



## STEYNING DOWNLAND SCHEME

### Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

#### Details of the Organisation

Name: Steyning Downland Scheme

Address: Wiston Estate Office, Wiston Park, West Sussex, BN44 3DD

Tel No: 01903 817996

Email address: [SDS@wistonestate.co.uk](mailto:SDS@wistonestate.co.uk)

Project Manager: Matthew Thomas

Charity Number: 1132957  
Company Number: 06946165  
Regulators: Charity Commission England and Wales

Insurance Company: NFU

Safeguarding Coordinator: Pete Butchers  
Safeguarding Tel: 01903 815720  
Safeguarding Email: [peter@thehubbeeding.org](mailto:peter@thehubbeeding.org)

#### Review Control

These Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be agreed by the SDS Trustees and distributed amongst all members. It will be reviewed periodically

Previously published versions of this policy:

Version: 11.02.16

Version: March 2021

## **Who we are**

The Steyning Downland Scheme (SDS) manages 165 acres (66 ha) of the Wiston Estate, on the South Downs National Park, near Steyning, West Sussex. A registered charity since 2009, we reconnect local people from all walks of life to our unique piece of species-rich downland, benefiting their mind, body and spirit. We create inspiring opportunities for new people to join the community through active volunteering, engaging events and inclusive access, so improving this special place for wildlife and for present and future generations to enjoy.

SDS runs an annual diverse programme of events for young people, including bushcraft and 'discovery days', working in partnership with Steyning Grammar School. Young people also use the land for informal recreation right through the year.

## **Our Commitment**

The Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults (regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability) as set out in The Children Act 1989 and 2004, Safe from Harm (HM Government 1994) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2010). We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect.

We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

As SDS we are concerned with the welfare and wholeness of each individual. We seek to safeguard all who access our scheme including all ages. It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, and neglect of children, young people and adults at risk. In fulfilling this the Leadership undertakes to:

- endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to international conventions.
- provide safeguarding training for all volunteers involved in working with children and will regularly review the SDS Policy and Procedures.
- ensure that the scheme meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- support the Safeguarding Coordinator in their work and in any action, they may need to take in order to protect children and adults at risk.

The Leadership agrees that this document is not to be copied by other organisations.

## Our responsibilities

It is the duty of every member of SDS, including trustees to help prevent the abuse of children, young people and adults at risk and to respond to concerns about the well-being of those connected to the scheme. Any abuse disclosed, discovered or suspected will be reported in accordance with our procedures.

The Steyning Downland Scheme expects all visiting groups who use SDS land to have a current Safeguarding policy and Procedure in place and for their responsible adults to hold a disclosure and barring check and have had any relevant training.

SDS seeks to promote best safeguarding practice by ensuring all workers/members realise they are responsible for promoting best safeguarding practice across the scheme.

## Prevention

### Understanding abuse and neglect

1. Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.
2. In order to safeguard those in The Steyning Downland Scheme, we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19:
  1. *States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*
  2. *Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.*

3. Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5:

*No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.*

Detailed definitions, and signs and indicators of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

## **Safer recruitment**

The Leadership will ensure all staff will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment.

Where our volunteers may be involved with working with young people and/or vulnerable adults, we will ensure that:

- A disclosure and barring check has been completed
- Qualifications and/or experience where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided
- Suitable supervision is given where deemed necessary

## **Safeguarding training**

The Trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for both staff and volunteers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All staff will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis.

## **Management of Staff and Volunteers – Codes of Conduct**

The Trustees are committed to supporting both staff and volunteers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. Staff and volunteers leading groups or activities which involve children and/or vulnerable adults will be issued with a card which includes a code of conduct towards children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

## Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable staff and volunteers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation. In accordance with this no staff or volunteer, when involved in an organised group activity should be working alone.

As well as a general code of conduct we also have specific good practice guidelines for every activity we are involved in and these are attached or in the appendices.

## Working in Partnership

There can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines with regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership. We will discuss with all relevant partners and contractors our safeguarding expectations. It is also our expectation that any organisation using the Steyning Downland Scheme will have their own policy.

## Responding to allegations of abuse

1. Under no circumstances should staff or volunteers carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:
2. Documenting a concern: Make a report of the concern in the following way:
3. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:
  - Safeguarding Coordinator: Pete Butchers
  - Safeguarding Tel: 01903 815720
  - Safeguarding Email: peter@thehubbeeding.org
3. The above is nominated by the Trustess to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

4. In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

- Project Manager: Matthew Thomas
- Tel No: 01903 817996
- Email address: [SDS@wistonestate.co.uk](mailto:SDS@wistonestate.co.uk)

5. If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Project Manager, then the report should be made in the first instance to:

- **thirtyone:eight** PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ.
- Tel: 0303 003 1111.
- Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.

6. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact the appropriate agency or they may first ring the thirtyone:eight helpline for advice. They should then contact social services in the area the child or adult lives.

- Name of local authority: West Sussex County Council
- Address: Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, 4th Floor, County Hall North (Parkside), Chart Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1XH
- Tel: 01403 229900
- Out of hours Tel: 033 022 26664
- Website address: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/children/contact-us-for-childrens-social-care-support/>
- Adult Social Services
- Tel: 01243 642121
- Out of hours Tel: 01243 642121
- Website Address: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/adults/contact-us-for-adult-social-care-support/>

7. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern:

- The Chair of the Trustees or Project Manager who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Designated officer or LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) if the allegation concerns a worker or volunteer working with someone under 18.

8. Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place. SDS will adhere to the (GDPR) General Data Protection Regulations in keeping written records.
9. Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from thirtyone:eight.
10. The Trustees will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
11. It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from thirtyone:eight, although the Trustees hope that staff and volunteers will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator as to the appropriateness of a referral, they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Trustees demonstrate their commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.
12. The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

## **Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:**

### **Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.**

1. If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:
  - Contact Children's Social Services (or thirtyone:eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
  - Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
  - Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.

2. For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
3. Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
4. Seek and follow advice given by thirtyone:eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.

### **Allegations of sexual abuse**

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator will:

1. Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
2. Seek and follow the advice given by thirtyone:eight if for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

### **Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:**

**Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including; physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.**

13. If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact thirtyone:eight and in discussion with them will consider appropriate action with regards to the scale of the concern.
- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively thirtyone:eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

### **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people**

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker

- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

### **Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs**

The Safeguarding Coordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide not the Steyning Downland Scheme.