



bell tower dropin

SECTION 11 SAFEGUARDING AUDIT

The Bell Tower - October 2024

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Introduction to Bell Tower Drop-In Review

Elaine Davidson was asked by the Project Manager Sam Harding and trustees at The Bell Tower Drop-In, to review the current standards of safeguarding practice across the charity. This would be based on a variety of safeguarding best practice tools such as using the assessment tool used by schools; the LSCB Section 11 Audit and another safeguarding area recommended for charities, the 10 Safeguarding Responsibilities for Charity Trustees from the Charity Commission.

The Bell Tower is a local youth drop-in, open every day after school, during term time. The Bell Tower is open from 3pm to 5:30pm and is free of charge to all young people of secondary school age. Young people can engage in a wide range of activities while attending. The 2023 Annual Review reported that there were 4790 attendances across the years activities.

The Bell Tower was launched in 2014 with the vision of creating a safe place for young people, after extensive research carried out in local schools showed a lack in daily after school youth provision since previous government funded youth centres had to close due to cutbacks to the statutory youth services. It is also worth noting that the Bell Tower was awarded The Queens Award in 2019 which recognises excellence of voluntary activities and services carried out by groups in the community.

The team headed up by Sam Harding and his deputy Dan Thompson have a small staff team and have around 24 volunteers. Catherine Harding heads up Life Group which aims to promote and support positive mental wellbeing. Young people meet and eat dinner together, and after dinner gather to discuss and share different life issues together. This might mean asking them to think about one good and one bad thing in their week. After the small group activity, the young people engage in other larger activities, games etc. The team are backed up with support from their safeguarding trustee Elspeth Barron.

In summary, due to the number of young people attending each week, some who have difficult backgrounds and family challenges, safeguarding is something the charity have taken seriously and want to ensure they meet all standards/requirements expected, hence the invitation to review safeguarding practices.

The safeguarding review was carried out in a variety of ways:

- reviewing website information;
- reviewing the Safeguarding Policy and associated policies such as the Complaints & Whistleblowing Policies etc;
- meeting with the Trustee responsible for safeguarding, Elspeth Barron, to review trustee safeguarding responsibilities;
- visiting the Bell Tower offices to meet on site with the Project Manager and Deputy to review policies and practices;
- visiting the Bell Tower a second time during a youth session to see safeguarding practices in action where possible and chat to volunteers and youth to gain their views;
- issuing a GoogleForm to volunteers to review how they felt safeguarding had been explained to them, and asking for their reflections on what else the charity could do to help them understand safeguarding better;
- visiting the Bell Tower a final time to meet with the Safeguarding Trustee to discuss and review the Charity Commission guidance on safeguarding duties for trustees.

Any gaps or issues that were found through this review would be highlighted to the team and worked through to ensure everyone in the organisation understands what safeguarding is and the responsibilities that come with it, from trustees through to volunteers and service users.

It is hoped that any suggestions and improvements from the review would be carried out over the coming year, encouraging their existing team approach to safeguarding which included the voice of volunteers and service users themselves. This will see an already high standard of safeguarding embedded further into safeguarding practice, ensuring all staff and volunteers recognise their input is valued and all are informed and engaged with safeguarding and its governance.

Safeguarding Assessment – based on Section 11 LSCB standards.

Section 11 was issued under the Children Act (2004) and has been reinforced in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Section 11 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Assessment Rating

Green	= Fully met, everything is in place, and up to date
Amber	= Not fully met, something requires review or development
Red	= Not met, needs to be developed as a matter of urgency
White	= Not applicable = does not apply to your organisation or circumstance.

There are nine standards which will be reviewed to measure how well The Bell Tower are delivering on a wide range of safeguarding practices:

- 1: Management/leadership and accountability
- 2: Policies and procedures
- 3: Safer recruitment and selection
- 4: Supervision, support and training
- 5: Complaints, allegations and whistleblowing
- 6: Interagency working, information sharing, communication and confidentiality
- 7: Culture of listening to children: individual decisions and development of services
- 8: Diversity
9. Management Committee
- 10: A further assessment regarding trustee responsibilities was reviewed using the Charity Commission's 'Trustees 10 Actions for Safeguarding'.

Summary of review findings

This is an overview/summary of the detailed Section 11 LSCB assessment audit tool found at Appendix 1

Standard 1 Senior Management - no actions required

Senior managers will need to demonstrate leadership, be informed about, and take responsibility for the actions of their staff, trustees and volunteers who are providing services to children and their families.

This Standard was met fully, with all safeguarding responsibilities understood and carried out by the Designated Lead and Deputy, supported by their safeguarding trustee. There was great involvement across the management team being hands on and involved in all safeguarding practices, ensuring volunteers were supported. The sense of duty, knowledge and dedication from the team was heartening to evidence. Although there were no actions required to meet this standard the team were updating existing role/job descriptions. There was also commitment from the Senior Team to continue to look at ways in which safeguarding can be embedded across the charity.

Standard 2: Policies and Procedures – 2 minor actions

Policies and procedures should be in place and reviewed regularly; these will be available to all relevant staff and cover safeguarding for the organisation.

There are several well written policies and procedures for safeguarding. The Safeguarding Children's Policy was updated in 2024 and a staff Code of Conduct in February 2023. These were supported by a Complaints Policy written in July 2024. These policies are well written and all available to the volunteers as needed with the Safeguarding Policy available in print format in the team members resource cupboard.

