If you already have one from another place of work we can accept that if it is under three years old and covers both child and vulnerable adults. If not, you will need to complete an application on line.

Go to www.dbsassist.co.uk/ucheck

1. Click on DBS Application Form – “start application”
2. Enter organisation reference – **DOWN6** (capital letters)
3. Enter password – downsix (lower case)
4. Click Enter

The first page to appear will be the Statement of Fair Processing which you need to tick at the bottom of the page to confirm

1. The blank application will then appear

Complete the application using the notes on the right hand side of the screen for guidance

Please don’t use the term “Volunteer”. Your job is “support worker CA” working with “Child and vulnerable adults”. This enables us to clear you to be used as a volunteer in any of our activities. If you don’t want to be cleared to work with vulnerable adults, it may restrict how we can use you but it is by no means obligatory.

1. Click on the box to indicate consent
2. Click on complete
3. Click home

Then you’re finished. Let us know via phone (01274 561308) or email ([office@downsyndromebradford.co.uk](mailto:office@downsyndromebradford.co.uk)) and we will complete the verification process using the details we have taken from your ID. **If we haven’t seen your ID, we will need to see and photocopy two of the following documents 1) your passport, 2) driving licence and / or 3) birth certificate. we will also need to see a recent, less than three months old, bank statement / council tax bill / for confirmation of your address**

Should you have any problems with the online DBS application feel free to call and we can arrange for you to come to the office for support in completing the form.

**Appendix E Safeguarding training, e-learning details**

In the absence of any proof of previous Safeguarding Training, all staff, Directors and volunteers are required to complete the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) online course “An Introduction to Safeguarding Children”. This will need to be undertaken every 3 years.

Front line staff also need to complete the ‘Awareness of Child Abuse and Neglect’ followed by an annual refresher course ‘Children’s Refresher Training’. You will be reminded to undertake this training.

In order to complete the required Safeguarding training you first need to register on line. You will be asked to complete a registration form and will then be emailed by BSCB with your login details.

1. Go to [www.saferbradford.co.uk](http://www.saferbradford.co.uk)
2. Scroll down to ‘learning and resources’
3. Click on ‘Training tab’
4. Scroll down to ‘Safeguarding children’s training’
5. Click on ‘click ‘e-learning courses’
6. Scroll down and click ‘self-registration’
7. At the bottom of the page click ‘register’
8. Select service sector - “Voluntary / Not for profit”
9. Click “register”
10. Scroll down and select “Introduction to Safeguarding Children” or “Awareness of Child Abuse and neglect” from the list if course options
11. Scroll to the bottom and Click “register”
12. Complete the registration form using the details: Down Syndrome Training and Support Service, Pamela Sunter Centre, 2 Whitley Street, Bingley, Bradford, BD16 4JH. Tel: 01274 561308
13. Click ‘Register’

*You will receive an email with your user name (your email) and password. A link will be provided to access the course content.*

Once you have completed the course (we’ve found it takes approx. 2 hours or 3 hours for the Awareness course), please print the certificate and forward it to us as proof of training completion.

You are very welcome to come to the office and complete the course here should you require support or assistance. Just call us to arrange a mutually suitable time, 01274 561308.

**Appendix F Form to sign to confirm you have read and understood our safeguarding policies**

NAME...........................................................

CONFIRMATION OF READING AND UNDERSTANDING RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER OUR SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURES

I have read the vulnerable adults policy and understand my responsibilities and what action I need to take under these procedures

Signed……………………………………………………….date……………………………

I have read the child protection policy and understand my responsibilities and what action I need to take under these procedures

Signed……………………………………………………….date……………………………

I have read the social media policy and understand my responsibilities and what action I need to take under these procedures

Signed……………………………………………………….date……………………………

I have read the touch policy and understand my responsibilities and what action I need to take under these procedures (youth club only)

Signed……………………………………………………….date……………………………

I have a completed the Introduction to Safeguarding online training

Signed…………………………………….date……………………………

APPENDIX G

**Reference Request Form**

Name of Applicant:

Post Applied for:

