



Safeguarding Children Policies and Procedures



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Registered Charity Number 1173646

Changing lives with **Adventure Therapy**

Adventure Therapy is a registered charity, Founded and based in Ilfracombe, Devon.

We exist to improve the emotional and physical wellbeing of children, young people and adults with unique health conditions, impairments or limitations through outdoor and adventure-led activities, grounded in therapeutic principles.

We support people with mental health conditions, neurodevelopmental disorders, physical disability, life-threatening or life-limiting illnesses and life-changing conditions.

Our service is provided to communities in Devon and Somerset, where we make a positive difference in challenging and complex lives.

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Adventure Therapy, 5 Seaview Estate, Ilfracombe, Devon EX34 9PP

info@adventuretherapy.org.uk, 01271 865285

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Safeguarding Children Policy

This policy enables Adventure Therapy to demonstrate its commitment to keeping children that are at risk with whom it works alongside, safe. As a registered charity, Adventure Therapy acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse.

It is important to have policy and procedures in place so that all staff, trustees, volunteers, associates, service users and carers can work to prevent abuse and know what to do should a concern arise.

The policy and procedures have been drawn up in order to enable Adventure Therapy to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm and abuse from occurring.
- Ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse is supported and
- to stop abuse occurring.

The definition of a child or young person for the purposes of this policy is an individual below the age of 18 years. Those who have attained the age of 18 years should refer to our Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To protect children and young people who receive services from Adventure Therapy. This includes the children of adults who use our services and the siblings of children using our services if they are below the age of 18 years.

A child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

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It is acknowledged that significant numbers of children at risk are abused and it is important that Adventure Therapy has a safeguarding children policy and a set of procedures to follow and puts in place preventative measures to try and reduce those numbers.

This is particularly important due to individuals and families that Adventure Therapy supports, who may have disabilities (cognitive and/or physical), life-threatening or life-limiting illnesses and life-changing conditions.

In order to implement the policy and procedures, Adventure Therapy will work to:

- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- prevent harm, and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to children with care and support needs.
- promote the wellbeing of children at risk in child safeguarding arrangements.
- safeguard children in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the children concerned.
- raise awareness of safeguarding children to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child and
- address what caused the abuse or neglect.

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Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children. Namely:

- Children Act 1989 (revised 2004)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2014
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection of Freedoms Acts 2012
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice, 0—25 years. Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities (HM Government 2014).
- Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HM Government 2015, revised 2018).
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government 2015, revised 2018).
- Safeguarding Children and Young People (HM Government, Charity Commission for England and Wales 2017, revised 2019)

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We recognise that:

- The welfare of a child is paramount as enshrined in the Children's Act 1989.
- All children should be treated equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
- Some children 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 organisations is essential to promoting young peoples welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Ensuring a designated member of the board acts as a Designated Safeguarding Trustee for children and young people and a Deputy Safeguarding Officer is appointed in their absence.
- Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff, trustees and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring that all necessary checks are completed.
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers.

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- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with organisations and agencies who need to know and involving children, young people, families and carers appropriately.
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff or volunteers appropriately.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise.
- Ensuring that we have an effective complaints and whistleblowing policy in place.
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- It is important to recognise that in providing its services Adventure Therapy utilises external providers which include activity instructors, outdoor guides, activity centres and health professionals. We expect any provider of services to Adventure Therapy to have robust policies and procedures in place to protect children and we will request a copy of these documents for our records. As part of our association with external companies and providers who will be supporting children on referral from Adventure Therapy, we will always provide a copy of our Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures and we would expect the content of this to be adhered to, without exception. Any company or person found to be in breach of our Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures will have any agreement with Adventure Therapy terminated in addition to the relevant authorities being informed, if applicable.

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The Designated Safeguarding Trustee at Adventure Therapy is:

Amber Gammon
Adventure Therapy
5 Seaview Estate
Ilfracombe
Devon EX34 9PP

Telephone 01271 865285
e-mail amber.gammon@adventuretherapy.org.uk

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee should be contacted for support and advice on implementing this policy and associated procedures.