The Code of Conduct is well written. However, it will now have a section for staff and volunteers to sign to say they have read and understood their commitment to uphold the code which will go on file. The Safeguarding Policy could have further appendices attached to include other forms of abuse; the reporting forms as examples to complete and a section to include allegations against staff/volunteers. A flow chart to report concerns has now been made available in the resource cupboard to staff and volunteers for clarity. A Whistleblowing Policy was recommended to support safeguarding, and this has already been actioned.

Actions: Ensure Codes of Conduct are signed by all, and Safeguarding Policy has appendices to include other types of abuse and the new flow chart on how to report a concern.

Standard 3: Safer recruitment practices - no actions required

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures should be put in place, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children.

There are excellent recruitment processes carried out thoroughly. All volunteers are safely recruited by completing application forms and references and once those character references are received volunteers are invited to attend a taster day during a session at the drop in for the project supervisor to observe their ability to work with children and young people. If the volunteer is felt suitable for the project, then a DBS check is processed as soon as possible. An interview for volunteers is now part of the Volunteer Flow in the ChurchSuite system, along with 2 character references. This is followed up with safeguarding training online under the supervision of the safeguarding lead.

Staff are appointed by trustees and team leaders where there is a written job description and person specification for the post. Applicants must complete the application form be shortlisted for interview and references are obtained. A DBS check is completed where necessary and suitable training programme provided for the successful applicant. All staff are asked questions relating to safeguarding including their response to specific case studies; these answers are reviewed by the project supervisor and trustees.

Staff and volunteers have a lengthy induction with trial sessions, the DBS checks, code of conduct explained, joining a team WhatsApp group, online training, and then they are able to go on the rota with supervision.

Action already completed: The safeguarding PowerPoint for volunteer evenings have incorporated a new set of recommended safeguarding videos, case studies and a diagram of the process from volunteers raising a concern - to DSL's processing it with external authorities and everything in between including the forms they must use etc.

Standard 4: Supervision, Support and Training – 1 minor action

Staff will need effective induction, including safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff and volunteers should receive ongoing training and know how to recognise abuse and neglect, and who to report concerns to within your organisation. Staff should have an understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities, and those of other professionals and organisations. This is essential for effective multi and inter-agency collaboration. Agencies are encouraged where appropriate, to enable their staff to participate in training provided on an inter-agency basis through LSCB's and single agency training provided by the organisation itself.

As well as the online induction safeguarding training and support there are also other sessions for the team to attend and receive further training. There is regular refresher training on safeguarding issues.

Volunteers reported that they felt very well trained and informed about safeguarding when asked for feedback in this area. Staff and volunteers have Accredited safeguarding training provided by an NSPCC trainer every two to three years. There is training that focuses on adverse childhood experiences 'ACEs' to make staff and volunteers aware of the impact of issues such as parental mental health, substance misuse and domestic abuse on family life.

New policies and guidance are updated and given to team members in briefings. There are good annual appraisal processes in place. The Chair of trustees completes the Project Manager's; the Project Manager completes the other key staff team members.

The Project Manager supports the staff team with regular supervision and support as required by policies and guidelines. Volunteers are issued with volunteer team management guides and are well supported. They have regular chats to ensure they are clear about the role and that they can request support.

Volunteers were asked to give this review their feedback regarding their individual support and training, and all were very satisfied with their training and support.

ACTIONS: The Project Manager will look at appraisals and see where there could be any training gaps that have been identified for the team and look at addressing any training needs that may arise. Not action, but perhaps check in on the Local Safeguarding Board from time to time to see if there is any free or discounted training available [Training Calendar - West Sussex SCP](#).

Standard 5: Complaints, Allegations & Whistleblowing – 1 action

There needs to be systems in place to enable service users and staff to make complaints (or compliments) and allegations, and for staff to have access to 'whistle-blowing'.

There is a Complaints Policy dated July 2024 which is thoroughly well written and available on the website and promoted across the team. There are also end of year surveys with the young people to gain their opinion and see if there are any improvements or concerns they wish to raise. There is a named Designated Lead and Deputy, alongside a safeguarding trustee where complaints and allegations can be raised.

The Bell Tower operates procedures for dealing with all allegations of abuse made against people who work with children. This includes an understanding of the role of the LADO and when and how to refer to them. Although the Designated Leads were able to demonstrate their knowledge of this, it needed to be specified clearly in the Safeguarding Policy.

An excellent Whistleblowing Policy was written for the review which covers all aspects required, encouraging staff to come forward with any concerns they have.

Actions: There needs to be a section in the safeguarding policy to show how concerns about staff/volunteers will be managed.

Standard 6: Interagency working, Information Sharing, Communication and Confidentiality – no actions required

Inter-agency working involves agencies and staff working together and is a crucial aspect to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will involve agreed information sharing protocols and the organisation should understand its duty to share information where there are child protection concerns. The organisation should ensure sensitive and personal information is kept confidential when appropriate.

Where concerns are flagged at the project it is very well managed, with the team very aware of the need to raise concerns, which are followed through excellently by the key staff members. There were several examples where the team had concerns and took all the appropriate steps to raise these with Children's Services where needed, and gain support for young people and their family members where possible.

There was a good knowledge on the team of all the local services available to connect with and share concerns with, that were used reasonably regularly.