**What is the name of your organisation:**

**What position do you hold in relation to the applicant:**

**How long have you worked/did you work with the Applicant:**

**Please confirm the Applicant’s role and/or duties:**

**Please confirm the Applicant’s dates of employment:** Employment commenced: Employment ended:

Please confirm the reason for the termination of the Applicant’s employment (If the Applicant was dismissed, please explain the reason for the Applicant’s dismissal and the surrounding circumstances.):

Please rate the Applicant against the following criteria: (please continue on separate sheet if required)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Please rate the Applicant against the following criteria: (please continue on separate sheet if required) | **Needs substantial develop-ment** | **Needs develop-ment** | **Acceptable** | **Strong** | **Outstanding** |
| Attitude to work |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reliability |  |  |  |  |  |
| Working relationships with other staff |  |  |  |  |  |
| Skills |  |  |  |  |  |
| Experience |  |  |  |  |  |

Has the Applicant been the subject of disciplinary proceedings (whether formal or informal) during the last 12 months of their employment? If so, please provide details of the allegation (s) against the Applicant and the outcome of the proceedings. **Yes / No** \*delete as appropriate

Has the Applicant been the subject of disciplinary proceedings (whether formal or informal) involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people? If so, please provide details of the allegation (s) against the Applicant and the outcome of the proceedings. **Yes / No** \*delete as appropriate

Please provide details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised (whether formally or informally) about the Applicant which relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people:

With reference to the attached job description, are you satisfied that the Applicant has the ability and is suitable to undertake this role? If not, please give specific reasons for your concerns. **Yes / No** \*delete as appropriate

Are you completely satisfied that the Applicant is suitable to work with children? If, not please give specific reasons for your concerns. **Yes / No (**\*delete as appropriate)

Would you be willing to re-employ the Applicant? If your answer is “No”, please explain why. **Yes / No** (\*delete as appropriate)

Please include any other information which you consider may be relevant to the Applicant’s application:

If the applicant requests to see a copy of this reference, please indicate if you are happy for this reference to be shared with the applicant: **YES / NO\*** (Delete as appropriate)

If you are NOT happy for the applicant to see this reference please state your reasons:

*(Depending on the circumstances, we may still be legally required to share this reference with the candidate.)*

Signed:

Please print name:

Job Title: Dated:

Telephone No: Extension:

E-mail address:

Organisation’s name and address:

**Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy**

**Introduction**

***Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd*** is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, engaged in the breadth of its activities.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the duty and responsibility of staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of ***Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd*** in relation to the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse.

All adults have the right to be safe from harm and should be able to live free from fear

of abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The key objectives of this policy are:

* To explain the responsibilities ***Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd*** and its staff, volunteers and trustees have in respect of vulnerable adult protection.
* To provide staff with an overview of vulnerable adult protection.
* To provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where vulnerable adult protection issues arise.

**Context**

For the purpose of this document ‘adult’ means a person aged 18 years or over.

Some adults are less able to protect themselves than others, and some have difficulty making their wishes and feelings known. This may make them vulnerable to abuse. The broad definition of a ‘vulnerable adult’ referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper ‘Who decides?’ issued by the Lord Chancellor’s Department, is a person:

“Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation”.

The first priority should always be to ensure the safety and protection of vulnerable adults. To this end it is the responsibility of all staff to act on any suspicion or evidence of abuse or neglect (see the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998) and to pass on their concerns to a responsible person/agency.

For purposes of ensuring consistent and widely understood terminology, these policy and procedures will use the phrase ‘Vulnerable Adults’ to identify those eligible for interventions within the procedures.

**Legal framework**

This guidance reflects the principles contained within the Human Rights Act 1998, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005, covering England and Wales, provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves, or who have capacity and want to make preparations for a time when they may lack capacity in the future. It sets out who can take decisions, in which situations, and how they should go about this.

The Human Rights Act 1998 gives legal effect in the UK to the fundamental rights and freedoms contained in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) created a framework for whistle blowing

across the private, public and voluntary sectors. The Act provides almost every individual in the workplace with protection from victimisation where they raise genuine concerns about malpractice in accordance with the Act’s provisions.

**The role of staff, volunteers and trustees**

All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of ***Down Syndrome Training & Support Service Ltd*** have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.

Staff, volunteers and trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe vulnerable adults who are at risk. This policy will enable staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific adult protection issues.