This policy and associated procedures are kept at our registered office address.

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Empowerment |  Proportionality |
|  Protection |  Partnership |
|  Prevention |  Accountability |

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Safeguarding Children Policy Procedures

Introduction

Adventure Therapy facilities access to a range of outdoor and adventure-led activities for children and adults with unique health conditions, impairments or limitations. These procedures have been designed to ensure the wellbeing and protection of any child who accesses services provided by Adventure Therapy. The procedures recognise that child abuse can be a difficult subject for workers and volunteers to deal with. Adventure Therapy is committed to the belief that the protection of children at risk from harm and abuse is everybody's responsibility and the aim of these procedures is to ensure that all staff, trustees, volunteers, service users and carers act responsibly, respectfully and appropriately in response to any concern of child abuse.

Preventing Abuse

Adventure Therapy is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the services it offers and that all those involved within Adventure Therapy will be treated with respect. Adventure Therapy is committed to safer recruitment policies and practices for paid staff and volunteers. This may include Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for staff and volunteers, ensuring references are taken up and provision of adequate training on safeguarding children.

The organisation will work within the current legal framework for referring staff or volunteers to the DBS who have harmed or pose a risk to vulnerable children and/or adults. Information about safeguarding children and our complaints policy will be available to service users and their carers/ families.

Recognising the Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Adventure Therapy is committed to ensuring that all staff, trustees and volunteers undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Adventure Therapy will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding Trustee and other members of relevant staff or volunteers have access to higher levels of training and/ or information around safeguarding children, if required.

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Adventure Therapy acknowledges that the children and young people who may benefit from its services, including those who are disabled, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and accepts a responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

Adventure Therapy does not tolerate any form of abuse towards the children or adults it supports and such behaviour will result in the Adventure Therapy Safeguarding Children and Adults Policies and Procedures being implemented. This will include disciplinary action and if upheld, dismissal of any employees, trustees or volunteers and the matter being referred to the Police.

Should Adventure Therapy become aware of past or current convictions or upheld disciplinarys for gross misconduct that suggest there may be a risk to children, these will be considered in accordance with relevant legislation and alongside the requirements of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

Responsibilities

Whatever your concern - whether you have been told something by a child or by another person or whether you have seen or heard something that has made you uncomfortable or whether you have become aware of a breach of policy you must share it. It does not matter how you have become aware or how a child has come into contact with Adventure Therapy.

If you have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a child you must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee. You can be confident that you will not suffer any personal detriment through sharing your concerns.

If you have any online safeguarding concerns, whether related to online grooming or child abuse images these must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee immediately.

Recognising the types of abuse

- Physical Abuse is deliberately hurting a child and causing injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns or cuts.
- Emotional Abuse is the emotional maltreatment or neglect of a child. It is sometimes referred to as psychological abuse and it can cause children serious harm.

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It could lead to a child thinking that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may include an expectation that a child is able to do more than their stage of development would allow. This could include expecting a baby to feed themselves, to be toilet trained or not to cry, as well as being over protective and preventing children from having opportunities to explore or participate in normal social interaction.

It might also include a child seeing or hearing domestic abuse or being subjected to or witnessing bullying (including cyber bullying). This can cause a child to feel frightened or in danger. Whilst it might exist alone, emotional abuse is a factor in all forms of abuse.

- Neglect of a child is the ongoing failure to meet their basic needs. It is dangerous and children can suffer harm over the longer term. Neglect can also occur during pregnancy because of maternal alcohol or drug misuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter; lack of supervision, access to medical care or keeping the child safe from danger. It could also include unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.
- Sexual Abuse is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This does not have to be physical contact, but could involve children being subjected to or being the subject of, sexual images. It could include encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. It is important to note that sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult men and women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- Grooming is defined as developing the trust of an individual or his or her family for the purposes of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or trafficking. Grooming can happen in person and online.
- Online Abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet, whether it is through social networking or playing games online. Sexual abuse can happen online, too.

