**Together for Colwyn Bay (TFCB) Company limited by Guarantee (CLG)**

**Safeguarding Policy**

* TFCB CLG’s designated Safeguarding Persons are Georgia Coleman (07858664728 or 07702638676) and Kai Davies (07895 563527)

**Introduction**
The Volunteer Directors of TFCB want children and adults to safely enjoy their involvement with TFCB and projects it supports. This policy is aimed at the volunteers (this includes Directors), staff, and leaders of organisations engaging in TFCB funded work though it will only formally apply to staff and Directors.

**Through this Policy we aim to:**

* adopt the highest possible standards in conduct and
* take all reasonable steps in relation to the safety and welfare of the children and adults who come into contact with TFCB and the activities that it supports.

It is impossible to ensure that no one ever comes to any harm while in contact with TFCB supported projects. However, implementing this policy and following the guidelines will enable all TFCB volunteers (this includes Directors), staff, and supported organisations to undertake their work with children and adults confident that they have taken all reasonable precautions to prevent harm occurring while feeling prepared to deal with any incident should it occur.

TFCB expects all volunteers and staff to apply this policy to all work with children and young people (anyone under the age of 18 years) and all adults, some of whom may be more at risk than others. You should apply appropriate safeguards when dealing with vulnerable people of all ages. The policy reflects the fact that it is our legal obligation to protect children as “the welfare of the child is paramount” (Children Act 1989) and our moral duty to protect adults, particularly those who are most at risk, due to age, illness or disability. Adults at risk may include those who, due to age, illness or disability are in need of support or assistance, whether they are receiving that support or not.

It is important to remember that you may come into contact with children, young people and adults at risk in a wide range of situations and these will include:

* children attending events organised and/or funded by TFCB
* children attending as members of organisations supported through TFCB

It is important that this policy is seen to apply and the guidelines followed in all situations in which you have contact with children, young people and vulnerable people of all ages.

**Who does this policy apply to?**

The policy applies to:

* all employees (including  permanent, fixed term and short term temporary appointments)
* any other person working or volunteering with TFCB who a member of the public might reasonably assume was an employee or volunteer (volunteers includes Directors of TFCB CLG)
* contractors (who should work in contact with a named volunteer or staff member)

All those covered by the policy have a duty to do everything reasonable in their power to ensure the safety and welfare of children and adults while they are in contact with them.

In addition TFCB expects organisations it funds who are working with children or vulnerable adults to have in place safeguarding policies of their own. This is explicit in the TfCB project proposal form.

**Duties**

Volunteers and staff are expected to:

* Respect the wishes and views of all you have contact with, child or adult; you must not impose your company, assumptions or expectations on them.
* Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any service user, child or adult in contact with TFCB.
* Remember to be a good role model and ensure your behaviour, language, gestures etc. are appropriate, above reproach and beyond misinterpretation.
* Be aware of Child / Adult Protection issues in relation to the work you do and do not become complacent and believe ‘it could never happen to me / here’.
* Prevent any other volunteer or member of staff from putting any person, child or adult, in a situation in which there is a significant risk to their health and safety.
* Take appropriate action if you become aware of anyone physically, emotionally or sexually abusing a child / adult.
* Report any evidence or reasonable suspicion that a child / adult has been or is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused whether by an adult or a child to TFCB CLG’s Designated Safeguarding Persons (see first point of this document for names and contact numbers) or to any of the other Volunteer Directors if either not available.
* Not physically, emotionally, financially or sexually abuse any child or young or vulnerable adult person.
* Recognise and report the neglect of an adult or child as a form of abuse.

