



**The  
Box Moor  
Trust**

# Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk

## **Introduction**

At The Box Moor Trust, we have a responsibility to keep all children and vulnerable adults (hereafter referred to as “individuals”) safe from harm. The Trust recognises that individuals from any background or community can be at risk, regardless of age, gender, religion or ethnicity.

Safeguarding procedures and policies are in place to ensure all staff, volunteers, Trustees and associates at The Box Moor Trust know what to do if they are concerned about an individual’s welfare. The word “staff” in this policy refers to: all staff members, the Board of Trustees, volunteers, students and all associates.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff at The Box Moor Trust to act on any concerns they have about an individual, through the appropriate methods outlined in this document. It is not the responsibility of staff to decide whether or not abuse or neglect has taken place.

The Box Moor Trust will ensure all staff who reports a concern that an individual may be at risk in good faith are fully supported.

To clarify, a vulnerable adult is:

an individual over 18 who has needs for care and support and/or who is at risk of abuse or neglect and is unable to protect themselves.

This document sets out the procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding of the children and vulnerable adults involved with The Box Moor Trust.

## **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

The Box Moor Trust believes that it is always unacceptable for an individual to experience abuse or neglect of any kind. It recognises its responsibility to safeguard any individual at risk receiving The Box Moor Trust services.

### **The Box Moor Trust recognises that:**

- The welfare of all individuals is paramount.
- All individuals at risk have the right to equal protection from all types of harm and abuse, regardless of their age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religion, sexual orientation or identity.
- We need to work in partnership with individuals at risk, their parents / carers and other agencies to promote welfare.

### **The purpose of this policy is:**

- To provide protection for individuals who receive The Box Moor Trust's services.
- To provide The Box Moor Trust staff with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect an individual to be at risk of, or experiencing, harm.

### **We will safeguard individuals by:**

- Establishing an environment where individuals at risk feel secure and are valued, respected and listened to.
- Adopting a code of practice for working with individuals at risk.
- Practising safe recruitment and checking the suitability of staff to work with individuals at risk, including ensuring a DBS is obtained for all those in contact with children.
- Ensuring all staff receive appropriate safeguarding training, which will be refreshed at three yearly intervals.
- Assigning the role of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to the Estate Manager and ensure they are appropriately trained.
- Nominating a Trustee to be responsible for safeguarding and to be aware of the requirements this role entails.
- Keeping written records of any concern, even when the DSL decides there is no need for referral.
- Keeping all records secure and in locked locations in accordance with The Data Protection Act and GDPR guidelines.
- Developing and following procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff, a volunteer or a Trustee at The Box Moor Trust.
- Always following the Box Moor Trust Code of Practice for working with children and adults at risk.

## Action Plan

To ensure all staff at The Box Moor Trust are aware of and understand the safeguarding measures we have in place, The Box Moor Trust will:

- Ensure all staff members receive a safeguarding briefing as part of their induction and attend our 'Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk' training courses where relevant to their role as soon as it is possible, with a refresher every 3 years.
- Ensure this document is accessible to all staff on the shared network space.
- Ensure our safeguarding policy is available to members of the public through our website.
- Ensure all staff know where safeguarding incident forms are kept.
- Operate safe recruitment practices, including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to government and local safeguarding board guidance.

## **The Box Moor Trust Code of Practice for Working with Children and Adults at Risk.**

This outlines the code of behaviour expected of The Box Moor Trust staff and advises on protection of children and adults at risk. Following this code will help to protect The Box Moor Trust by reducing the possibility of anyone using their role within the organisation to gain access to individuals at risk in order to abuse them or cause them harm.

When working for The Trust with individuals at risk all persons are considered to be acting in a position of trust. It is important that everyone is aware they must be seen as appropriate role models by children and act in an appropriate manner at all times, following our code of practice.

All Box Moor Trust staff working with individuals at risk require clearance through DBS procedures. Although you may start undertaking a role with children whilst this is being processed, you should ensure you are **always** with an adult who has prior clearance.

The Trust will ensure that all staff members are aware that sexual relations between themselves and a person under 18 years of age may be unlawful, which could result in legal proceedings being taken against them in line with the Sexual Offences Act 2003. (Abuse of position of Trust).

Sexual relationships between any member of staff and a vulnerable adult using the Trusts' services represent a serious breach of trust and are not permissible under any circumstances.

All members of staff are expected to report any breaches of this code to the DSL for The Box Moor Trust. Staff members who breach this code of conduct may be subject to Trust disciplinary procedures. Serious breaches of this code may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as Police or Children's Services Department.

### **When working with children and adults at risk it is important to:**

- Always adhere to The Box Moor Trust Safeguarding Policy .
- Ensure there are always at least two adults present during activities with individuals at risk.
- Listen to and respect individuals at risk at all times.
- Treat individuals at risk fairly and without prejudice. Avoid favouritism.
- Value and take seriously contributions of individuals at risk .
- Ensure any contact with an individual at risk is appropriate and relative to the activity.
- Always use appropriate, non-offensive and non-discriminatory language.
- Provide examples of good conduct that you wish others to follow.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and promptly report any allegations / suspicions of abuse and/or neglect.

**When working with individuals at risk you must never:**

- Patronise any individuals.
- Allow allegations to go unreported.
- Develop inappropriate relationships such as contact individuals at risk that are not part of Trust work or agreed by a manager.
- Provide individuals at risk with your personal contact details (including mobile number, address or social networking details).
- Use sarcasm or insensitive comments.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Make inappropriate promises, particularly in relation to confidentiality.
- Make suggestive or derogatory comments or gestures.
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts.
- Exaggerate or trivialise abuse or neglect issues.
- Rely on your good name or that of the Trust to protect you from allegations.
- Use racist or sexist language.
- Smoke, drink alcohol or take drugs.
- Let individuals at risk adult out of the sight of you or other responsible adults in your group.
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another, more prudent approach.