There is a very good understanding about confidentiality, sharing information and Data protection requirements when managing safeguarding concerns. The charity has taken this seriously and have recently had a very thorough GDPR/Data Protection review looking at all aspects of information/data storage etc. Emails are used carefully when sharing information. Basic personal information is collected from the young people attending on the charity's registration device on ChurchSuite, which is secure and compliant. For sensitive data and safeguarding concerns there is a locked register with only the 3 key staff members and trustee who have access.

Standard 7: Culture of Listening – no actions required

In developing local services, those responsible should consider how the delivery of their services will take account the views of children. Children and families should be involved in this planning process, for example, how to develop the service, so children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

There are annual Big Surveys which encourage feedback from the children to the charity about what works for them, what is helpful etc. The Annual Review has been carried out over the last 10 years, the most recent published in November 2023, with 2024's being planned for the Autumn. There are lovely stories and comments throughout the review/report sharing the voice of the child/young person. On a week-to-week basis there was evidence of a culture of listening and sharing feedback to young people.

Throughout the visit to the drop-in service for this review, it was observed and noted that the young people were put front and centre and their needs/voices consistently embedded in the practices and activities observed. Young Leaders who had gone on to become volunteers themselves, were given opportunities to regularly give their opinions, and their voices were sought when reviewing the service activities.

The Annual Review, where young people's opinions were requested each year, found that 44% of children who attended the Drop In have said the Bell Tower is their safe place, with 55% saying they would be 'roaming the streets' if Bell Tower wasn't there. Although children do chat to staff about issues, worries etc as there is lots of trust built, when asked during the review the staff and volunteer team did think they could look at this even more. Ideas were raised which they wanted to try over the coming months.

Team suggestions were:

- Having posters/leaflets around to get the message out that children can chat about their problems.
- Wearing badges that say, 'I'm here to help.'
- Reinforcing to the youth about the Team's 'Do's & Don'ts' so they are aware of what is right behaviour.

During the evening youth session, children were given the chance to share with the reviewer about being listened to - and they shared that they felt safe to tell the team about problems.

During the session review with youth leaders, there were several who were able to share their experiences of children sharing safeguarding issues which were followed up, supported and reported to the safeguarding leads. The safeguarding leads shared several examples of how they discussed, sought advice and reported concerns. Discussion at an earlier meeting with the Project Manager had several examples of safeguarding concerns where the young person was listened to and managed well.

Standard 8: Diversity – no actions required

Organisations have a commitment to equality and diversity and ensure services are accessible to all local communities. Staff understand equality and diversity and can demonstrate this in their practice. There are systems in place to evaluate provision of services and equality of access.

The Bell Tower is highly committed to Equality & Diversity, and a core part of their service provision is to provide for those who are hard to reach. The charity has won the Queens Award for its provision of activities in the community.

There are many of the children using the service who are at a disadvantage in their lives, some who would be carers or Looked After Children. There are also children attending with SEND. Staff and volunteers are very aware and informed in this area and go above and beyond to ensure inclusion works for them, adaptations made where needed. The premises are very welcoming and also accessible for those with physical disabilities.

When reviewing how fair and equal access is evaluated, the Project Leader thought this could be looked at to double check if there was anything further that could be evaluated in this area. However, it was noted that in the Annual Report these areas of service are evaluated, and the charity is well known for fair and equal access to all youth in the area. If there were any new ways this might be measured and improved on, then this would be actioned as appropriate.

Standard 9: Management Committee – 1 minor action

Working Together stipulates one of the key responsibilities of organisations working with children is... A senior board level lead, to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.

This standard requires that the management committee / trustees know what its legal responsibilities and duties are regarding safeguarding, appointing a senior board level lead, and that role descriptions are available for trustees to understand any safeguarding responsibilities.

The Bell Tower have appointed Elspeth Barron as their trustee with specific responsibility for safeguarding standards. She has a role description outlining these duties and is well informed and experienced in this area, having held positions in learning and education and cultural projects for young people. There are other role descriptions for trustees, which after discussion Elspeth thought she would review and see if any further role descriptions were needed/updated.

As previously reported safeguarding is on every Trustee agenda, where the Project Manager provides a report which is discussed by trustees.

Actions: Review Trustee role descriptions to see if any updates etc are needed.

The following Section 10, added to this review, will now focus on all safeguarding responsibilities outlined by the Charity Commission.

Standard 10: Ten Safeguarding Responsibilities – Charity Commission

The following areas have been reviewed to ensure trustee safeguarding governance is covered by the charity.

10 actions trustee boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance
Safeguarding should be a key governance priority for all charities

Ensure your charity has an adequate safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures. Regularly review and update the policy and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose	Identify possible risks, including risks to your beneficiaries or to anyone else connected to your charity and any emerging risks on the horizon	Consider how to improve the safeguarding culture within your charity	Ensure that everyone involved with the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report and record a safeguarding concern	Ensure people know how to raise a safeguarding concern
Regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant	Review which posts within the charity can and must have a DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service	Have a risk assessment process in place for posts which do not qualify for a DBS check, but which still have contact with children or adults at risk	Periodically review your safeguarding policy and procedures, learning from any serious incident or 'near miss'	If you work overseas, find out what different checks and due diligence you need to carry out in different geographical areas of operation

 **CHARITY COMMISSION**
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

1: Ensure your charity has an adequate safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures. Regularly review and update the policy and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Policies are well written and available to all across the charity. Trustees have an annual review policy to check for all policies are updated and safeguarding is part of that. Last review date and next review date are put on the policies. The safeguarding policy was updated in 2024. This is reviewed in a meeting and changes made. The Project Manager is aware of small amendments to make for the policy such as adding forms etc.