**To minimize the risk of misinterpretation of your behaviour**

 Sometimes false accusations are made and therefore it doesn’t make sense to

* Spend an excessive length of time with one child away from other people and/or close doors to rooms when with an individual. See above - **you must not be alone with a child or young person** unless you have
	+ a completed DBS check for TFCB and
	+ the advanced, written, specific permission of their parent or carer.
* Take a child or young person on a car journey with less than 2 adults, however short, (if its unavoidable, use a mobile phone/ask another person to time your journey, and back)
* Allow children or young people to use inappropriate suggestive language unchallenged
* Make suggestive remarks or tease, even in fun
* Do things of a personal nature that the child or young person can do for him/her self

**Responsibilities - Activities where anyone e.g. parent, teacher or other group leader accompanies a child or vulnerable adult or leads a group of children or adults at risk:**

* Where children are accompanied by an adult, primary responsibility for the children remains with that person.
* Where an adult is accompanied by family or a carer, primary responsibility remains with that person.
* Volunteers and staff of TFCB should nonetheless use this Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines as the basis for their action and any advice they offer.
* They should not agree to anything which contravenes this Policy and is not in line with the Guidelines.

If, due to illness or another unexpected event, a representative of TFCB is left in charge of a child /vulnerable adult or group then they should act in accordance with this Policy and Guidelines.

**Responsibilities - Activities where children or vulnerable adults are unaccompanied:**
In most instances the children you come into contact with will be accompanied by a leader of an organisation or parent or carer. However should you be left in charge of an unaccompanied individual or group then it is your responsibility to:

* Make decisions during the event following the principles set out in this Policy and Guidelines.

During activities where an adult who appears to be vulnerable is unaccompanied, it may be appropriate to:

* sensitively question them about what they are there for, how they got there and who with
* find out who the person is or who knows this person and their needs (if unknown)
* support the person to make a decision about what to do next and provide any assistance required
* log each and every incident and share logs with safeguarding persons/Directors

**Occasional assistance provided by a volunteer or staff member who does not hold an appropriate (Enhanced check, workforce specific) Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate**

Any person associated with TFCB may assist in activities with children / adults on an occasional basis, which is less frequent than weekly or fewer than 4 times in 30 days (unless there are known reasons why this should not take place). They may do so only if the group is led by a parent, teacher or other group leader or member of staff who has been appointed following the necessary pre-appointment checks and holds an appropriate DBS certificate.

The person leading the activities must be the one to allocate tasks and make relevant decisions. Tasks that the occasional helper must not undertake are those known as Regulated Activity (this would include all elements of personal care and healthcare).

**Allegation of abuse**
Fortunately, for many organisations, it is a rare thing to have to deal with an alleged incident of child or adult abuse. But it is sensible that all volunteers and staff are prepared to do so and this will be assisted if staff and volunteers are given the opportunity to contribute to discussion (and access training where possible).

There are four likely scenarios which everyone should be aware of and be prepared to deal with if necessary.

These are;

* There is suspicion or evidence that a child is being abused by anyone
* A child alleges someone is abusing them.

Adults, particularly those made vulnerable due to age, illness or disability, may also suffer abuse in exactly the same pattern;

* There is suspicion or evidence that an adult is being abused by a person associated with.
* An adult alleges someone is abusing them.

In addition, adults may suffer financial abuse (which is not merely theft) usually occasioned by those closest to them. Adults have a right to give their consent to actions to safeguard or protect them, but this may be over-ruled where: other people will be put at risk if action is not taken; a crime has been committed; it is in the public interest to take action.

**In all cases you must:**

* Be prompt, calm, assured and professional
* Listen without interrogating the child/adult; “tell me, explain to me, describe to me” are often good ways of asking people to explain their position. Make notes of the conversation immediately after.
* Keep any details strictly confidential and share only on a ‘need to know’ basis.
* Report the issues as soon as possible to the volunteer and/or staff members with responsibility for safeguarding, to Social Services or to the local Police in line with All Wales Child Protection Procedures.

**Children at Risk**

**A child at risk is a child who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and has needs for care and support (whether or not the needs are being met)**

**Categories of Child Abuse**

The main categories are:

**• Neglect**

This means persistent or severe neglect or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold and starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the child’s health or development.

**• Physical Injury**

This means actual or likely injury to a child or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering) to a child. It includes deliberate poisoning, suffocation and Munchausen’s Syndrome by Proxy.

