

## Pathway Ponies Safeguarding Policy

### **Policy Statement**

Pathway Ponies is committed to providing a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all participants, particularly children, young people, and adults, including vulnerable people of all ages. Our aim is to promote welfare, prevent harm, and protect participants from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. This policy outlines the responsibilities, procedures, and measures in place to safeguard everyone involved in our programs and activities.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all staff members, volunteers, contractors, and anyone associated with Pathway Ponies. It is a core requirement that all individuals understand and adhere to this safeguarding policy.

## **1. Aims of the Policy**

- To protect all children, young people, and vulnerable adults who take part in Pathway Ponies' activities.
- To provide staff and volunteers with clear guidelines and procedures on safeguarding responsibilities.
- To ensure that all suspicions and allegations of abuse or poor practice are handled with urgency, care, and professionalism.

## **2. Key Definitions**

- **Child:** A person under the age of 18.
- **Vulnerable Adult:** A person aged 18 or over who is unable to protect themselves from harm due to mental health, disability, age, or illness.
- **Safeguarding:** Measures taken to protect the health, well-being, and rights of individuals, especially those who are vulnerable.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO):** The appointed individual responsible for managing and implementing safeguarding policies and responding to safeguarding concerns.
  - **Current DSO: Carly Flower, Owner of Pathway Ponies 07984 417772**
- **Staff and Volunteers:** All staff and volunteers are responsible for following the safeguarding policy, reporting concerns, and attending regular training.

## **4. Code of Conduct**

To ensure a safe environment, all staff and volunteers must:

- Treat all participants with respect and dignity.
- Foster a welcoming, supportive, and non-judgmental atmosphere.
- Avoid being alone with a participant whenever possible; use group settings or open areas.
- Never physically punish or verbally abuse a participant.
- Obtain consent for all physical interactions related to activities.
- Always report any safeguarding concerns to the DSO immediately.

## 5. Safer Recruitment and Training

- All staff and volunteers must undergo a rigorous recruitment process, including background checks and reference checks.
- DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are required for all individuals working with children and vulnerable adults.
- All staff and volunteers will receive safeguarding training at least annually, with updates on best practices and policy changes.

## 6. Risk Assessment and Safety Measures

Pathway Ponies is dedicated to maintaining a safe physical environment for all activities. To ensure safety, we will:

- Conduct regular risk assessments of the premises, equipment, and activity setups.
- Ensure that all areas used for activities are appropriately maintained and secure.
- Monitor activities closely to identify and mitigate any potential risks to participants' well-being.

## 7. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

All staff and volunteers have a duty to report any suspicions or concerns related to safeguarding, no matter how minor they may seem.

### Reporting Procedure:

1. If you witness or become aware of potential abuse, neglect, or inappropriate behaviour, report it immediately to the DSO.
2. Record all relevant details, including names, dates, times, and a factual account of the incident.
3. Do not investigate or confront any individual yourself; this will be managed by the DSO and, if necessary, reported to the appropriate authorities.

### Confidentiality:

Safeguarding concerns will be handled with strict confidentiality. Only those directly involved in managing the case will have access to information.

## 8. Types of Abuse

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the following types of abuse, which may occur to children and vulnerable adults:

- **Physical Abuse:** Inflicting physical harm.
- **Emotional Abuse:** Causing emotional harm through bullying, intimidation, or verbal abuse.
- **Neglect:** Failure to provide adequate care, supervision, or resources.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Any form of sexual exploitation or inappropriate behaviour.
- **Financial Abuse:** Exploiting an individual financially, particularly in the case of vulnerable adults.

## **9. Working with Third Parties**

Pathway Ponies collaborates with local schools, care homes, and the Local Authority. We will ensure that all partners are aware of our safeguarding policy and agree to uphold safeguarding standards in line with our requirements.

## **10. Policy Review**

This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually or when there is a significant change in legislation or best practices. The review will ensure that our policy remains effective, comprehensive, and in alignment with current safeguarding standards.

**Last Review Date:** 8th November 2024

**Next Review Date:** 8th November 2025

## **11. Contact Information**

**Pathway Ponies Designated Safeguarding Officer: Carly Flower**

**07984 417772,**

**pathwayponies@gmail.co.uk**

**Local Authority Safeguarding Team: Buckinghamshire Council**

**Mon - Thurs, 9am - 5.30pm**

**Fri 9am - 5pm**

**01296 383 962**

**Emergency Out of Hours**

**0800 999 7677**

**NSPCC Helpline:** 0808 800 5000

**Police (for emergencies):** 999

### **Approval and Implementation**

This policy is approved by Carly Flower, Owner of Pathway Ponies and is effective as of 8th November 2022