Some adults will try to groom children over a period of time while others may act opportunistically. It is therefore up to all who work at or volunteer for Adventure Therapy to create a safeguarding culture and a safe environment where the potential for abuse is minimised and prevented.

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We want to ensure that anyone working with children has sufficient knowledge and confidence to report any concerns that they might have for a child or about the behaviour of an adult or other young person, towards a child, through an understanding of this policy and if appropriate, related training.

What should I do if I am concerned about the welfare of a child?

Types of Concern

You might have a justifiable concern for the welfare of a child for a number of reasons. For example: you may have observed an injury or witnessed an inappropriate interaction between a child or children and an adult.

You may be concerned about bullying or inappropriate use of mobile phones or know of someone who has been, or is, accessing or sharing inappropriate images.

A child could exhibit inappropriate sexualised behaviour or awareness or look neglected or withdrawn in their behaviour.

A child may make a disclosure to you that they or someone they know is being abused. If a child says they want to tell you a secret or they disclose information that may suggest they are at risk of or have been abused it is important that you tell them that you are unable to keep secrets and that, depending upon what they tell you, you may have to tell someone else in order to keep them safe. In the majority of cases the child will disclose to you anyway as they will have already prepared themselves to make a disclosure.

It is important that you remain calm and do not show surprise or disbelief. Listen carefully to what is being said and do not ask for detailed information, probing or leading questions. Tell them that you take what they are saying seriously and what you are going to do next: that you will only tell people who you think need to know. Let them know that when you have spoken to someone, they will be told what is going to happen next.

If you feel that the child is in immediate danger you must contact the police (dial 999) and once you have done that, refer the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee as soon as possible.

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You must not ignore a concern and do nothing. As a charity, we do not expect you to make a decision of what is significant or whether abuse has occurred. However, you are expected to share information with the people or agencies who are able to make those decisions. Contact the Designated Safeguarding Trustee immediately and share your concerns with them. They will be able to advise you on the next step. If you are unable to contact the Designated Safeguarding Trustee you should contact the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. In their absence, contact the Independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Never delay in taking whatever course of action is necessary to safeguard a child.

Once you have shared your concern, the Designated Safeguarding Trustee, Deputy Safeguarding Officer or Independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will decide what the most appropriate course of action should be and they will then be responsible for taking this forward.

Dependent on the seriousness of the concern, a potential outcome might be a referral to a statutory agency such as the Police, Children's Services, the NSPCC or to the child's school or parent who will know the child better. The information you hold may be important in building a bigger picture and in helping to safeguard the child.

In certain circumstances children may present with injuries or behaviours which in isolation might not seem significant. It is advisable however, to maintain a record of when children present with unexplained injuries or behaviour as, over a period of time, a picture may emerge that raises concern and this should be dealt with by following these policies and procedures.

If the parent is not aware of the disclosure or they are the alleged abuser, where possible it is better to wait for guidance from the Police or Children's Services as to how much information can be shared. Where the parent can be informed it is likely to be distressing for them so you will need to think about who is best placed to do this.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer must be kept informed and advice sought before saying anything as this situation would need to be handled sensitively.

It should not affect your decision to report concerns, but please be aware that, dependent on the seriousness of your concern, it may not be possible to maintain your anonymity. This will be discussed with you and you will be offered support throughout.

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Registered Charity Number 1173646

Social workers will always consider how to protect the person reporting the concern but ultimately such decisions must be made in the best interests of the child and in any event, it is always possible that the alleged perpetrator may guess who made the referral.

Should the child be in immediate danger or require medical attention, dial 999 and ask for the appropriate emergency service. Once you have ensured the child is safe, inform the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer immediately.

It is very important that you keep a clear record of what has happened. A written account of events may be required in the future. Adventure Therapy will provide a form to record this information and you should ensure it is completed accurately, is factual and written as close to the event as possible.