 **• Sexual Abuse**

This means actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. The child may be dependent and/or developmentally immature.

**• Emotional Abuse**

Actual or likely severe adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill-treatment. This category is used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

**• Abuse of Trust**

A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity.

The individual in the position of trust may have the power to confer advancement or failure. The relationship may be distorted by fear or favour.

**Recognising child abuse**

It is very important that any employee with the organisation should be alert to the possible indicators of abuse. Anyone who knows or is concerned about or suspects that a child is being harmed or at risk from being harmed must pass on those concerns. Contact details are listed at the end of this policy.

**What signs to look for**

• Frequent or repeated injuries

• Very low self-esteem

• Fearful and withdrawn behaviour

• An adult who has unrealistic expectations of a child

• Failure to thrive and meet developmental milestones

**Procedures**

**If someone tells you that they or another child or young person is being abused:**

• Show that you have heard what they are saying, and that you take their allegations

 seriously.

• Encourage the child to talk, but don’t prompt them or ask leading questions. Don’t

 interrupt when the child is recalling significant events. Don’t make the child repeat

 their account.

• Explain what you have to do next in a way that is appropriate to the age and

 understanding of the child.

• Do not promise to keep what you have been told secret, as you have a

 responsibility to disclose information to those who need to know. Reporting

 concerns is not a betrayal of trust.

• Write down what has been told using the exact words if possible.

• Make a note of the date, time and place and people who were present at the

 discussion.

**If there is immediate risk of danger call the Police on 999.**

**What you must do next:**

* Report your concerns to the volunteer and/or staff member of TFCB with designated responsibility for child protection immediately
* Ensure that your concerns are immediately reported to the duty social worker at the local office.
* Do not delay. Contact details are at the end of this policy.
* Do not confront the alleged abuser.
* Do not worry that you may be mistaken. You will always be taken seriously by Social Services. It is better to have discussed it with somebody with the experience and responsibility to make an assessment. If you suspect a senior member of the organisation then ring one of the independent contacts listed at the end of this policy
* **Do not worry about making a mistake.**

**Code of behaviour around children and young people**

TFCB volunteers and staff have a duty of care to ensure that children and young people are protected from harm. This applies to all the activities and events that TFCB takes part in. They must ensure that their own behaviour does not cause a child or young person distress or to be misinterpreted by others. These guidelines will help ensure that neither of these things can happen.

* Use appropriate language when working in an environment where children or young people are likely to hear e.g. no swearing, no explicit talk of sexual acts or violent behaviour.
* It is a strict rule that no one is to come to events, activities or meetings intoxicated or under the influence of illegal substances. If there are any obvious signs that this is the case you will be asked leave for the remainder of the day.
* Respect the children and young people - do not use condescending language, humiliate them or use inappropriate innuendos.
* When greeting children and young people be very mindful of having only limited and socially appropriate physical contact with them.
* When a child or young person is distressed be especially mindful to have only limited and socially appropriate physical contact with them.
* If the need ever arises to administer discipline to them you should not shout at them, talking to them sternly is enough. You should ***never*** hit, grab or be forceful with children under any circumstances.

**Allegations against adults**
We must all be aware of our conduct and activities around children. You must be aware that allegations of abuse made by children about adults do occasionally happen. Some prove mistaken or, very rarely, malicious. The Policy and Guidelines are here to help you to avoid situations in which well-intentioned actions could be misinterpreted and ensure that you do not place yourself in a situation where an allegation by a child, young or vulnerable person might be made.  The same applies when working with adults who are known or likely to be vulnerable or at risk due to age, illness or disability.

**Discipline**

When working in an environment where children or young people are present, it is essential that these procedures are followed when dealing with unacceptable and disruptive behaviour.

* Keep calm. Remember it is the behaviour that is unacceptable – not the child or young person.
* Explain to the child or young person why their behaviour is unacceptable and ask them not to do it again.
* If the child or young person carries on displaying unacceptable behaviour warn them that if they continue to be disruptive, they will be asked to leave.
* If the behaviour still does not improve contact the parents or carer and explain the situation requesting that they collect and remove the child or young person.

