

Safeguarding Policy



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Splitz has a responsibility under the Children Act 2004 and under The Care Act 2014 for ensuring that it provides a service having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and adults at risk. The definition of a young person in this document is anyone under the age of 18 years.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Splitz Support Service. All these will be referred to as staff throughout this policy.
- 1.3 All managers in Splitz Support Service need to be aware of how their staff interact with children, young people and adults at risk, providing appropriate training on safe working practices and developing safe working environments. Staff should be alert to any indications that a child, young person or adult at risk may need to be safeguarded from harm and who to contact if they have concerns.
- 1.4 This Policy should be read in conjunction with Splitz Policies regarding Boundaries, Confidentiality, Whistle Blowing, Supervision and Recruitment.
- 1.5 Splitz will work to the policies and procedures of the Local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnerships. Staff should be familiar with the appropriate procedures in conjunction with this policy.

This policy and associated procedures has been prepared with reference to the *South West Local Safeguarding Children Boards Procedures Manual* together with *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2018), which all staff should read and make themselves familiar with.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is:
 - to protect vulnerable children, young people and adults who receive services from Splitz;
 - to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles and procedures that guide their approach to safeguarding individuals

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3. Legal Framework

3.1. This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, young people and adults. The key pieces of legislation are detailed below:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004 (amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017)
- Safeguarding Adults (ADSS 2005)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- The Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2015) updated 2018
- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- The Care Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018

4. Principles

4.1. Splitz Support System recognise that:

- the welfare of the adults, young people and children is paramount, as enshrined in the legislation listed;
- all children, young people and adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse;
- some individuals are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues;
- working in partnership with adults, children, young people, parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting an individual's welfare.

4.2. We will seek to keep children, young people and adults safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them;
- adopting protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- ensuring that safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and that appropriate action is taken;
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures;
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training;

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- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about personal protection and good practice with all service users, staff and volunteers;
- sharing concerns appropriately, according to Splitz Support Service procedure, with agencies who need to know, and involving service users, children, young people and their parents in this process

5. Promoting Good Practice

- 5.1. All incidents of abuse but particularly child abuse and sexual abuse, can arouse strong emotions in those facing such a situation. It is important to understand these feelings and not allow them to interfere with your judgement about the appropriate action to take.
- 5.2. Abuse can occur within many situations including the home, school and social situations. Some individuals will actively seek employment or voluntary work with young people in order to harm them. All suspicious cases of poor practice should be reported following the guidelines in this document.
- 5.3. There are several types of abuse, which are defined in [Appendix 1](#) for children. These include Child sexual abuse, female mutilation and honour based violence. For Adults please refer to the Safeguarding Adults Procedure for information applicable to adults.
- 5.4. All staff should demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. This includes the use of Social Media, guidelines are found in [Appendix 7](#).
- 5.5. Good practice means:
 - Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication.
 - Treating all individuals equally with respect and dignity.
 - Always putting the welfare of each individual first.
 - Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a service user).
 - Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust and empowering service users to share in decision-making.
 - Where children or young people are involved, then including parents/carers wherever possible.
 - Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of service users.
 - Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
 - Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of service users and not pushing them against their will.
 - Keeping a written record of any injury that has occurred/evidence of harm, along with the details of any treatment given.

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- If the need arises to administer emergency first aid and/or other medical treatment to children or young people, securing parental consent in writing to act in loco parentis
- Transporting young people in your cars should only be considered where there is no other option, for example an emergency putting the child or young person at risk. However, if this occurs then there should always be another child or trusted adult in the car.

6. Safeguarding Lead

6.1 The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for managing safeguarding matters within Splitz Support Service. In the absence of the Safeguarding Lead or their deputy, concerns should be raised with the appropriate authority in accordance with the procedures in this document and in Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy. The Safeguarding Lead in each area is:

- Bristol: Rachel Wetton - Head of Service Wiltshire, Glos & Bristol
- Gloucestershire: Rachel Wetton - Head of Service Wiltshire, Glos & Bristol
- Swindon: Rachel Wetton - Head of Service Wiltshire, Glos & Bristol
- Wiltshire: Rachel Wetton - Head of Service Wiltshire, Glos & Bristol
- Devon: Chrissy Stower – Head of Service Devon and Torbay
- Torbay: Chrissy Stower – Head of Service Devon and Torbay

7 Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- 7.1 There is a responsibility to act on any concerns through discussion with the relevant line manager, the Safeguarding Lead and contact with the appropriate authorities. Where a concern has been identified by a member of staff with regard to a child or young person then the **guidelines outlined in the Splitz Safeguarding Flowchart (Appendix 2) should be followed with regard to reporting a Safeguarding concern.** If the concern is regarding an adult, then refer to the **Safeguarding Adults Procedure.**
- 7.2 If there is any indication that there is an immediate risk of harm to the child, young person or vulnerable adult or that they are in immediate danger then it is the staff member's responsibility to call 999 and ask for the appropriate service to attend.
- 7.3 Splitz will work to the policies and procedures of the Local Area Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnerships. Staff should be familiar with the appropriate local policies and procedures in conjunction with this policy, which may be found by following the links below. Particular attention should be given to Reporting Concerns, Information Sharing and Escalation Procedures.