Safeguarding Children Online

If you have any safeguarding concerns on the internet, whether related to online grooming or child abuse images, these must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer immediately. They are in a position to be responsible for taking the necessary action to refer and alert the appropriate agencies. Regardless of how you have become aware of online child abuse images, be it via your personal or work e-mail account, you must refer it in accordance with this policy as the referral policy will ensure that agencies such as the Internet Watch Foundation are able to remove child abuse images from the internet.

Photography

Adventure Therapy may find it useful to be able to use the image of a child or children in the promotion of our services and activities. This may include marketing literature, on our website, social networking or additional promotional materials. We will always request permission and signed authorisation from a parent or legal guardian should we wish to do this.

Training and Due Diligence

Adventure Therapy is committed to ensuring its staff, volunteers, Approved Activity Providers and professionals it works with are aware of and familiar with the Adventure Therapy Safeguarding Children

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Registered Charity Number 1173646

Policy and will provide a copy of this policy to all staff, volunteers, Approved Activity Providers and professionals it works with. The charity will also make this policy available as a download on its website.

The charity will apply for an Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) certificate for all staff and volunteers of the charity who operate in a role which means they will have direct interactions and engagement with children and/ or vulnerable adults at our activities whether or not the staff or volunteer has a DBS certificate with another organisation at the time of their employment or volunteering.

Adventure Therapy will request a copy of the DBS certificate for the lead instructor at its Approved Activity Providers for our activity sessions. We ensure that an activity termed as a 1:1 session is actually a 2:1 (or more) so that more than one adult is present at all sessions.

Adventure Therapy requests that all staff and volunteers who will work with children complete and pass the NHS e-learning for Healthcare Safeguarding Children Level 1 module (as a minimum) and that staff who will work with children complete this on an annual basis.

Our Deputy Safeguarding Officer has completed the NHS e-learning for Healthcare Safeguarding Children Level 3 module.

Designated named person for safeguarding children

Adventure Therapy has an appointed individual who is responsible for leading safeguarding children work in the organisation. In their absence, a deputy will be available for staff, trustees or volunteers to consult with. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee at Adventure Therapy is the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Amber Gammon.

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Trustee the deputy should be contacted, which is our Founder and Chief Executive, Rob Emery.

Should either of these named people be unavailable then staff, trustees, volunteers, service users and carers should contact the Local (Devon) Safeguarding Children Partnership directly.

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Registered Charity Number 1173646

The roles and responsibilities of the named person(s) are to:

- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they have concerns that a child is at risk and may be experiencing or has experienced abuse or neglect.
- Ensure that concerns are acted on, clearly recorded and referred to the Local (Devon) Safeguarding Children Partnership or to the allocated social worker/care manager where necessary.
- Follow up any safeguarding children referrals and ensure the issues have been addressed.
- Manage and have oversight over individual complex cases involving allegations against an employee, trustee, volunteer or student, whether paid or unpaid.
- Consider any recommendations from the safeguarding children process.
- Reinforce the utmost need for confidentiality and to ensure that staff and volunteers are adhering to good practice with regard to confidentiality and security. This is because it is around the time that a person starts to challenge abuse that the risks of increasing intensity of abuse are greatest.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers working directly with service users who have experienced abuse or who are experiencing abuse, are well supported and receive the appropriate supervision.
- Ensure staff and volunteers are given support and afforded protection, if necessary, under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. They will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner and they will be kept informed of any action that has been taken and its outcome.

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Responding to people who have experienced or are experiencing abuse:

Adventure Therapy recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of child abuse is never easy.

How to respond if you receive an allegation:

- Reassure the person concerned and listen to what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.
- Tell them the information will be treated seriously.
- Do not start to investigate or ask detailed or probing questions.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.