**Electronic communication**

*With the world of electronic communication changing so rapidly, it is not possible to issue guidance that covers all eventualities. However, there are general principles that TFCB is adopting for the well-being of the children and young people.*

* Electronic contact details or contact itself, including mobile phone numbers or social media contact, with children and young people is not to be made by staff or volunteers without the advance, written and specific permission of the parent or carer and of the child or young person.
* Volunteers or staff should not put any pressure on children or young people to reveal their electronic contact details.

**Direct electronic communication with children of primary school age is inappropriate and should be avoided.**

* Only volunteers or staff who have been appointed as such under TFCB agreed procedures should use any electronic means of communication to contact children or young people on behalf of TFCB.
* Contact with children and young people by electronic communication should generally be for information-giving purposes only and not for general chatter.
* However where a young person in need or at a point of crisis uses electronic communication as a way of communicating with a volunteer or staff member: significant conversations should be saved as a text file if possible, and

a log kept of who and when they communicated.

Volunteers and staff should not share any personal information with children and young people, and should not request or respond to any personal information from the child or young person other than that which is necessary and appropriate as part of their role.

Volunteers and staff should be careful in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives. To reduce the risk of misinterpretation clear, unambiguous language should be used and the use of unnecessary abbreviations should be avoided. Text language’ should be avoided so that there is no misunderstanding of what is being communicated. ‘Text conversations’ should usually be avoided; (that is a series of text messages/emails being sent to and from between mobile phones). The use of instant messenger services should be kept to a minimum.

Electronic communication should only be used between the hours of 8.00 am and 10.00 pm.

E-mails should be sent out with (organisation’s name) header and footer showing the child or young person this is an official communication from a volunteer or staff member.

**Social networking sites**

* + When staff or volunteers communicate via social networking sites they should ensure that all of the content on the site is appropriate for children and young people to see.
	+ Where lower age limits of social networking sites apply they should be adhered to.
	+ Be aware of the content of photos that may be uploaded on to your site.
	+ Ideally all communication with children and young people should be kept within public domains.
	+ Staff and volunteers should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. Copies of communications should be retained and where possible other staff and volunteers should be copied in on communication.

**Use of images**

On TFCB’s website, and Facebook pages only images which have been authorised by the subjects may be displayed. TFCB will offer the opportunity to choose not to appear in such images and the photographing staff member or volunteer must have regard to this and ask for written permission: the failure to secure written permission will make it invalid for TFCB to use the image in question.

Volunteers and staff should not retain images of children and young people on their mobile phone or other electronic devices.

**Adults at Risk**

An adult at risk is an adult who is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect, has needs for care and support, (whether or not those needs are being met) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

What abuse or ill treatment means

* ***Physical Abuse***

This includes hitting, slapping, misuse of medication, undue restraint or unfair punishment.

* ***Sexual Abuse***

This means sexual acts which the person has not agreed to or was made to agree to.

* ***Psychological Abuse***

This includes threats of harm or of being left alone, making fun of people, calling people names, taking people’s friends or services away.

* ***Financial or Material Abuse***

This includes taking a person’s money or things away without consent, making people give their things away, misusing people’s benefits or not using it for them.

* ***Neglect***

This might mean not getting a person to a doctor or dentist etc. when they need one, not thinking about risks, not giving a person their food, tablets or medicine, not keeping them warm.

# **Who may be the abuser?**

Adults at risk may be abused by a wide range of people including relatives and family members, professional staff, paid care workers, volunteers, other service users, neighbours, friends, associates and people who deliberately exploit vulnerable people.

