



Safeguarding Procedures - The Access Project

1. Safeguarding Summary/Overview

All children have the right to a childhood free from harm and abuse, and all adults involved in The Access Project have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people¹ participating in our programme. Our frontline staff and volunteers are in the privileged position to get to know the young people they work with well, to develop trusting relationships, observe changes in behaviour and they may be chosen by the young person to share concerns.

There may be occasions where child abuse is alleged or suspected. All such situations must be taken seriously. It is the policy of The Access Project to safeguard the welfare of children and young people involved in The Access Project's activities by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm, and neglect.

It is the responsibility of each adult involved in The Access Project to ensure that his/her behaviour is appropriate at all times, and our Code of Conduct provides positive guidance for all adults. It is essential that this is followed. Details of the steps to take if abuse is alleged or suspected are also included in this document. These procedures exist not to discourage adults from being involved in the life of this service but to ensure, as far as possible, that people who may abuse children do not get the opportunity to do so.

2. Designated Child Protection Officer

The Access Project has a Designated Child Protection Officer to support staff and volunteers with any safeguarding issues that may arise and to act as the main point of contact in the event of an allegation or disclosure.

- If there is an allegation or you have identified signs and indicators of abuse then this information **must** be passed immediately to the Designated Child Protection Officer. If it is an emergency - and the child is at risk - you **must** contact the police or NSPCC first and then inform the Designated Child Protection Officer.
- If the allegation or indicators of abuse are passed on to The Access Project, it is the Designated Child Protection Officer's responsibility to collect all relevant information and make decisions on how to proceed, (this may include contacting the Designated Safeguarding Officers in the young person's school, or Children's Social Care or police, who are the investigative agencies). It is important to remember that The Access Project staff are **not** investigating officers. At all times, the welfare of the young person is paramount. Swift reporting will enable the investigative agency to give advice and take appropriate action.
- You have a legal duty of care to pass on all relevant information regarding any allegations of abuse, or identified signs and indicators of possible abuse.

¹ For the purposes of this document, "young person" refers to anyone under the age of 18.



Our Designated Child Protection Officer can be contacted at:

E: stayingsafe@theaccessproject.org.uk

M: Safeguarding Line: **07542 881 501**

T: London Office: **020 3960 6592**

If you think a child is in immediate danger, call the police on 999 or the NSPCC straight away

NSPCC Helpline: **0808 800 5000** (available 24/7) NSPCC Email: helpline@nspcc.org.uk

NSPCC Website: www.nspcc.org.uk

3. Complying with The Access Project's Safeguarding Child Policy

All adults coming into contact with children and young people through The Access Project must comply with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Code of Conduct.

Definitions of Abuse

Physical Abuse: physical injury to a child where there is knowledge, or a reasonable suspicion, that their injury was inflicted or knowingly not prevented.

Neglect: the persistent or severe neglect of a child which results in serious impairment of the child's health or development (both physical and mental).

Emotional Abuse: the persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment of a child which has severe adverse effect on the behaviour and emotional development of that child.

Sexual Abuse: the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent

You can find further information relating to the signs and symptoms of child abuse via this link

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/information-service/definitions-signs-child-abuse.pdf>

If you have identified any signs or indicators that a child/young person is being abused:

1. Immediately contact the Designated Child Protection Officer.
2. Record the known facts in writing and send them to the Designated Child Protection Officer:
 - **Names of those involved (volunteer, TAP member of staff, young person's name)**
 - **Date/ time of incident/ concern arising**
 - **An overview of the incident/ concern:**
 - **Where did it happen?**
 - **When did it happen?**
 - **Factual information, use exact words spoken if possible.**
 - **Any action taken**
 - **Any other relevant information**



3. In the event of an emergency - and the child is at risk - inform the police or NSPCC first and then the Designated Child Protection Officer.