2: Identify possible risks, including risks to your beneficiaries or to anyone else connected to your charity and any emerging risks on the horizon

Trustees looked at Risk assessments of buildings and activities; staffing financials; being aware of succession plan needs and working on a contingency to be in place, this also led to notice periods being lengthened. In conversation with Revelation Church who host The Bell Tower activities, trustees are vigilant at ensuring the security of the space. They have looked at other options to host in buildings should that change.

Access to the building and those using the building if at same time it is changed so there is no cross over or risk to the young people being in contact with unchecked adults etc. The safeguarding trustee is aware and involved in the safer recruitment of volunteers and staff and the process to manage accusations about staff or volunteers. A mobile number is available of trustee for staff/volunteers to access with concerns about a team member.

A small action point was to possibly look at any media management if needed in the future.

3: Consider how to improve the safeguarding culture within your charity

Elsbeth confirmed that safeguarding is spoken about a lot, spoken about as a team all the time to make sure the space feels safe and homely for the young people. The young people are also aware of being able to chat about things, which was evident in visiting the sessions with youth. This was inherent within the charity, with the team keen to ensure the best standards and procedures were continuously improved.

4: Ensure everyone in the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report and record a safeguarding concern.

Everyone is trained and aware of the 4 R's. Regular meetings happen and action points discussed. This is normal everyday practice. Again, this was evident in the review of induction training and further safeguarding training the team attended, it was a consistent theme and good practice expected from everyone.

5: Ensure people know how to raise a safeguarding concern.

There was confirmation from the trustee responsible for safeguarding that the safeguarding message was given to young people in a variety of ways. As new young people join, the charity aim to get that message out to them right from the beginning and carry that through the project. This is achieved by all staff and volunteers knowing the priority of safeguarding and it being an integral part of their role and the charities activities, so that talking about safeguarding in a variety of ways was the norm. Ensuring young people knew they could chat about any worries they might have with the team was evidenced by young people sharing struggles and concerns that were at times a safeguarding incident that needed reporting. Ideas for more leaflets/posters and badges were noted in the earlier report.

6: Regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant.

Training was budgeted for across the charity, with a variety of courses available at different stages in a team members induction etc. The Designated Leads had a higher level of training and training was accessed from the National Youth Agency which has a wide variety of courses related to safeguarding and other core skills to work with young people. Training was also tailored for the charity every 2 years by an NSPPC Accredited Trainer who looked at specific needs for case studies at The Bell Tower, safeguarding themes and challenges the team were facing.

7: Review which posts within the charity can and must have a DBS check.

This was reviewed and checked out by the Project Manager and checked with the trustee for safeguarding. It was confirmed that all positions serving at The Bell Tower positions required Enhanced DBS Checks for Children's Workforce.

8: Have a risk assessment process in place for posts which don't qualify.

This was not applicable to any posts in The Bell Tower as everyone required a DBS Check who came into contact with young people.

9: Periodically review policies/procedures, learning from any serious incident or near miss.

As previously reported, policies and procedures are reviewed annually with trustee involvement. The team also use Thirty-One Eight's guidance on policies. Fortunately, there have been no serious incidents or near misses at the charity to review.

10: If the charity works overseas what different checks and due diligence you need to carry out in different geographical areas of operation.

This does not apply to the charity.

APPENDIX 1: SAFEGUARDING ASSESSMENT – BASED ON SECTION 11 LSCB STANDARDS

Standard 1: Senior Management Leadership and Accountability

Senior managers will need to demonstrate leadership, be informed about, and take responsibility for the actions of their staff, trustees and volunteers who are providing services to children and their families. This could mean identifying a Safeguarding lead to champion the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children throughout the organisation. Safeguarding Leads will also be responsible for monitoring the actions of their workforce to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

There should be clarity about who has overall responsibility for the agency’s contribution to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and there should be a clear line of accountability which is understood by all staff.

Responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children can operate at three levels:

- i. Individual, which can be encompassed within job descriptions.
- ii. Professional, which is governed by codes of conduct for different disciplines.
- iii. Organisational, with clear lines of accountability throughout the organisation to senior officer level.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
1.1 How is your organisation strategically linked into your local Safeguarding Children Board/s?	This isn’t particularly applicable to the Bell Tower as not a school etc, however, the charity does have all necessary contacts in place should they need to report, or gain advice.	None	N/A	N/A
1.2 Who are the named Safeguarding leads for your organisation? It is recommended where appropriate that a named deputy should also be identified.	Sam Harding – Safeguarding Lead Daniel Thompson – Deputy Safeguarding Lead Elspeth Barron is the nominated Safeguarding Trustee for the team.	None	N/A	Green
1.3 The lead(s) for safeguarding have a clearly defined role and responsibilities within your organisation to champion safeguarding and child protection	Safeguarding leads have roles and responsibilities in their job description, although they plan to improve on these	Continue to review Job descriptions.	Dec 2024	Green

