

## **Stockport Sunday School – Safeguarding Policy**

### **Our commitment:**

- All children and vulnerable people without exception have a right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

### **Our Policy:**

- It is the policy of Stockport Sunday School to safeguard the welfare of all young and vulnerable people with which it works by protecting them from neglect and physical, sexual and emotional harm.

### **We are committed to:**

- Taking the interests and wellbeing of young people into account, in all our considerations and activities.
- Respecting the rights, wishes and feelings of the young people with whom we work.
- Taking all reasonable practicable steps to protect them from neglect, physical, sexual and emotional abuse.
- Promoting the welfare of young people and their protection within a position of trust.
- All volunteers, members, trustees or employees of Stockport Sunday School are responsible for putting this policy into practice at all times.
- Each employee, trustee, member or volunteer has a responsibility to ensure that young and vulnerable people are protected from harm.

### **It is the responsibility of all to ensure that:**

- Their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- They observe the rules established for the safety and security of young and vulnerable people.
- They follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of child abuse (see below).
- They recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed. In every respect, the relationships they form with the young or vulnerable people under their care are appropriate.
- It is the policy of Stockport Sunday School that all employees, contractors and volunteers over the age of 18 years, who will work alone with young people undergo a DBS check unless one is already held by the individual which is less than two years old. Stockport Sunday School will repeat the DBS check process on all staff and volunteers every three years.
- It is the responsibility of the individual to contact Stockport Sunday School regarding the status of their current DBS and provide a photocopy of the certificate.
- Individuals who are working with Stockport Sunday School on a short-term basis who have not been DBS checked must be overseen by a DBS checked member of the team. 'Overseen' means checked upon regularly but does not mean watched continually. This oversight role must be taken very seriously by the member of the team who takes responsibility.
- All allegations or suspicions of abuse, no matter how insignificant they might seem or when/where they occur, must be referred to by the immediately. No information must be withheld or filtered.

**Coverage:**

- This policy applies to all activities involving children, young people and vulnerable adults at Stockport Sunday School. It also applies to those staff, trustees and volunteers who work with children and young people, as part of the school activities, off the usual sites we work in (in off-site venues, carnivals, fetes etc., ).
- Students and adults are reminded, that while phones and tablets are allowed to be used, the taking of photographs or videos by trustees or members of Stockport Sunday School should only do so with the knowledge and verbal consent of those who are being photographed or videoed. We understand the desire for memories and support it, but are also committed to protecting all the young and vulnerable people in our care from bullying, embarrassment and abuse. Any unauthorised or inappropriate photographs or videos of the students, including, but not restricted to, those being used on social media to bully or embarrass students, staff or volunteers of the company, must be reported to the trustees and where appropriate the Local Authority.

**Bullying:**

- Stockport Sunday School has a zero tolerance policy to bullying, and any reports of verbal or physical abuse amongst the members, staff, volunteers, trustees or assistants must be reported to the trustees.
- No incident, however seemingly small will be ignored or not addressed. The emotional wellbeing of the children and vulnerable adults in Stockport Sunday School is of utmost importance. However if the bullying is of a more serious nature the procedure below will be followed.

**Procedure when a child makes a disclosure. Initial discussion**

- If a child makes a disclosure that they have suffered significant harm through abuse or neglect, our initial response should always be limited to listening carefully to what the child says so that we have a clear picture of the child's situation. We should offer reassurance about how we will keep a child safe and explain what action we will take. It is vitally important that we do not promise to keep the information secret.
- If a child can understand the implications of making a referral to the Local Authority's Children's Services then we should ask the child for their view but we should always be clear that it is our responsibility to take what action is necessary to ensure the child's safety.
- The steps which should be followed are: Stay calm. Ensure that you find an early opportunity to explain that it is likely that you will need to speak to other people – do not promise to keep secrets. Allow the child to speak at their own pace. Ask questions that will give clarification but do not press the child for answers or ask ANY leading questions. Reassure the child that they have done the right thing by talking to someone. Make sure the child understands what you will do next, that you will be speaking to the person in Stockport Sunday School who is responsible for their protection and that you may need to speak to the Local Authority Children's Services.

- Record the disclosure using the child's words where possible and noting time and date. Contact a trustee as soon as possible. Do not discuss the disclosure with other staff or members, discussion should be on a 'need to know' basis.

#### **Recording concerns**

- The member of staff should report the disclosure to a trustee immediately or as soon as they are able, and where appropriate the Local Authority designated Officer (LADO) for advice on further action. Having received a disclosure from a child, the member of staff or volunteer should complete an Incident Report Form.
- If the **afore mentioned members of the team** are implicated in any concerns, the matter should be taken directly to the relevant authorities at the Local Authority
- Access to this safeguarding policy will be available on our website [www.compasspointstockport.org.uk](http://www.compasspointstockport.org.uk).