If a child or young person discloses information relating to abuse

1. Allow him/her to speak without interruption, encouraging them to tell you only what they feel comfortable telling you, and be accepting of what is said.
2. Advise him/her that you will offer support, but that you **MUST** pass information on to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
3. If they refuse to tell you anything unless you promise to keep it a secret, inform them that you want to help and that there is one person you have to tell (the Designated Child Protection Officer). If they then refuse to tell you any more, please respect their decision and report this incident.
4. Immediately after a disclosure, contact the Designated Child Protection Officer. In the event of an emergency – and the child is at risk – inform the police or NSPCC first and then the Designated Child Protection Officer.
5. Record the facts as you know them in writing as above, including the account given to you by the young person using the words.
6. Provide this written information to the Designated Child Protection Officer as soon as you are able.

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

1. Immediately tell the Designated Child Protection Officer.
2. Record the facts as you know them in writing as above and give them to the Designated Child Protection Officer.
3. In the event of an emergency – and the child is at risk – inform the police or NSPCC first and then the Designated Child Protection Officer.

If you deal with the personal data of young people:

1. Handle all information with sensitivity and confidentiality.
2. The information should be kept securely and not be made available to others without the authority of The Access Project.
3. Where necessary, dispose of data relating to under 18s in a confidential manner.
4. Do not use the information inappropriately, especially if it will cause harm to the young person concerned.



4. Training and Supervision

All members of staff and volunteers must undertake and pass The Access Project's online Safeguarding Children training and also pass the Safeguarding assessments including obtaining DBS clearance and two references. Every three years at least, DBS checks must be refreshed and staff and volunteers retrained. This training covers detailed information in addition to this document.

We may from time to time drop into volunteer tutorials for quality assurance, safeguarding and feedback purposes. We will contact volunteers prior to doing so to confirm. This is a vital part of ensuring effective delivery, so we require our volunteers to be cooperative with these requests.



Code of Conduct

For staff and volunteers interacting with young people on The Access Project.

You must:

- ✓ Report any incidents or concerns that a child may be at risk. This includes a requirement under the Prevent duty to report if you suspect that a child or adult at risk may be under the influence of radicalisation or extremism.
- ✓ Operate within The Access Project's Safeguarding Children Procedures in the event of any disclosure/concern.
- ✓ Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour that are inappropriate.
- ✓ Treat all young people with respect.
- ✓ Only communicate with the young people on the programme in a professional manner.
- ✓ Be sensitive to the needs of young people.
- ✓ Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- ✓ Treat all information and data (including photographs and video footage) pertaining to a young person with sensitivity.
- ✓ Avoid being alone with a young person. All tutorials must happen in a public place or in an office meeting room or other public place within the office with a door open, ensuring there are other people present in the tutorial vicinity.
- ✓ Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- ✓ Be aware that any physical contact with a young person can be misinterpreted and should always be avoided.
- ✓ Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people.
- ✓ Refer to our Lone worker Policy when setting up your tutorials.



You must not:

- X Engage in, or attempt to engage in, sexual or inappropriate relationships with a young person on The Access Project.
- X Make suggestive or derogatory remarks in front of young people or via electronic communication
- X Communicate with a young person on The Access Project by social media, which includes (but is not limited to) 'LinkedIn', 'WhatsApp', 'Facebook', 'Snapchat' and 'Skype'.
- X Give special rewards or privileges to build up an inappropriate relationship with a young person. Gifts may only be given and received in line with our Gift Giving policy and you should be aware of your obligations under the *Bribery Act 2010* at all times.
- X Be under the influence of alcohol or other substances when working on activities involving young people.
- X Take photographs of young people without permission from relevant Access Project staff.
- X Transfer the personal data of young people to third parties without express permission from relevant Access Project staff, the young person or their family.
- X Reveal excessive personal details to a young person on The Access Project (for example, your address).
- X Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- X Discriminate against or harass a young person or any other volunteer or Access Project Staff on the basis of that person's age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy or maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and/or sexual orientation.
- X Rely on your good name or that of the organisation to protect you.

Any serious breaches may result in a referral being made to the police or the relevant Local Authorities Designated Officer.