## Procedures:

The procedures detailed in this section apply to all members of Trust staff and volunteers, including Trustees. The guidelines ensure that everyone knows what to do if they are concerned about an individual at risk.

### **Recognising Abuse:**

The term abuse is used to describe when someone in a position of trust hurts harms or causes distress to an individual at risk. Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights and can be committed by another person or persons. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated actions directly or indirectly and can happen anywhere. The four main types of abuse are:

**Physical Abuse:** Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

**Sexual Abuse:** Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

**Neglect / Acts of Omission:** Ignoring medical, emotional or physical needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**Psychological Abuse:** Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or support networks.

In addition to these are the following categories of abuse:

**Financial or Material:** Theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Discriminatory:** Forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender or gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

**Organisational:** Neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice such as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

**Domestic Violence:** Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.

**Modern Slavery:** Slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

**Self-neglect:** This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and including behaviours such as hoarding.

**FGM:** Female Genital Mutilation (sometimes referred to as female circumcision) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. This practice is illegal in the UK.

**Forced Marriage:** A forced marriage is where one or both people do not or cannot consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. It is an indefensible practice and is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against men and women, domestic / child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

**Radicalisation:** An individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and / or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.

**Hate Crime:** Crimes committed against someone because of their disability, gender-identity, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation are hate crimes and should be reported to the police. Hate crimes can include: threatening behaviour; assault; robbery; damage to property; inciting others to commit hate crimes; harassment.

**Mate Crime:** Exploitation, abuse or theft from any vulnerable person by those they consider to be their friends. Those that commit such abuse or theft are often referred to as 'fake friends'.

**Cyber Bullying:** Takes place through mobile phones, emails, online gaming, social networking and much more. It can include; Hurtful text messages; Name calling on social networking pages; Threats online; Being targeted online because of who you are, or because someone thinks you are 'different'

**Signs of abuse and / or neglect to look out for include:**

- Frequent mood changes.
- Unusual eating patterns (e.g. stealing food from others or refusal to eat).
- Changes in physical appearance.
- Becoming quiet and withdrawn.
- Attention seeking, aggression or self-harm.
- Poor hygiene.
- Never wanting to go home / running away.



- Tiredness.
- Seductive, sexualised behaviour/ sexual knowledge beyond their years.
- Bedwetting.
- Fear of making mistakes.
- Excessive washing
- Frequent bruises and attempts to hide them
- Burns, black eyes, broken bones, concussion, missing hair.
- Flinching/fear of physical contact
- Possession of unexplained amounts of money
- Taking a parental role at home and functioning beyond their normal age
- Alluding to secrets which they cannot reveal
- Compulsive nervous habits such as hair twisting or rocking
- An excessive need of approval attention and affection
- An inability to cope with praise.

### **How to respond if a child or vulnerable adult reports abuse or neglect to you.**

**It is never the responsibility of any member of staff of The Box Moor Trust to decide whether or not abuse or neglect has taken place. However, all staff have a responsibility to act on concerns and report them to the DSL and subsequent authorities. The Box Moor Trust will ensure all staff are given full support and will protect anyone who in good faith reports his/her concern that an individual may be at risk.**

If a child or adult at risk reports abuse or neglect to you, you should:

- Remain calm
- Take what the individual says seriously
- Listen to what is being said by the individual and try to obtain a clear and accurate understanding of what is being said. Do not ask any leading questions.
- Don't ask about explicit details
- Reassure the individual. Do not promise confidentiality as this is not feasible
- Do not give an opinion on the situation, only offer reassurance.
- Inform the individual what you will do next
- Do not attempt to discuss anything with parents or carers
- As soon as possible after the disclosure complete a 'safeguarding incident report' form (these are in the Trust Centre's main office and on SharePoint). Make a full, detailed, written record with everything that was said and heard. Ensure it is dated and signed.
- Give to the DSL ASAP.
- Ensure that the information is kept confidential at all times. Do not talk about any of the details with anyone other than the DSL.

The report should include;

- The individual's name, age and date of birth
- The individual's home address and telephone number
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concerns or those of someone else
- The nature of the allegation including dates and times and any other relevant information
- Clear definition between fact, opinion and hearsay
- A description of any physical signs such as bruising and any indirect signs such as behavioural changes
- Details of any other witnesses to the incident
- The individuals at risk's account of what has happened as heard by the reporter
- Has anyone else been consulted, if so who and what has been said.

The report must then be passed immediately to the DSL for The Box Moor Trust who will make the appropriate referral:

Children's Services 0300 123 4043

Health and Community Services 0300 123 4042

Herts Safeguarding Adults Board 0300 1234042

Police, as appropriate.

If it is not possible to report to the DSL, the information should be passed to another senior management member immediately. All referrals must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours of being reported.

### **How to respond to suspected abuse or neglect**

Follow the procedure as above, ensuring you do not discuss the situation with the suspected victim or anyone associated with them.

In addition to the above, the form should include:

- A description of any physical signs such as bruising and any indirect signs such as behavioural changes

### **How to respond to allegations of abuse against a member of staff / volunteer.**

Follow the procedure as above, ensuring you do not discuss the situation with anyone within the organisation. In the case that it is not possible to refer the case to the DSL, refer it to the highest level of management appropriate.