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a sound knowledge of legislation & guidance, Communicating to staff • Holding managers/staff/management committee members to account • Ensure effective working relationships are in place • Responding to identified safeguarding training needs • Insure internal audit and review of policies <p>Does this person have sufficient time and support to carry out their responsibilities?</p>	<p>and are currently working on updating the roles and responsibility description. The Designated Leads have specific training to update knowledge including attending NYA webinars, attending relational hubs which help charities to grow, providing/joining WhatsApp groups where they can ask questions and they attend safer recruitment courses. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and in 2024 they have begun to review the practices/policies in even greater detail. They have requested an external review of practices across 2024 activities to ensure their own reviews are improved where possible. This has included minor updates to policies etc.</p>	<p>In the voluntary sector there is always a need for more hours. Based on the effort of the designated team leads of the charity they cover a great work and safeguarding is woven throughout to meet needs of the groups they serve.</p>		
<p>1.4 All staff understand their own roles and responsibilities and to whom they are accountable and what level of accountability they have?</p>	<p>There is a good team structure that supports and holds each other accountable. With regular updates and team meetings where safeguarding is part of their accountability.</p>	<p>Continue to look at ways in which safeguarding can be embedded in to team members practice.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Green</p>
<p>1.5 All staff /volunteers working with children (and where relevant) understand the need for accurate, clear and on-going case-work recording.</p>	<p>Staff and volunteers provide good record keeping on a well-designed form which is stored on Google Drive. Volunteers are supported to complete any forms of record keeping.</p>			<p>Green</p>

Standard 2: Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures should be in place and reviewed regularly; these will be available to all relevant staff and cover safeguarding for the organisation.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>2.1 The organisation has written policies and procedures for safeguarding and protecting children which are accessible to all staff and service users (which includes how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse).</p>	<p>There are several well written policies and procedures for safeguarding and there is a complaints policy written in July 2024. A staff code of conduct in February 2023. A safeguarding children policy 2024.</p> <p>These policies are well written and all available to the volunteers as needed the safeguarding policy is available in the cupboard.</p> <p>The code of conduct is well written. However, it will now have a section for staff and volunteers to sign to say they have read and understood</p>	<p>The policies will be reviewed and recommendations made for any updates for November 2024.</p> <p>A flow chart to report concerns will be made available to staff and volunteers. – Completed.</p> <p>Appendices of other forms of abuse; reporting forms and code of conduct to include.</p> <p>Code of conduct to be issued to all and signatures obtained. A section to include 'Allegations against staff members / volunteers'</p>	<p>November 2024</p>	<p>Amber</p>
<p>2.2 The organisations policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis. Any changes to national guidance and legislation and outcomes from local serious case review and inspections will be incorporated into existing policies and communicated to all staff including volunteers.</p>	<p>The policies and procedures are reviewed annually and include the support of trustees.</p> <p>Using Thirty-One Eight's guidance on policies to gain updates is useful.</p>			<p>Green</p>

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>2.3 There are clear procedures for reporting a disclosure of abuse from a child and for recording and reporting concerns or suspicions of abuse which all staff are aware of.</p>	<p>There are clear procedures for reporting concerns. For low level concerns reporting and sharing information happens proportionately.</p>	<p>Providing a flow chart as previously agreed will clarify the reporting process.</p>		<p>Flowchart</p>
<p>2.4 The organisation has health & safety and risk assessment procedures for your activities with children & young people.</p>	<p>There are a wide range of excellent risk assessments for many activities across the project; fire and evacuation training is given by the building managers St. John's fire drills are tested. There are first aid trainers present and first aid kits available.</p> <p>There is a risk register looking at a variety of risks across the charity and risk assessments for picnics in the park; for beach trips; for driving young people to activities as well as a kitchen risk assessment.</p> <p>Volunteers who prepare food in the kitchen have a level 2 food hygiene certificate. Any accidents that require treatment are reported to the board of trustees.</p>	<p>Nothing to improve on – all excellent and well thought out. Risk assessments are well thought out and updated regularly.</p>		<p>Green</p>

Standard 3: Safer Recruitment and Selection

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures should be put in place, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children. This should include all agency staff, students and volunteers working with children. Safer practice in recruitment means thinking about and including issues to do with child protection at every stage of the process. Any organisation commissioned to provide services to children, must be required as part of the commissioning process to comply with safe recruitment and selection guidance.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>3.1 The organisation has recruitment and selection procedures for all personnel, volunteers and for any service delivering activities on your behalf. Staff involved in recruitment receive 'safer recruitment' training.</p>	<p>All volunteers are safely recruited by completing application forms and references and once those character references are received volunteers are invited to attend a taster day during a session at the drop in in order for the project supervisor to observe their ability to work with children and young people. If the volunteer is felt suitable for the project then a DBS check is processed as soon as possible this is followed up with safeguarding training online under the supervision of the safeguarding lead.</p> <p>Staff are appointed by trustees and team leaders where there is a written job description and person specification for the post. Applicants must complete the application form be shortlisted for interview and references are obtained a DBS check is completed where necessary and suitable training programme provided for the successful applicant.</p>			<p>Green</p>

