



## **Tarka Trust Safeguarding Policy**

This policy applies to any possible or proposed interactions between the Trustees of The Tarka Country Trust and its employees, volunteers and applicants in regard to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children, young adults and vulnerable adults who may interact with the activities of the trust. In most cases children, young adults and vulnerable adults will primarily be in the care of their own family members, guardians or carers, in order to be allowed to participate in the actions of the trust; however, this does not negate the Trusts duty of care, hence the creation and regular revision of this policy.

### **Policy**

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility:** Child protection and safeguarding as a whole is something the trust has taken regard of for some years as part of its general safeguarding awareness and its task of promoting high levels of both physical and mental welfare through the interaction with nature.

The chair of the trust acts as its chief safeguarding officer and all trustees voluntarily apply for regular DBS checks to ensure compliance with best practice. As adults and/or professionals or volunteers, everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children and promote their welfare. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – and in particular, protecting them from significant harm - depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

Individual children, especially some of the most vulnerable children and those at greatest risk of social exclusion, will need co-ordinated help from health, education, children's social care, and quite possibly the voluntary sector and other agencies, including youth justice services.

For those children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm, joint working is essential, to safeguard and promote welfare of the child(ren) and – where necessary – to help bring to justice the perpetrators of crimes against children.

The trust agrees that all agencies and professionals should:

- be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect.
- be alert to the risks which individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children.
- share and help to analyse information so that an assessment can be made of the child's needs and circumstances.
- contribute to whatever actions are needed to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.
- take part in regularly reviewing the outcomes for the child against specific plans; and
- work co-operatively with parents unless this is inconsistent with ensuring the child's safety.



The trust uses the following definitions of abuse and neglect as all forms of abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child.

- Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm.
- Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.
- They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

### **Physical abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the use of persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g.: rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

### **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, that is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate caregivers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.



The Tarka Country Trust does not currently employ any staff but in the past and potentially in the future all staff will be made aware of this policy and the absolute necessity of ensuring its correct implementation and review. Where necessary or possible, any and all staff will be encouraged to attend appropriate training courses, the cost of which will be borne by the trust.

### **Reviewing the Policy and Procedure**

This policy and procedure will be reviewed every year by the trustees as part of the procedure of its annual general meeting, this will include checking telephone numbers, accuracy of personnel details, and any updates required by a change in local or national policy.

### **Allegations Involving a Members of Staff / Volunteer**

As stated above the Trust does not currently employ any staff but if this takes place the staff member will be supported and supervised by an appointed trustee who will be responsible for that person's effective recruitment and human resources procedures, including checking all staff and volunteers to make sure they are safe to work with children and young people.

In the case of an allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or trustee all allegations will follow the set procedure to ensure that all allegations are treated with the same level of seriousness and rigour. All reports of allegations must be submitted within two working days to The Child Protection Officer, in this case the Chair of the trust.

The following procedure should be applied in all situations where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way which may have harmed a child, young adult or vulnerable adult
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young adult or vulnerable adult
- Behaved towards a child or children or young adult or vulnerable adult in a way which indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children.

The allegations may relate to the persons behaviour at an event run by the trust or its dedicated community groups at work, at home or in another setting.

The Child Protection Officer will discuss the matter with the complainant to determine what steps should be taken and where necessary obtain further details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion should also consider whether there is evidence/information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded, or whether a referral to the appropriate authorities is appropriate. The trust as a whole is required to act in a wholly open and transparent manner; therefore, if the allegation is not patently false and there is cause to suspect that a child, young adult or vulnerable adult is suffering or has suffered significant harm the matter should be referred to the trustees as a whole. In the case where an allegation may be so serious as to require immediate referral to the Police may be appropriate, but common sense and judgement must be applied in reaching a decision.



Some allegations may be less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation; however, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are followed up and examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation.

**Policy Review Table**

<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>14/09/2020</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>None</b>

**Signed by: R Prowse Chair of Trustees**

### Safeguarding Process Chart

