

**Manager:** Suzanne Campbell  
**Phone:** 01796 539915

**Abbey Place**  
**Faversham**  
**Kent ME13 7BG**

**Email:** [abbeyphysic@btinternet.com](mailto:abbeyphysic@btinternet.com)  
**Website:** [www.abbeyphysiccommunitygarden.org](http://www.abbeyphysiccommunitygarden.org)  
**Facebook:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Abbey-Physic-Community-Garden/119753674901502?fref=ts>  
**Twitter:** [www.twitter.com/AbbeyPhysic](http://www.twitter.com/AbbeyPhysic)

## Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)	Suzanne Campbell / Garden Manager – <i>Tom Jewell (Assistant Garden Manager) covers this role in Suzanne’s absence</i>
Named Trustee Safeguarding – Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sarah Porter
Policy agreed	August 2022
Date of next review	Yearly – August 2023

This policy outlines the steps that Abbey Physic Community Garden (APCG) will make to safeguard children and young people to ensure they are not put at risk of abuse or neglect while at the garden and steps we would take if it is deemed they may be at risk of abuse or neglect in other circumstances. It includes the roles and responsibilities of employees, members/volunteers and trustees and how we work with other professionals and agencies in promoting the welfare of children and young people and ensuring that our working practices are safe and effective. It is written in conjunction with APCG’s other policies relating to confidentiality, data protection, recruitment, complaints and code of conduct.

The garden needs to be kept as a safe and welcoming place for everyone. The work of the garden is primarily focused on supporting adults, however young people under the age of 18 do occasionally come into the garden independently. Such young people are welcomed and allowed into the garden at the discretion of the garden manager (or Assistant Garden Manager) at that time, so age, purpose, number and other activities going on at that time are taken into account. We would not want to turn away a young person seeking support and refuge. If children and young people accompany their parents /carers, then they are expected to primarily be under the supervision and responsibility of the person accompanying them – however, everyone needs to stay alert to respond to any safeguarding concerns.

APCG will only accept referrals from schools if the child/young person is always accompanied by an appropriate member of staff from the school, unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed with the school, young person and the garden manager and trustees. Children and young people coming into the garden as part of an arrangement with a school will be covered by that school’s own safeguarding policy.

### Policy Objectives

The key objectives of this policy are for all employees, members/volunteers and trustees of APCG to:

- have an overview of safeguarding for children and young people

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- understand the principles that guide our approach to child protection which apply to anyone working on behalf of APCG
- be clear about their responsibility to safeguard children and young people - both those who use our services directly and the children of adults who use our services when those children are in the Physic Garden
- ensure the necessary actions are taken where a child or young person is deemed to be at risk

## Safeguarding Principles

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind, and we have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- the welfare of the child is paramount
- all children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children and young people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

Abbey Community Physic Garden aims to keep children and young people safe by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- nominating a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and young people, and a lead trustee for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for employees, members/volunteers and trustees
- being aware of the impact of social media and the need for boundaries and confidentiality
- providing effective supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures for employees, members/volunteers and trustees
- recruiting employees, members/volunteers and trustees safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- recording and storing information professionally and securely
- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against employees, members/volunteers and trustees appropriately
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for children, young people, employees, members/volunteers and trustees, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.

## Responsibilities and Reporting

Safeguarding and child protection is **everyone's** responsibility.

To meet our responsibilities, we must always consider what is in the best interest of the child/young person, keeping alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect and alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers may pose to children.

The role of APCG is to contribute to the early identification, referral, and assessment of children and young people in need, including those who may have suffered, be suffering or are at risk of suffering significant harm. In situations where there are child protection concerns, it is not APCG's responsibility to investigate but to recognise and refer to the appropriate statutory bodies.

Anyone who makes a complaint, allegation, or expression of concern, whether employee, volunteers, trustees, garden members or members of the public should be reassured that:

- they will be taken seriously
- their comments will usually be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared with the appropriate authorities if they or others are at significant risk
- this will not affect their membership of the garden or employment, if relevant.

The named responsible person for safeguarding duties, the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO), for both adults and children, is the garden manager. ***As of August 2022, in the absence of the Garden Manager, this role becomes that of our Assistant Garden Manager.*** All employees and volunteers should contact the DSO if they have any concerns/queries of safeguarding children and young people. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Trustee with designated safeguarding responsibilities, should also be contacted immediately or as soon as possible.