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
	All staff are asked questions relating to safeguarding including their response to specific case studies; these answers are reviewed by the project supervisor and trustees. An interview for volunteers is now part of the Volunteer Flow along with 2 character references.			
3.2 Enhanced or standard DBS checks are completed on all staff and volunteers (including their managers) who have contact with children and young people.	All staff and volunteers have a DBS check carried out as soon as possible before starting.			Green
3.3 New employees undertake a specified induction and review period during which time they are supported and assessed as to their suitability for the role.	Staff and volunteers have a lengthy induction with trial sessions the DBS checks, code of conduct explained, joining a team WhatsApp group, online training, and then they are able to go on the rota with supervision.	Action already completed: The safeguarding PowerPoint for volunteer evenings have incorporated new set of safeguarding videos, case studies and a diagram of the process from volunteers raising a concern to DSL's processing it with external authorities and everything in between including the forms.		Green
3.4 Do you sub-contract any services that you are commissioned to deliver by a Statutory Body? If yes, please outline how you ensure that the sub-contracted services meet the standards outlined in this checklist.				N/A

Standard 4: Supervision, Support and Training

Staff will need effective induction, including safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff and volunteers should receive ongoing training and know how to recognise abuse and neglect, and who to report concerns to within your organisation. Staff should have an understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities, and those of other professionals and organisations. This is essential for effective multi and inter-agency collaboration. Agencies are encouraged where appropriate, to enable their staff to participate in training provided on an inter-agency basis through LSCB's and single agency training provided by the organisation itself.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
4.1 The organisation has induction, regular supervision and (where relevant) annual appraisal processes for all staff and volunteers who work regularly with children and families. This includes familiarisation with safeguarding policies and procedures. Safeguarding training gaps are identified as part of this process.	Staff and volunteers have a well-planned induction alongside team members who regularly supervise and support them. There is a good culture of support and training for all members of the team ensuring that safeguarding is a priority.			Green
4.2 All staff and volunteers receive on-going training on their individual and the organisation's roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children. This might include LSCB-delivered multi-agency training to help staff understand their roles and those of colleagues in other agencies.	As well as the online induction safeguarding training and support there are also other sessions for the team to attend and receive further training. There is regular refresher training on safeguarding issues. Volunteers reported that they felt very well trained and informed about safeguarding when asked for feedback in this area.	Not action, but perhaps check in on the Local Safeguarding Board from time to time to see if there is any free or discounted training available Training Calendar - West Sussex SCP		Green
4.3 All staff /freelancers who work directly with children receive regular refresher safeguarding training at least once every 3 years.	Accredited safeguarding training is provided by an NSPCC trainer every two to three years.			Green

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
4.4 Training enhances staff awareness of race, culture, disability, substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health and the impact they have on family life and parenting capacity.	There is training that focuses on adverse childhood experiences ACE's to make staff and volunteers aware the impact of ACEs on family life.			Green
4.5 All new policies, guidance and legislation regarding safeguarding children is incorporated into training and briefings.	New policies and guidance are updated and given to team members in briefings.			Green
4.6 There is an annual appraisal process which includes a review of each member of staff's role and their skills, competencies and knowledge around safeguarding children.	Yes, there are good annual appraisal processes in place. The Chair of trustees completes the Project Manager's; the Project Manager completes the other key staff team members.			Green
4.7 The organisation's training manager ensures any safeguarding training gaps identified in the appraisal process are filled.	Appraisals are completed but training needs could be prioritised.	The Project Manager will look at appraisals and see where there could be any training gaps .		Amber
4.8 Staff working with children receive regular management supervision on an individual basis and can access further support when required; the supervision meets the organisation's required written standards.	The Project Manager supports the staff team with regular supervision and support.as required by policies and guidelines. Volunteers are issued with volunteer team management guides and are well supported,. They have regular chats to ensure they are clear about the role and that they can request support. Volunteers were asked feedback regarding their support and training and all were very satisfied with their training and support.			Green

Standard 5: Complaints, Allegations and Whistle-blowing

There needs to be systems in place to enable service users and staff to make complaints (or compliments) and allegations, and for staff to have access to 'whistle-blowing'.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
5.1 The organisation has effective policies and systems in place to manage concerns and complaints as well compliments from service users or other professionals. These are all recorded, monitored and available for internal and external audit.	There is a complaints policy dated July 2024 which is thoroughly well written and available on the website and promoted across the team. There are also end of year surveys with the young people to gain their opinion and see if there are any improvements or concerns, they wish to raise			Green
5.2 The organisation has effective policies & systems in place to enable whistle blowing on an organisational and individual level.	There was a need for a Whistleblowing policy	This was provided during the review.		Green
5.3 The organisation operates procedures for dealing with all allegations of abuse made against people who work with children. This includes an understanding of the role of the LADO and when and how to refer to them.	Discussion with Dan and Sam about managing concerns about any volunteers/staff was understood.	There needs to be a section in the safeguarding policy to show how concerns about staff/volunteers will be managed.		Amber
5.4 The organisation has a named Safeguarding lead/Senior manager with responsibility for ensuring the organisation follows these procedures effectively	Yes, a Designated Lead and Deputy are named, alongside a safeguarding trustee			Green

Standard 6: Interagency Working, Information Sharing, Communication and Confidentiality

