

Child Protection and Safeguarding Children's Policy

St Michael's offers a range of services to parents and children that include 3 registered family assessment centres, an outreach service working with young mums and dads under 25 years and their children, Jigsaw a family contact service and Securing Change that supports families moving into the community following an assessment.

One of our core values is: we are child-focused. Everything we do is aimed at improving the life chances of the individual child/children whose parent(s) use our services.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people who receive St Michael's services from harm.
- To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of St Michael's, including senior managers and the board of trustees, permanent staff, sessional staff, volunteers, interns and agency staff.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England.

Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance and other related documents:

- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording concerns and information sharing
- Child protection records retention and storage
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Photography and sharing of images guidance
- Safer recruitment
- Online safety
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Health and Safety
- Induction, training, supervision and support
- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer

We believe that:

- Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of young people
- All children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable to abuse and face additional barriers to making a disclosure or accessing support because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs, having a disability, being from the LGBTQ+ community or other factors
- Safeguarding includes keeping children safe from discriminatory behaviours such as those of a racist, homophobic and transphobic nature
- Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them at all times
- Appointing a nominated child protection lead for children and young people with a deputy, and a lead trustee for safeguarding
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently
- Ensuring all staff and trustees undertake mandatory safeguarding training as part of their induction to the organisation and then annually for staff and biannually for trustees.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing and using information professionally and securely in line with data protection legislation and guidance
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- Making sure that children and young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern
- Using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately

We have a duty to act should concerns/complaints on the safety of children and young adults in our care arise by:

- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Maintaining an environment where there is zero tolerance of bullying ensuring we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively should any bullying arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we have a safe physical environment for children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff, trustees and volunteers, children, young people and families, treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

Review

In order to remain relevant and in line with best practices in child protection and safeguarding this policy will be reviewed annually as well as any time a significant change is made to wider legislation, policy and guidance.

Contact details

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