# **Adults at risk - PROCEDURES**

# What to do if an adult at risk discloses to you or you discover abuse

* You must ensure the care and safety of the alleged victim
* Do not promise to keep the information secret
* Listen carefully to the account without interrogating the person – only clarify the facts
* Note persons, places, and times referred to in the account given
* Write down as soon as possible exactly what the person said then sign and date it.
* Preserve any physical evidence
* If the perpetrator is also an adult at risk consideration will need to be given to their needs.
* Contact BCT’s designated Safeguarding Persons (see first point of this document for names and contact numbers) or to any of the other Volunteer Directors if either not available.
* **If there is a risk of imminent danger call the Police**

It is essential to be sensitive as in cases of possible sexual abuse or situations where there is a danger of exposing the person to further immediate risk of abuse or injury.

What to do when an incident involving an adult at risk does not appear to require emergency procedure or there is insubstantial evidence of abuse or neglect.

1. Volunteers and staff should be sensitive to cultural, racial and other factors affecting families.
2. Volunteers and staff observing any indicators of abuse should initially and sensitively seek an explanation. If the families are undo-operative the Volunteer should advise them that the Designated Safeguarding Officer will be informed.
3. The Designated Person should check out the volunteer’s report tactfully with the individuals concerned. They should explain to the formal or informal carer that any unsatisfactory explanation of the adult’s condition may be discussed with other professionals.
4. Volunteers and staff uneasy about any explanation or noticing re-occurrence should share their concern with the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Unstable or changed situations should also be reported. Concerns should be recorded.
5. If an adult at risk begins to disclose information about abuse, volunteers should listen carefully without prompting or probing but having first explained the limitations imposed by the law and (organisation’s name) confidentiality policy. The exact words should be recorded as soon as possible*.* ***It is not the role of volunteers to investigate allegations or diagnose abuse.***
6. Written records should be simple and factual. They should be written in ink within 24 hours, dated, signed and held confidentially and securely. Actions taken by volunteers should also be recorded.
7. If the Designated Safeguarding Officer finds cause for concern, s/he will contact the appropriate officer at Social Services, the GP or the police.

**Use of Information relating to third parties**

Personal information about children and adults e.g. names and addresses, obtained during activities of TFCB must be treated confidentially. It must be kept securely by TFCB, stored only as long as necessary and disposed of in a way which maintains their confidentiality. However this information, whilst held, may also be shared appropriately with statutory agencies to protect a vulnerable person or prevent/detect a crime.

**Responsibility within TFCB**

**It is the responsibility of all volunteers and staff of TFCB to be aware of safeguarding issues and this policy.** TFCB recognises that a designated person/volunteer Director is required to ensure that good practice is maintained. To this end, TFCB have designated Georgia Coleman (Volunteer Director) to take lead responsibility in safeguarding.

**This involves:**

**•** Writing and monitoring this policy

• Keeping up to date with legislation and other guidance on safeguarding

• Keeping up to date in local procedures and processes

• Attending training

• Ensuring that all volunteers and staff are trained in the policy

• Developing and maintaining a protocol with other voluntary agencies

• Making referrals to the appropriate authorities if there is a disclosure, an incident or suspicion of abuse or neglect.

This work will be overseen by Kai Davies in their role as a Volunteer Director.

**In order to avoid the occurrence of abuse TFCB will:**

• Arrange whatever level of check is currently required and appropriate for all

 volunteers and staff who will have direct access to children or adults

**•** Ensure that each volunteer and staff member has a role description and a

 copy of this policy

• Arrange training in safeguarding procedures.

**Discussion of the issues**
Open discussion of safeguarding should be encouraged since this helps to make people more comfortable with the issues involved. Do not keep it ‘under wraps’ for fear of upsetting or embarrassing people. Recent media stories can be a useful way to air issues and challenge outdated values.

**This policy will be reviewed annually.**

**Conwy CBC (North Wales Safeguarding Board)** [www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales](http://www.northwalessafeguardingboard.wales)

Social Services (Children and Adults) **01492 575111**

**Out of Hours (Children and Adults) 0300 1233079**

**POLICE**

**In an emergency – 999**

**Non-emergency - 101**

Child exploitation and online protection centre – [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)

**NSPCC** [www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/) and/or 0800 800 5000