Inter-agency working involves agencies and staff working together and is a crucial aspect to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will involve agreed information sharing protocols and the organisation should understand its duty to share information where there are child protection concerns. The organisation should ensure sensitive and personal information is kept confidential when appropriate.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
6.1 Your organisation understands its duty to share information, even without user consent, when there are child protection concerns.	Just had a GDPR review. Been given training/ information on what can be shared. Only safeguarding trustee has access to registers. Careful about emails with information in. New recruits were asked about safeguarding concerns and sharing info.			Green
6.2 Staff participate in multi-agency meetings, reviews and forums to consider individual children / families when required.	This hasn't been required as yet, but the team are able to manage this if needed.			Green
6.3 There is good communication between members of the organisation about children for whom there are concerns and where relevant, a system for 'flagging' these children	This is very well managed, with the team very aware of the need to flag concerns, which are followed through excellently by the key staff members. There were several examples where the team had concerns and took all the appropriate steps to raise concerns and gain support for young people and their family members where possible.			Green
6.4 Your organisation ensures personal and sensitive information on children and their families is accurate, up to date and kept confidential when appropriate and has a statement on the security of personal records.	Basic personal information is collected from the young people attending on the charity's registration device. For sensitive data and safeguarding concerns there is a locked register with only the 3 key staff members and trustee who have access.			Green

Standard 7: Culture of Listening to Children: Individual Decisions and Development of Services

In developing local services, those responsible should consider how the delivery of their services will take account the views of children. Children and families should be involved in this planning process, for example, by participating in discussions about where to locate a service so it is accessible (depending on the primary functions of the agency) or how to develop the service so children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>7.1 Business/Service plans are informed by the views of children and families, including for example disabled / Looked After Children.</p>	<p>There are annual Big Surveys which encourage feedback from the children to the charity about what works for them, what is helpful etc.</p> <p>The Annual Review has been carried out over the last 10 years, the most recent published in November 2023., with 2024's being planned.</p> <p>There are lovely stories and comments throughout the review/report sharing the voice of the child/young person.</p> <p>Throughout the visit to the drop-in service for this review the young people were put front and centre and their needs/voices consistently embedded in the practices and activities observed.</p> <p>Young Leaders voices are also sought.</p>	<p>A form is being created in ChurchSuite for Life Group sessions with 0-10 values</p> <p>3 Crowns</p>		<p>Green</p>
<p>7.2 Children are made aware of their right to be safe from abuse. This is achieved through information made available, for children, young people and parents about where to go for help in relation to maltreatment and abuse.</p>	<p>The Annual Review where young people's opinions were requested:</p> <p>44% of children have said the Bell Tower is their safe place, with 55% saying they would be 'roaming the streets' if Bell Tower wasn't there.</p> <p>Although children do chat to staff about</p>	<p>Team suggestions were:</p> <p>Having posters/leaflets around to get the message out that children can chat about their problems.</p> <p>Wearing badges that say "I'm here to help".</p>	<p>This area was a very good, standard. Suggestions put forward would be</p>	<p>Green</p>

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
	issues, worries etc as there is lots of trust built, when asked during the review the team did think they could look at this even more.	Reinforcing to youth the Do's and Don'ts of what is safe practice.	nice to action over the coming months.	
<p>7.3 Children are listened to, taken seriously and responded to appropriately, including during individual case decision-making.</p>	<p>During the session review with youth leaders there were several who were able to share their experiences of children sharing safeguarding issues which were followed up, supported and reported to the safeguarding leads. The safeguarding leads shared several examples of how they discussed, sought advice and reported concerns. During the evening youth session, children were given the chance to share with the reviewer about being listened to and they shared that they felt safe to tell the team about problems. Discussion at an earlier meeting with the Project Manager, there were examples of safeguarding concerns where the young person was listened to & managed well.</p>			Green
<p>7.4 The organisation provides feedback to young people about the views they have expressed.</p>	<p>There are regular annual reviews where young peoples views are sought and this is published in the annual review. On a week to week basis there is a culture of listening and sharing feedback to young people.</p>			Green

Standard 8: Diversity

Organisations have a commitment to equality and diversity and ensure services are accessible to all local communities. Staff understand equality and diversity and can demonstrate this in their practice. There are systems in place to evaluate provision of services and equality of access.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>8.1 Your organisation can demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity. This includes current knowledge of diverse communities and those who are hard to reach.</p>	<p>The Bell Tower is highly committed to E&D and a core part of their service provision is to provide for those who are hard to reach. The charity has won the Queens Award for its provision of activities in the community.</p>			
<p>8.2 All staff understand the value of an equality and diversity policy in contributing to improved outcomes for ALL children including, for example, those with disabilities, who do not have English as a first language, who are Looked After, or who are young carers.</p>	<p>There are many of the children using the service who are at a disadvantage in their lives, some who would be carers or Looked After. There are also children attending with SEND. Staff and volunteers are very aware and informed in this area.</p>			
<p>8.3 Information provided is in a format and language easily understood by all service users.</p>	<p>All youth attending have age-appropriate worded information and where there are different issues and needs to address the team members will explain the information further to the individuals.</p>			
<p>8.4 Services and staff are accessible to all users. E.g. location, accessibility, contact methods and use of interpreters.</p>	<p>The premises are very welcoming and accessible for those with physical disabilities</p>			
<p>8.5 Your organisation has systems in place to evaluate the extent to which it provides fair and equal access to services and has strategies to tackle discrimination.</p>	<p>The evaluation of this wasn't reviewed in detail, but during the annual review all areas of the service are evaluated and the charity is well known for fair and equal access to all youth.</p>	<p>Possibly look at evaluation process of its fair and equal access?</p>		

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your Safeguarding Lead (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
8.6 It is ensured all records and assessment documentation have a record of ethnicity and diversity. This is considered within the assessment processes and delivery of services.				