A written record of the concern will be made, and the manager (***or Assistant Garden Manager in the Garden Manager's absence***) will inform one of the trustees (the DSL in the first instance, and the Chair of Trustees second). If deemed necessary they will make decisions about notifying children's services, the school/college (in situations where the school or college has referred the individual to take part in our services) or consider alternative actions where necessary. The records will be kept in a secure file and marked confidential and must be handled in line with the APCG Data Protection Policy. Trustees will review the safeguarding log annually, which is held digitally and password protected.

**The Key Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)** is to:

- Maintain a confidential recording system for safeguarding and child protection concerns
- Ensure that any child protection information collected is shared with the necessary contacts - school/college/appropriate referral body or statutory agency
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures in the garden and their responsibilities in making this work
- Ensure they and other staff members receive regular training and updating on safeguarding
- Coordinate safeguarding action for the child/young person
- Understand the appropriate child protection policies specified by school/college or referring body and ensure that APCG follows these arrangements
- Ensure that there are clear alternative reporting arrangements in place when the DSO is on Annual Leave

**The Key Role of the Trustee Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is to:

- Act as a key point of contact in the absence of the DSO, taking appropriate action in line with this policy
- Maintain an oversight of APCGs safeguarding policy, making recommendations for improvement to the Trustees as appropriate

Employees, members/volunteers or trustees at APCG who have safeguarding concerns should follow the following guidelines.

## **How to Record Concerns and Manage Disclosures**

Employees, members/volunteers or trustees at APCG who have safeguarding concerns should follow the following guidelines:

### **Handling Disclosure and Recording Concerns**

Seek the support of the DSO as soon as possible.

If a child/young person discloses a safeguarding issue to an employee, member/volunteer or trustee they should:

- Stay calm and not show that they are shocked or upset
- Accept what is being said
- Allow the young person to talk freely and do not ask leading questions - avoid interrupting, except to clarify what the young person is saying
- Not promise confidentiality – it might be necessary to refer to Children’s Social Care Services
- Reassure them that they did the right thing by speaking up and that what has happened is not their fault
- Not criticise the alleged perpetrator
- Explain what will happen next and that you will have to pass this information on
- Write up your conversation, using the young person’s own words as far as possible. Stick to the facts, and do not put your own judgement on it. Record the date, time, place, any non-verbal behaviour
- Sign and date the write-up and pass it on to the DSO.
- If there should be an immediate danger to the child/young person that requires urgent action then the appropriate action should be to make a direct referral to the police/Children’s Social Services and tell the DSO as soon as possible that you have done so. However, please see the ‘Ask for Help/Refer’ section below – if you are a member, volunteer or visitor to the garden, there will always be an employee or Trustee available for advice and support and to make this referral on your behalf and they will have had safeguarding training as part of these roles.

If the child or young person disclosing a safeguarding issue is at the garden as part of a planned arrangement with a school, then the school’s safeguarding policy comes into effect.

### **Ask for Help/Refer**

If an employee, member/volunteer or trustee has urgent concerns they should notify the DSO immediately – in the DSO’s absence the first point of contact should be the trustee DSL for safeguarding. If the DSO/DSL considers that there is an immediate risk of harm (e.g. it is unsafe to go

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home) they will contact Social Services. If the child is in immediate danger, the DSO/DSL will call the emergency services using 999.

All concerns will be recorded in the APCG safeguarding log. The records should include both the reasons for referring a concern and reasons for not referring. If there is any doubt about whether to report an issue to Children's Services, then it should be reported.

The DSO will be responsible for providing acknowledgement of the referral and brief feedback to the person raising the concern on what has been done. Feedback should be given in a way that will not breach the Data Protection Act.

### **Storage of Safeguarding Records**

Records will be kept secure and separate from any general records, only be kept for as long as necessary and they will only be accessible to the DSO and DSL.

### **Serious Incidents must be Reported to the Charity Commission**

The Charity Commission requires charities to report serious incidents to them, even if the matter has already been reported to the police. A serious incident is an adverse event, actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to employees, members/volunteers, trustees or others who come into contact with the charity through its work.

The Trustees (in conjunction with the DSO) are responsible for deciding whether a safeguarding matter needs to be reported to the Charity Commission. The Chair of the Trustees would contact the Charity Commission in line with their guidance – see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

### **Support and Guidance in Delivering this Policy**

#### **Recruitment, Training and Supervision**

APCG will ensure that all employees, members/volunteers and trustees whose roles include working with children and young people are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised. All staff will be required to have an Enhanced DBS check as well as any volunteers or trustees that have regular contact with children and young people.