South West	South West Region Child Protection Procedures (Child Protection Procedures for South West)
Wiltshire:	Wiltshire Safeguarding Partnership for Adults & Children (Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Guidance)

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Swindon:	Swindon Safeguarding Partnership for Adults & Children (Swindon Safeguarding Partnership Guidance)
Gloucestershire:	Gloucestershire Safeguarding Partnership (Safeguarding Children in Gloucestershire Guidance) Gloucestershire Adult Safeguarding (Safeguarding Adults in Gloucestershire Guidance)
Bristol:	Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership for Adults & Children (Safeguarding Children & Adults)
Devon:	Devon Children and Families Partnership (Devon Safeguarding Children) Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership (Devon Safeguarding Adults Procedures)
Torbay:	Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership (Torbay Safeguarding Children Guidance) Torbay Safeguarding Adults Board (Torbay Safeguarding Adults Guidance)

- 7.4 The safety of the child or young person or adult will remain the organisations first priority. The individual will be notified of any concern that is discussed with a line manager or referred to Social Care, as long as by doing so they are not at an increased risk.
- 7.5 An allegation of abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so be mindful of not doing anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse.
- 7.6 In the case of a child or young person, staff should seek to discuss any concerns with the family (including the child where appropriate) and where possible seek their agreement to make a referral to Social Care. This should only be done where such discussion and agreement seeking will not place the child at an increased risk of significant harm.
- 7.7 If the parents, carers or child do not agree to information being shared, this should not prevent referrals where child protection concerns persist. The reasons for dispensing with consent from the parents, carer or child should be clearly recorded and communicated with Social Care
- 7.8 In cases where an allegation has been made against a family member living in the same household as the child and it is your view that discussing the matter with the parent would place the child at risk of harm, or where discussing it may place a member of staff / volunteer at risk, consent does not have to be sought prior to the referral being made.
- 7.9 There are slightly different thresholds, guidelines and reporting procedures in each local authority area. **Staff should comply with the local procedures by following the**

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links to the relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures above. Reporting Flowcharts for Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Devon can be found in ([Appendix 3, 4 and 5.](#))

7.10 Information Sharing The protection of the child, young person or adult is paramount. Data protection legislation does not overrule safeguarding matters. Information relating to the incident and circumstances leading up to the allegation may be shared with other agencies as appropriate. Information should only be shared within the organisation with those who need to know in order to fulfil their duties. For further guidance on Information Sharing, refer to C004 Data Protection Policy.

7.11 Recording Safeguarding Incidents Safeguarding incidents must be properly recorded. The issue can be reported verbally initially but must be recorded as soon as possible in the service user record and in the Safeguarding Log. This log will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Lead and Senior Managers.

8. Concerns about members of staff

9.1 Any suspicion that an individual is being abused by a member of staff or a volunteer should be **immediately reported** to the Safeguarding Lead, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the individual in question and anyone else who may be at risk.

9.2 If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, they may have

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child
- Behaved in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to a child

9.3 The Safeguarding Lead will refer the allegation to the Designated Lead for Allegations or LADO according to local authority procedures. Please refer to the Safeguarding Partnership for the Local Authority for guidance on following correct procedure.

9.4 If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about inappropriate activity, the Safeguarding Lead will deal with it as a misconduct issue. It is important that this be dealt with by following the guidelines described in Allegations Against Staff ([Appendix 6](#)).

9.5 If the Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to another senior Manager who will refer the allegation to the Designated Lead for Allegations or LADO.

9.6 Raising Concerns. Splitz endeavours to provide the highest quality of service at all times, in conjunction with partners and other agencies. However if a staff member does have concerns about poor practice within Splitz or elsewhere, then they should first report these to their line manager. If the issue is within Splitz and is not addressed, then the Whistleblowing Policy should be used. If the concern is external to Splitz, then the Local Authority guidelines should be followed.

9. Safe Recruitment

10.1 Splitz subscribe to safer recruitment principles as recommended by the Local Authority.

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10.2 These principles include:

- Recruitment documentation will include the organisation's commitment to safeguarding
- Applications are scrutinised for gaps in employment and for safeguarding concerns
- At least one member of the interview panel will have completed the recognised safer recruitment training
- Interviews will include questions relevant to safeguarding
- If a candidate is successful, this will be dependent on satisfactory references and checks
- References will be confirmed and recorded on staff files
- A DBS check must be carried out and the member of staff cannot be in contact with children, vulnerable adults or the service user database until the result is known to be clear of any issue relevant to safeguarding.

10.3 Staff members and volunteers will have a thorough induction programme

10.4 Staff members would attend foundation training and meet the minimum standards set by the Local Authority Safeguarding Partnership. In addition, any staff member who may be likely to attend Child Protection Conferences or Core Groups should attend an Advanced Safeguarding Training. All training will be renewed in line with Local Authority guidance.

10.5 Staff will have regular supervision arrangements

Appendices:

1. Definitions of Abuse
2. Splitz Safeguarding Flowchart
3. Wiltshire Reporting Flowchart
4. Gloucestershire Reporting Flowchart
5. Devon Reporting Flowchart
6. Allegations Against Staff
7. Social Media Guidelines