

Gay Surrey Charity Child Protection Policy

Policy Statement

The Trustees and Volunteers that run the Gay Surrey Charity are dedicated to those practices that protect children from harm and abuse, and in accordance with the Protection of Children Act 1999. We recognise and accept our responsibilities to promote child welfare and safeguard all children that attend a Gay Surrey support group or event.

General Principles

There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe 'recruitment' of volunteers by checking suitability to work with children, ensuring they recognise that they should not abuse their status and by performing Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks where appropriate.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping Trustees and Volunteers with the skills and information surrounding identifying abuse and understanding reporting procedures required to keep children within our groups safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse to the designated Child Protection Officer.
- Supporting children who have been abused in accordance with an agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can develop self-awareness under the Gay Surrey umbrella.

Role of the designated Child Protection Officer

The role of the designated Child Protection Officer is to:

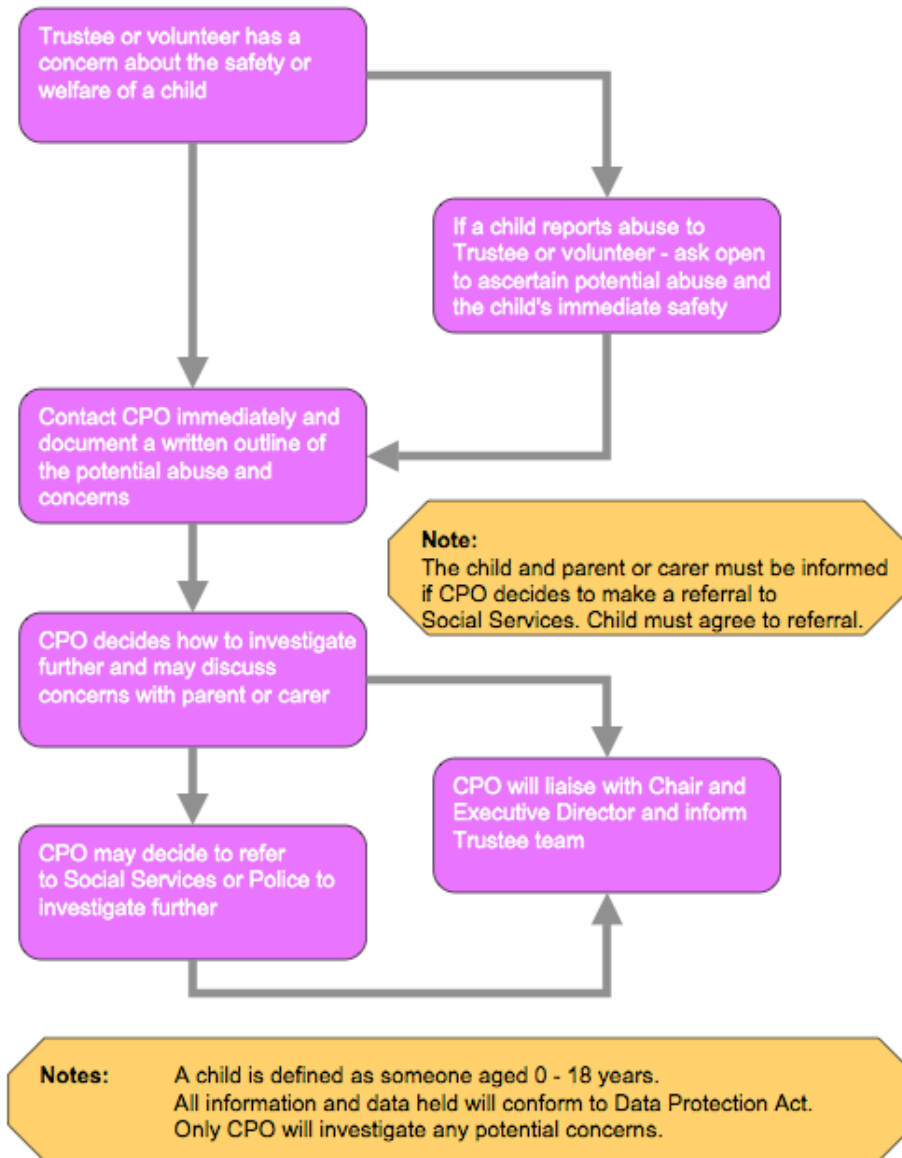
- Ensure that **Gay Surrey Charity's** Child Protection Policy is implemented throughout the organisation's work.
- Ensure that all necessary child protection-related enquiries, procedures and investigations are carried out and to report the results of such enquiries to the Trustees Committee.
- Ensure secure and confidential record-keeping on child protection matters, that a "need to know" confidentiality policy is preserved on such matters and that all Trustees and Volunteers apply themselves fully to the Data Protection Act, 1998.
- Liaise with Social Services and Surrey Police where appropriate on child protection matters, both formally and informally.
- Report on the implementation of the Child Protection policy at all Trustees Committee meetings where deemed appropriate.
- Ensure that there is adequate and appropriate training for all Trustees and Volunteers on child protection matters.
- Ensure that all activities carried out by **Gay Surrey** satisfy child protection requirements with regard to Trustees, Volunteers, practises and premises.
- Check and countersign all incident reports made by Trustees and Volunteers, making such reference to outside agencies as is appropriate after consultation with the Chief Executive and the Charity's Chair.

The designated Child Protection Officer for the registered charity Gay Surrey is:

Mrs Nick Ward (07005 982 429)

Deputy Mr Aaron Rodden (07005 982 429)

Action Plan



Definitions of Abuse

Abuse takes many forms:

Neglect:

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Physical Abuse:

Physical abuse may involve hitting, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Sexual Abuse:

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Emotional Abuse:

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Source: Working Together to Safeguard Children (DoH 1999)

Safeguarding Trustees and Volunteers

All Trustees and Volunteers of Gay Surrey Charity must safeguard themselves when undertaking support group / meetings / event activities:

- Children must be supervised at all times
- Trustees / Volunteers must know where children are at all times
- Sufficient numbers of Trustees / Volunteers in attendance
- Adults should work in pairs
- Criminal Records Bureau checks will be carried out if appropriate
- Trustees / Volunteers should not engage in activities that could be misinterpreted
- Trustees / Volunteers must never be alone with a child
- Trustees / Volunteers should never take a child in their car or take them back to the home of the Trustee / Volunteer. In the case of an emergency make sure that another adult is present at all times.
- Trustees / Volunteers must never abuse their position of power and trust to their own advantage

Handling Disclosures of Abuse

- Stay Calm and allow time for the child to talk.
- Ensure you and the child are not alone – stay within sight or others even if you take a quiet corner. If in a room have the door open at all time and open blinds or curtains if they are fitted.
- Listening skills – Listen to the child.
- Clarify the concerns by asking open questions, how, when, why etc.
- You don't need to press the child or ask too many in-depth questions – the Child Protection Officer (CPO) will consider this.
- Make no false promises to the child that you won't disclose the information.
- Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing by telling you.
- If deemed appropriate, ensure the child is aware that a referral will be made to the CPO and possibly Social Services.
- The child has to agree before a referral can be made to Social Services. If they do not agree to this, you should still raise a concern via the CPO.
- Write up a report using the child's comments as much as possible. Including time, dates and use names as used by the child.
- Raise any concern with the CPO, however minor or small you may think it is. It could be a small jigsaw in a wider picture.

Further Information

For further information regarding advice please contact:

Nicola Ward, CPO – 07766 688018

Policy agreed by the Trustees on 16th July 2007

Updated: 29-Apr-08