#### **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

APCG expects all employees, members/volunteers and trustees to maintain confidentiality at all times and not to share information on individuals if not required. This policy is supplemented by and is consistent with the Data Protection Policy and Confidentiality policy.

#### **Safe Working Practice for Staff**

Children may make allegations against staff in situations where they feel vulnerable or where they perceive there to be a possible risk to their welfare. As such, all staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position regarding child protection or potential allegations. For example, it is always advisable for activities with individual children to be conducted in view of other adults. Any allegation by a child or young person against an employee, member/volunteer or trustee would

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be taken very seriously, recorded and reported to the DSO and DSL, external advice sought as/when necessary from the police or Children's Social Services. Maintaining the welfare and safety of everyone within the garden is of paramount importance.

## Important Contact Details

Abbey Physic Community Garden Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): Suzanne Campbell, Garden Manager

Phone 01795 539915/ 07599 012894 Email [suzanne@abbeyphysic.org](mailto:suzanne@abbeyphysic.org)

***In Suzanne's absence, DSO is Tom Jewell, Assistant Garden Manager***

***Phone 07933 508262 Email [tom.abbeyphysic@gmail.com](mailto:tom.abbeyphysic@gmail.com)***

APCG Trustee Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Sarah Porter

Email [sazkporter@gmail.com](mailto:sazkporter@gmail.com)

APCG Chair of Trustees: Helen Carr, Email [chair.abbeyphysic@gmail.com](mailto:chair.abbeyphysic@gmail.com)

If you do not use email and would like to speak with Sarah Porter or Helen Carr, please call the main garden number on 01795 539915 and leave a message requesting we return your call.

**Kent Social Services 03000 41 11 11 Email [social.services@kent.gov.uk](mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk) / [frontdoor@kent.gov.uk](mailto:frontdoor@kent.gov.uk)**

**Out of hours (after 5pm / Urgent calls only) please contact: 03000 41 91 91**

For more information: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/report-abuse> and [www.kscmp@kent.gov.uk](mailto:www.kscmp@kent.gov.uk) – we would follow the advice of Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership

For further information on procedures within KSCMP, please see

<https://www.proceduresonline.com/kentandmedway/chapters/contents.html>

**If you think someone is in immediate danger, the best thing to do is call 999 for the emergency services.**

## Useful Contacts

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000 [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### Support for Children and Young People

NSPCC: [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

ChildLine: [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

Papyrus – Preventing Child Suicide: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

Young Minds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

The Mix: [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

### Support for Parents/Carers

Family Lives: [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

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## **Appendix**

### **Be Alert to the Potential Signs of Abuse**

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual (including online sexual abuse) or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. Neglect in whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

Knowing what to look for is vital to the early identification of abuse and neglect. If employees or members/volunteers are unsure they should always speak to the DSO. It is also important to note that child abuse can occur within all social groups regardless of religion, culture, social class, or financial position. Those who abuse children/young people can be of any age, gender, ethnic group, or background and it is important not to allow personal preconceptions to prevent recognition or action taking place.

#### **Possible Indicators of Physical Abuse**

- Unexplained burns, cuts, bruises, or welts in the shape of an object
- Bite marks
- Anti-social behaviour
- Problems in school
- Fear of adults
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Self-destructive or suicidal behaviour
- Depression or poor self-image

#### **Possible Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

- Apathy
- Depression
- Hostility
- Lack of concentration
- Eating disorders

#### **Possible Indicators of Sexual Abuse**

- Inappropriate interest in or knowledge of sexual acts
- Avoidance of things related to sexuality, or rejection of own genitals or bodies
- Nightmares and bed wetting
- Over compliance or excessive aggression
- Fear of a particular person or family member

- Withdrawal, secretiveness, or depression
- Suicidal behaviour
- Eating disorders
- Self-injury

### **Possible Indicators of Neglect**

- Unsuitable clothing for weather
- Being dirty or unbathed
- Extreme hunger
- Lack of supervision

### **Who can Abuse?**

- Abusers come from all positions of society and all professions – they can be difficult to recognise
- Abuse of children may sometimes be carried by strangers but it is much more common that the abuser is known to the child and is in a position of trust and /or authority
- It is not only adults who abuse children; children may suffer abuse from other children and young people, such as bullying

### **Abusers May Include**

- Adults who are unable to provide consistent care
- Adults who manipulate themselves into positions of trust where they can exploit children and young people, emotionally and sexually
- Some adults, including professionals, who by behaving inappropriately towards children and young people can cause them to suffer physical or emotional harm

For further information, see: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/spotting-signs-child-abuse/> (Last accessed 3/8/22)