Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding is taken seriously by TheO6 including XL:Mentoring(Ottery)

- We acknowledge children's and adults' right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- We consider that the welfare of children is paramount.
- We will follow legislation, statutory guidance and recognised good practice in order to protect vulnerable people who we engage with.
- We will seek to establish a caring environment in which there is an informed vigilance about the dangers of abuse.
- We will implement, maintain and regularly review the procedures outlined in this policy, which are designed to prevent and to be alert to such abuse.
- We will appoint a Safeguarding Coordinator and Safeguarding trustee who will have specific responsibilities for safeguarding, although we recognise that safeguarding is a responsibility of all people working within (paid or voluntary) TheO6.
- The Safeguarding Coordinator is the person to whom all concerns or allegations should be addressed. In the absence of the Safeguarding Coordinator or if it involves the Safeguarding co-ordinator, the trustee responsible for safeguarding should be contacted. Their contact details can be found in the key contacts.
- We will organise activities in such a way as to promote a safe environment and minimise the risk of harm to children and young people.
- We will follow a safer recruitment process for the selection and appointment of people to work with young people at risk, whether voluntary or paid.
- We are committed to providing support, supervision, resources and training to those who work with children and young people.

All concerns and allegations of abuse will be responded to appropriately, including referring to the statutory authorities if necessary.

We will co-operate with the statutory authorities in any investigation, will follow multi-agency decisions and will maintain confidentiality of any investigations to those directly involved.

Aim and purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to provide procedures for promoting safeguarding, preventing abuse and protecting children, young people and staff. This includes clear procedures for taking appropriate action when safeguarding concerns are raised involving children and young people who attend our activities and events.

Who this policy applies to.

This policy is approved and endorsed by the Trustees and applies to:

- all those who attend the activities of TheO6
- our trustees and staff (both paid and voluntary)

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The term ‘children and young people’ refer to those under the age of 18 years.

Duty of care and confidentiality

We have a duty of care to all beneficiaries of TheO6, whether adults, young people or children. We will maintain confidentiality at all times, except in circumstances where to do so would place the individual or another individual at risk of harm.

Preventing abuse

TheO6 will appoint a Safeguarding Officer and Trustee responsible for Safeguarding for safeguarding children and adults.
Activities will be organised in accordance with National Youth Agency and safeguarding good practice guidelines so as to promote a safe environment and healthy relationships, whilst minimising opportunities for harm, misunderstanding or false accusation. For each event, risk assessments will be carried out, appropriate consent forms will be used, appropriate records will be kept and adequate insurance will be in place.

We are committed to safer recruitment and selection of all paid staff and volunteers and will ensure that these procedures are followed, which include:

- obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- taking up two references (not from family members)
- interviewing candidates

Safeguarding training will be provided and volunteers and paid staff will be given support and supervision in their role.

All trustees, paid staff and volunteers will work within the policies of TheO6 and understand that there may be action taken if this code is not followed, possibly involving suspension or termination of working with us.

What are we protecting people from?

The definitions of abuse differ between children and adults. A copy of the definitions relating to children is attached in the appendices.
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How to recognise abuse

It is important to be aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse. Please see Appendices for those relating to children and young people. Some signs could be indicators of a number of different categories of abuse.

It is essential to note that these **are only indicators of possible abuse**. There may be other, innocent, reasons for these signs and/or behaviour. They will, however, be a guide to assist in assessing whether abuse of one form or another is a possible explanation for a child or adult's behaviour.

What to do if there is a disclosure or allegation of abuse

If a child, young person or adult makes a disclosure that they are being abused and / or an allegation of abuse against someone, it is important that the person being told:

- stays calm and listen carefully
- reassures them that they have done the right thing in telling
- does not investigate or ask leading questions
- explains that they will need to tell someone else if anyone is at risk of harm, in order to help them
- does not promise to keep secret what they have been told
- informs the TheO6 Safeguarding Coordinator as soon as possible (if they are implicated in the allegation, inform the Trustee responsible for Safeguarding)
- makes a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident and signs and dates this record. This should be given to the TheO6 Safeguarding Coordinator and stored securely in a locked filing cabinet

Procedure in the event of a concern of abuse

If there is an immediate threat of harm, MASH and/or the police should be contacted without delay.

Where it is judged that there is no immediate threat of harm the following will occur:

- The concern should be discussed with TheO6 Safeguarding Coordinator and a decision made as to whether the concern warrants a referral to statutory authorities
- A confidential record will be made of the conversation and the circumstances surrounding it. This record will be kept securely and a copy passed to statutory authorities if a referral is made
- The person about whom the allegation is made must not be informed by anyone in TheO6 if it is judged that to do so could place a child or young people at increased risk. If this is not the case and statutory authorities are involved parents/guardians should be consulted beforehand

If the allegation is regarding the youth pastor, trustee, mentor or volunteer

For any concerns relating to children and young people, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)will be contacted. The timing and method of any action to be taken will be discussed and agreed with the LADO. This will cover communication with the worker, suspension, investigation and possible strategy meetings. A decision will be taken by the LADO about when to inform the worker and TheO6 will follow this advice. For LADO contact details, see Key Contacts.

In accordance with the law, a referral will be made to the DBS / PVG if TheO6 withdraws permission for an individual to engage in work with children and young people OR would have done so had that individual not

resigned, retired, been made redundant or been transferred to a position because the employer believes that the individual has engaged in relevant conduct, satisfied the harm test or committed an offence that would lead to automatic inclusion on a barred list.

In such cases, a report will also be made to the Charity Commission, as they deem such a referral to be a 'serious incident' and requires notification.

Key Contacts

Should anyone have any concern please contact:

Safeguarding Co-ordinator

Name: Mr. Graham Harry (Youth Pastor)

Telephone No 07398 117173

Email graham@theo6.org.uk

Trustee Responsible for Safeguarding

Name: Miss. Judith Webber (Chair of Trustees)

Telephone No 07979 703237

Email Judith.webber@gmail.com

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) 01392 384964 or email ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0345 155 1071

Signed……**Chair** (on behalf of the trustees) Date ……

Review: September 2025