**What is abuse?**

Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The Department of Health in its ‘No Secrets’ report suggests the following as the main types of abuse:

**• *Physical abuse*** - including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

• ***Sexual abuse*** - including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.

• ***Psychological abuse*** - including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

• ***Financial or material abuse*** - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

• ***Neglect and acts of omission*** - including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

• ***Discriminatory abuse*** - including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

**Procedure in the event of a disclosure**

It is important that vulnerable adults are protected from abuse. All complaints, allegations or suspicions must be taken seriously.

This procedure must be followed whenever an allegation of abuse is made or when there is a suspicion that a vulnerable adult has been abused.

Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information.

This should include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

**Responding to an allegation**

Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to a member of staff or volunteer as appropriate.

The nominated member of staff/ volunteer shall telephone and report the matter to the appropriate local adult social services duty social worker. A written record of the date and time of the report shall be made and the report must include the name and position of the person to whom the matter is reported. The telephone report must be confirmed in writing to the relevant local authority adult social services department within 24 hours.

**Safeguarding officers**

Our Safeguarding officers are

Named Person for Child Protection:      Wendy Rhodes

Work telephone number:                        01274 561308

Mobile number:                                     07426 540271

Emergency contact no:                            01132 554436 (home)

Deputy

Name of contact person:                        Wendy Uttley

Work telephone number:                        01274 561308

https://mail.google.com/mail/ca/images/cleardot.gifMobile number:                                     07816 465845

Emergency contact no:                          07816 465845 (home)

**Responding appropriately to an allegation of abuse**

In the event of an incident or disclosure:

**DO**

* Make sure the individual is safe
* Assess whether emergency services are required and if needed call them
* Listen
* Offer support and reassurance
* Ascertain and establish the basic facts
* Make careful notes and obtain agreement on them
* Ensure notation of dates, time and persons present are correct and agreed
* Take all necessary precautions to preserve forensic evidence
* Follow correct procedure
* Explain areas of confidentiality; immediately speak to your manager for support and guidance
* Explain the procedure to the individual making the allegation
* Remember the need for ongoing support.

**DON’T**

* Confront the alleged abuser
* Be judgmental or voice your own opinion
* Be dismissive of the concern
* Investigate or interview beyond that which is necessary to establish the basic facts
* Disturb or destroy possible forensic evidence
* Consult with persons not directly involved with the situation
* Ask leading questions
* Assume Information
* Make promises
* Ignore the allegation
* Elaborate in your notes
* Panic.

It is important to remember that the person who first encounters a case of alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional adult protection agencies, following a referral from the designated Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer.

**Confidentiality**

Vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality which should be clearly understood by all.

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and adult social services.

Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.

All personal information regarding a vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines. Records will only record details required in the initial contact form.

If an adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.

Within that context, the adult should, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it.

Where possible, consent should be obtained from the adult before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.

Where a disclosure has been made, staff should let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result.

Staff should assure the adult that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The adults’ involvement in the process of sharing information should be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.

**The role of key individual agencies**

**Adult Social Services**

The Department of Health’s recent ‘No secrets’ guidance document requires that authorities develop a local framework within which all responsible agencies work together to ensure a coherent policy for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.

All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multi-agency work aimed at protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults. It is normal practice for the board to comprise of people from partner organisations who have the ability to influence decision making and resource allocation within their organisation.

**The Police**

The Police play a vital role in Safeguarding Adults with cases involving alleged criminal acts. It becomes the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and gathering evidence. Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.

**CONFIRMATION OF READING POLICIES**

NAME...........................................................

CONFIRMATION OF READING AND UNDERSTANDING RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER OUR SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

I have read the vulnerable adults policy and understand my responsibilities what action I need to take under these procedures

Signed……………………………………………………….date……………………………

I have read the child protection policy and understand my responsibilities what action I need to take under these procedures

Signed……………………………………………………….date……………………………

I have read the code of conduct, confidentiality policy and social media policy and understand the actions recommended.

Signed……………………………………………………..date………………………………….

I have a completed the Introduction to Safeguarding online training. Please supply a copy of your certificate.

Signed…………………………………….date……………………………

Thank you.