Standard 9: Management Committee

Working Together stipulates one of the key responsibilities of organisations working with children is... A senior board level lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements.

Standard Indicator	Please explain how you meet the standard (relating to your R.A.G. rating)	Any action required by your agency (for improvement) other comments	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
9.1 Your management committee / board of trustees know what its legal responsibilities and duties are regarding safeguarding. (Please refer to 10 actions Trustee boards need to take.)	There is a trustee code of conduct. Safeguarding is on the agenda every meeting. Reports from Project Manager for trustee meetings are informative. Discussion on safeguarding issues, standards is regular, discuss cases where appropriate.	The safeguarding trustee is very knowledgeable about their role and responsibilities and this is filtered down through other trustees. Could look at further training for trustees to refresh/update.		
9.2 Your organisation has role descriptions for everyone on the committee, which include their safeguarding responsibilities.	There are some role descriptions for trustees.	Further role descriptions are being accessed to review		

Ten Actions Trustee Boards need to take to ensure good safeguarding governance: this is used as a support/guide for 9.1

The following areas were discussed with the safeguarding trustee on 30th September 2024.

Charity Commission Recommended Actions for Trustees	Is this carried out? How?	Any action required by your agency (for improvement)	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
<p>10.1 Ensure charity has an adequate safeguarding policy, code of conduct and any other safeguarding procedures. Regularly review and update the policy and procedures to ensure they are fit for purpose.</p>	<p>The policies are all reviewed and in place. There is an annual review policy for all policies and safeguarding is part of that. Last review date and next review date is recorded. This is reviewed in meetings and changes made.</p>			<p>Green</p>
<p>10.2. Identify possible risks, including risks to beneficiaries or anyone else connected to the charity and any emerging risks on horizon.</p>	<p>Risks were reviewed i.e: Risk assessments of building, staffing financials, being aware of succession plan needs, working on a contingency to be in place, notice periods lengthened. In conversation with Revs to ensure the security of the space. Trustees continue to look at other options to host in buildings should that change.</p> <p>Access to the building and those using the building at same time is changed so there is no cross over risks. Safer recruitment of volunteers and staff and process to manage accusations about staff or volunteers is clearly followed. A mobile number is available of trustee for staff to access with concerns about a team member.</p>	<p>Minor point to possibly look at was any media management if needed in the future.</p>		<p>Green</p>
<p>10.3 Consider how to improve safeguarding culture within the charity.</p>	<p>It's spoken about a lot, spoken about as a team all the time as it is a priority. The team/trustees want to make sure the space feels safe and homely for the kids. The young people are aware of being able to chat about things, this is encouraged and messaged regularly.</p>			<p>Green</p>

Charity Commission Recommended Actions for Trustees	Is this carried out? How?	Any action required by your agency (for improvement)	Timescale	R.A.G or N/A
10.4 Ensure everyone in the charity knows how to recognise, respond to, report and record a safeguarding concern.	Everyone is trained and aware of the 4 R's. Regular meetings happen and action points discussed. This is normal everyday practice.			Green
10.5 Ensure people know how to raise a safeguarding concern.	We do get this message out in a variety of ways. As new young people join we aim to get that message out to them and carry that through the project.			Green
10.6 Regularly evaluate any safeguarding training provided, ensuring it is current and relevant.	Lots of safeguarding training is provided across the team regularly and at different stages. We now have MHFA teams which is really good.			Green
10.7 Review which posts within the charity can and must have a DBS check.	All volunteers, staff and trustees are DBS checked. There aren't any on team who don't qualify.			Green
10.8 Have a risk assessment process in place for posts which don't qualify.	N/A			Green
10.9 Periodically review policies/procedures, learning from any serious incident or near miss.	Policies and procedures are reviewed annually with trustee involvement. They also use Thirty-One Eight's guidance on policies. There have been no serious incidents to review.			Green
10.10 If the charity works overseas what different checks and due diligence you need to carry out in different geographical areas of operation:	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Appendix 2: Bell Tower Safeguarding Questionnaire – Feedback Form for Volunteers

Bell Tower Safeguarding Questionnaire - we appreciate your feedback and thoughts!

The questions will take around 10 minutes to complete on your own, but if you want to chat about anything take a bit longer - grab a drink!

We just want staff and volunteers in the charity to check how we are doing with understanding safeguarding and our responsibilities, and where we might need to improve or tweak things. Your help with this is really important as we want to ensure we offer the best service to those who are coming along to our activities. Thanks so much for completing what you can.

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

1. What is your role/title - main things you do at Bell Tower? Is is volunteer or staff? *

2. How long have you served at the Bell Tower? *

3. What's your understanding of safeguarding and any responsibilities you may have in your role? (You don't have to put an expert answer, just what you think it is.) *

4. Have you come across any safeguarding concerns before whilst serving at Bell Tower? *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

5. Do you know who to report a safeguarding concern to? *

7. Have you seen any of the following? Please tick those you have and leave blank those you haven't. *

- Safeguarding Policy
- Safeguarding procedures
- Leaflets/posters/other

8. Have you attended any safeguarding training sessions or had any input about this for your role? *

- Yes
- No

9. If you have had training or input what was this and when? *

10. Is there anything regarding safeguarding at Bell Tower that you think could be improved? *

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