

**SOHBET SOCIETY**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

**Introduction**

Nothing is more important than children’s welfare. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified. We, as Sohbet Society want a system that responds to the needs and interests of children and families.

Sohbet Society believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, mentors, supervisors, paid staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Sohbet Society .

**Principles:**

The purpose of this policy is:

* To create safe settings and services which take the issue of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children seriously.
* To protect children and young people who receive Sohbet Society ’s services, including the children of adults who use our services.
* To provide staff, volunteers, child and the parents with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
* To ensure all children feel safe, are treated as individuals and their rights, values and beliefs are respected.
* To take action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Legal framework:**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely the:

* Children Act 1989
* United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
* Data Protection Act 2018
* Human Rights Act 1998
* Sexual Offences Act 2003
* Children Act 2004
* Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
* Children and Families Act 2014
* Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers: HM Government 2015
* Working together to safeguarding children 2010
* Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2015
* Working together to safeguard children: statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2018

**We recognise that:**

* Children need to be and feel safe in our setting.
* The welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989.
* All children regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
* Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.
* Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.
* Safeguarding is everyone’sresponsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part.
* No single professional can have a full picture of a child’s needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. *Working Together to Safeguard Children, HM Government (2015)*
* Individual practitioners, whether paid or volunteer, should be aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and protecting children from harm, how they should respond to child protection concerns and how to make a referral to local authority children’s social care or the police if necessary. *Working together to safeguard children, HM Government 2018*

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

* Valuing them, listening, and ensuring that their voice is heard and provide appropriate support.
* Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people, a deputy, and a board member lead for safeguarding.
* Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
* Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
* Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures.
* Ensuring that our staff and volunteers have fulfilled their safeguarding responsibilities.
* Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring everyone gets DBS checked.
* Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions.
* Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately.
* Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
* Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
* Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
* Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

**Recognising Abuse and Neglect**

**Different forms of abuse and neglect**

The following definitions are based on those from *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010*

**Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after.

**Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development.

**Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether the child is aware of what is happening.

**Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's heath or development.

**Responding to Abuse and Neglect**

**DO:**

* Always treat any allegations extremely seriously and act towards the child as if you believe what they are saying.
* Tell the child they are right to tell you.
* Reassure them that they are not to blame.
* Be honest about your own position, who you must tell and why.
* Tell the child what you are doing and when and keep them up to date with what is happening.
* Take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
* Write down everything said and what was done.

**DON’T:**

* Make promises you cannot keep.
* Interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and Children’s social care, who have experience in this.
* Cast doubt on what the child has told you, do not interrupt or change the subject.
* Say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse.
* Do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advise.

**Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)**

* The Designated Safeguarding Officer has lead responsibility and accountability for child protection.
* The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer must ensure that all staff have access to regular safeguarding supervision and ensure each member of staff and volunteer has understand the child protection policy and procedures.
* Where there are concerns about a child, Designated Safeguarding Officer is the first point-of-call for all staff. The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer will act as a source of support, advice, and expertise to staff on matters of safety and safeguarding and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
* The Designated Safeguarding Officer must keep accurate, secure, and detailed written records of concerns and referrals.
* The Designated Safeguarding Lead should ensure the Sohbet Society ’s policies are known and used appropriately.
* Where there is a concern, the mentor of the child must compile a form to forward to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Designated safeguarding Officer must review the concern form and decide about next steps.
* The next steps can either be monitoring, contacting the parent, or referring to social care depends on the decision that has been made.
* It is not the role of the designated safeguarding officers to decide whether a child has been abused or not. This is the task of the children’s service authorities who have the legal responsibility.
* Designated safeguarding officer should always follow up their concerns if they are not satisfied with the local authority’s response.

**INDUCTION**

**Contact details**

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Name: YON

Phone/Email: yozcan@mentorwise.org.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

www.ceop.police.uk

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 26/03/2021

Next policy review due on: 26/03/2022

Signed: AES- Admin and Finance Officer