If you witness abuse or abuse has just taken place, the priorities will be:

- To call an ambulance if required.
- To call the Police if a crime has been committed.
- To preserve evidence.
- To keep yourself and others safe.
- To inform the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
- To record what happened in the Safeguarding Children and Adults policy register.

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Children should be given the opportunity to decide whether they agree to their personal information being shared. If a child doesn't have the capacity to make their own decisions ask their parent or carer (unless doing so would put the child at risk of harm).

All situations of abuse or alleged abuse will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Trustee and/or Deputy Safeguarding Officer of the charity and should be made immediately.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer of the charity will contact the the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership for Devon or Somerset or seek advice from the NSPCC. They may also contact the Police.

If anyone feels unable to raise their concern with the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer of the charity, then concerns can be raised directly with the local Safeguarding Children Partnership, by contacting the NSPCC and, if considered urgent, the Police.

Making a safeguarding children referral

Contact the Local (Devon) Safeguarding Children Partnership by completing the relevant form at www.devonscp.org.uk/make-a-request-for-support/professionals-practitioners/

If the concern is urgent call the Local (Devon) Safeguarding Children Partnership on 0345 600 0388.

Contact the Local (Somerset) Safeguarding Children Partnership by completeing the relevant form at www.professionalchoices.org.uk/eha/ or call 0300 123 3078 if your concern is urgent.

The NSPCC Helpline is 0808 800 5000 and is available between 1000 and 1600 Monday to Friday.

For urgent concerns and if a child is at immediate risk then please dial 999.

You should ask to make a safeguarding children referral.

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Managing an allegation made against a member of staff or volunteer

Adventure Therapy will ensure that any allegations made against a member of staff, trustee or volunteer will be dealt with swiftly.

Where a member of staff/trustee/volunteer is thought to have committed a criminal offence the Police will be informed. If a crime has been witnessed the Police should be contacted immediately.

The safety of the individual(s) concerned is paramount. A risk assessment must be undertaken immediately to assess the level of risk to all service users posed by the alleged perpetrator. This will include whether it is safe for them to continue in their role or any other role within the charity whilst the investigation is undertaken.

The Designated Safeguarding Trustee and/or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer will liaise with Community Health and Social Care Direct to discuss the best course of action and to ensure that the charity's disciplinary procedures are coordinated with any other enquiries taking place as part of the ongoing management of the allegation.

Adventure Therapy has a whistle blowing policy and staff would be made aware of this policy. Staff will be supported to use this policy.

Recording and managing confidential information

Adventure Therapy is committed to maintaining confidentiality wherever possible and information around safeguarding children issues should be shared only with those who need to know. For further information, please see the confidentiality policy of the charity.

All allegations/concerns should be recorded in the Safeguarding Children and Adults Register where safeguarding of children and adults concerns will be recorded. The information should be factual and not based on opinions. Record what the person tells you, what you have seen and any witnesses, if appropriate.

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The information that is recorded will be kept secure and will comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. This information will be secured in a locked filing cabinet at the registered office address of the organisation. Access to this information will be restricted to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee and Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

Disseminating/Reviewing policy and procedures

These Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures will be clearly communicated to staff, trustees, volunteers, service users and carers. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee will be responsible for ensuring that this is done.

The Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually by our Founder and Chief Executive and our Board of Trustees. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee will recommend any changes. The Designated Safeguarding Trustee will also ensure that any changes are clearly communicated to staff, other members of the board of trustees, volunteers and, if it appropriate to do so, service users and carers. It may be appropriate to involve staff, volunteers, service users and carers in the review.

Useful Contacts

Care Direct Phone: 0300 123 1053 (available: Monday to Friday, 0900—2000 and 1100—1600 on weekends). Further information about the Care Direct service can be found online, at www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support/carers-direct-helpline/.

Designated Safeguarding Trustee

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Telephone: 01271 865285

email: amber.gammon@adventuretherapy.org.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Rob Emery
Adventure Therapy
5 Seaview Estate
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Telephone: 01271 865285

email: rob.emery@adventuretherapy.org.uk

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