

# SUMMERHOUSE

'Supporting Brighter Futures'

## Child Protection Policy

SUMMERHOUSE fully recognises its responsibilities for child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff and volunteers working for SUMMERHOUSE. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of all staff and volunteers working in the Business. All staff are required to fulfil an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check and appropriate references are obtained before they commence work with children and young people.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children and young people with the skills needed to keep them safe within the remit of the work of the SUMMERHOUSE.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Working with schools, colleges, agencies and individuals in supporting children and young people who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children and young people can learn and develop.

SUMMERHOUSE recognises that because its staff have day to day contact with children and young people they are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. SUMMERHOUSE will therefore:

- Work to create and maintain an environment where children and young people feel secure, are encouraged to talk and are listened to.
- Work with children and young people to identify appropriate adults within their educational or wider environment whom they can approach if they are worried.
- Provide training opportunities to young people to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

When delivering our services to schools, colleges and agencies we will work within the procedures laid down by their Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies and take into account guidance issued by the Department for Education to:

- Ensure we, including our staff and volunteers, are aware of the designated adult within each individual school, college or agency and confirm they are appropriately trained and supported for this role.
- Ensure all volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to their designated SUMMERHOUSE Supervisor.
- Ensure all SUMMERHOUSE Facilitators and all other paid SUMMERHOUSE workers within schools, colleges or agencies understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and for reporting any concerns to the designated Safeguarding Officer within the school/college.
- Keep written and confidential records of concerns about children and young people, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of SUMMERHOUSE staff and volunteers.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

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In addition to the above, when delivering SUMMERHOUSE services in our own venues or other community settings we will adhere to our own Child Protection Procedures in line with the Area Child Protection Committee by:

- Ensuring we have a nominated Officer responsible for child protection.
- Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the Child Protections Register.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and cooperate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Use the framework as laid down by HM Government 'Working Together to Safeguard Children,' to proceed with and report cases of concern if we identify children and young people being at risk.
- Hold risk assessment meetings with Line Management and relevant staff involved to determine the level of action needed and to ensure safe working practices.

SUMMERHOUSE recognises that children and young people who have experienced abuse may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and some a sense of blame. The environment that SUMMERHOUSE provides within schools, colleges and community settings may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When working with us they may express themselves through a number of behaviours. We will endeavour to support every child and young person through:

- The content and delivery style of our programmes.
- The SUMMERHOUSE ethos which promotes a positive, accepting, supportive and safe environment and values every child and young person.
- Raising awareness with children and young people that some behaviours are unsafe for self and others whilst conveying they are not to blame for any abuse that has occurred and that they are valued regardless of this.
- Liaising and creating positive links with agencies and individuals of whom SUMMERHOUSE is aware, that support the child or young person.

All employees and volunteers will receive training and guidance on this policy and will be assessed on their competence to apply its principles.

The SUMMERHOUSE Child Protection Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in line with local and national legislation and guidance.

Policy Created – Tuesday 1 June 2021.

Review Due – June 2022.