

TOG Mind Child Safeguarding Policy

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Revision History

Date of this revision: September 2023

To be reviewed by: September 2024

Version number	Revised by	Summary of Changes	Changes marked
3	Nicola Harrison	Updated relevant legislation, aligned policy to VCFSE Standards	No
4	Nicola Harrison	Reviewed legislation, linked to additional policies.	No
5	David Stevens	Named leads and contact details added to safeguarding framework document. Section 5.1 edited to include types of abuse. Section 5.4. Added statement around what to do if allegations are made against a member of TOG Mind. Section 5.5. Statements added around staff and volunteer training and incident reporting.	No
6	Claire McGrath	Updated relevant policies and legal framework sections. Addition of appropriate handling of non-recent disclosures. Amendment of organisational commitment section to expand on training provision. Updated scope to include staff and volunteer cases and defined age ranges. Updated managing allegations against staff section to include specific LADO criteria. Adaption of protecting children section. Amendment to Appendix A – safeguarding framework. Addition of Appendix B – Safeguarding statement.	No

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Signed approval forms are filed in the Management section of the project files.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Cheryl Eastwood	Cheryl Eastwood	Chair	October 2023	6

Introduction and Background

Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind (TOG Mind) recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children by protecting them from harm, recognising and responding to concerns about a child and ensuring everyone within our organisation is aware of their individual responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children.

TOG Mind's policies are underpinned by our values of:

- Relationships: we listen and ask questions to understand others and to build trust. People matter to us both inside and outside our organisation.
- Aspiration: we support one another, clients, and communities to achieve better mental health.
- Learning: we seek insight and grow from experience; finding new or better ways to contribute to the field of mental health.
- Potential: we encourage personal responsibility for development by discovering and realising the abilities and energies of people.

1. Scope

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of or in partnership with Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind, including the board of trustees, staff, volunteers and third parties. TOG Minds Safeguarding Policies and procedures cover all of the local Mind's work including digital, online, face to face and phone support. Clear separate arrangement may be in place where work is delivered in partnership with other agencies, this may involve following the safeguarding policy of another venue or organisation.

Within this policy a 'child', 'children' or 'young person' is defined as any person aged up to 18 years, where a young person is aged 18 and 25 but has additional needs or a disability a 'young person' would be protected under this policy or the Adult Safeguarding Policy, this will be decided on an individual basis by the relevant safeguarding lead.

In addition, this policy may extend to situation where a member of staff or volunteer discloses that they themselves are a victim or perpetrator of abuse.

2. Purpose and aims of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all staff, volunteers and third parties associated with TOG Mind appropriately safeguard the welfare of children, protect them from harm and minimise any risks to the welfare of a child.

This policy will instruct appropriate practice and responses within organisational services and activities directly or indirectly with children.

3. Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. This includes:

- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Working together to safeguard children 2018
- Every Child Matters 2003
- Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual
- NSPCC Voluntary and Community Sector Safeguarding Standards and Guidance

- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Family Law Act 1996
- The Mental Health Act 2005
- The Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Social Care Act 2018
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

This policy has been written in line with key local partners with safeguarding responsibility such as, local Safeguarding Children Boards and other local safeguarding agencies.

4. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Code of Conduct for staff and volunteers
- Recruitment Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy - within the Employee Handbook
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Consent and Capacity Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Information Sharing Policy
- Risk Management and Incident Reporting Policy
- Any other service specific policy directly or indirectly relating to a child

5. Policy Statement

5.1.1 Definitions

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children to protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- preventing harm to children's health or development
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes

The Care Act 2014 identifies 10 categories of abuse:

- Physical
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual
- Psychological or emotional
- Financial or material
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational or institutional

- Neglect
- Self-neglect

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

TOG Mind recognises that abuse can take many forms and all within the organisation are required to be trained in being alert to and recognising the signs of potential abuse.

5.2 Protecting children and young people

TOG Mind are guided by the following principles in the safeguarding and protection of children:

- **Empowerment:** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- **Prevention:** It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality:** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Protection:** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Partnership:** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

TOG Mind recognises the importance of applying these principles and will do so by ensuring:

- 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 abuse.
- All children have the right to be respected, valued and listened to, including the right to be involved in any action taken by the organisation in minimising risk and protecting from harm, where it is appropriate and safe to do so.
- That children should be involved in the safeguarding process. Their views, wishes and feelings must be taken into account when decisions are being made because abuse or neglect is suspected. It is important to note that while a client's views, wishes and feelings should be taken into account, this doesn't override our duty of care towards clients who are at risk of harm.

It is the responsibility of everyone within the organisation to uphold the above principles for safeguarding children and all within the organisation are responsible for responding to and reporting any concerns relating to a child.

All within the organisation should ensure their practice is informed by the following guidance:

- Suspicions, concerns, disclosures and allegations of abuse are to be taken seriously.
- Any suspicion, concern, disclosure or allegation of abuse should be dealt with promptly, in line with this policy and supporting procedures.

- Any disclosure of abuse by third parties should be dealt with promptly, ensuring all involved are kept up to date with any action taken, where appropriate.
- Where a disclosure of abuse is historic the organisation should seek to support the individual and ensure any risks posed to a child are explored and responded to in line with this policy – please see specific section related to non-recent disclosures.
- TOG Mind recognises all within the organisation have the right to raise concerns of abuse directly to external agencies. However, it is important to note that TOG Mind has designated internal support and guidance in line with this policy and supporting procedures to assist in doing so. Staff are advised to utilise Appendix A and Appendix B in accessing further information of safeguarding roles within the organisation and their responsibilities.

The organisation is not responsible for making a decision about whether abuse has or has not occurred. The organisation is required to gather the relevant information, share this with the relevant agencies and support those involved with any further action required, in line with this policy.

For further information on sharing information please refer to the TOGMind Information Sharing Policy.

5.3 Appropriate conduct and behaviour

TOG Mind wants to ensure that no-one in the organisation is left open to an allegation concerning their conduct or behaviour towards a child. All within the organisation are required to ensure that professional boundaries are vigorously adhered to at all times.

The Code of Conduct stipulates the expectations regarding conduct, and this should be adhered to. Where anyone within the organisation is unsure about the Code of Conduct, they should discuss this with their line manager or other named safeguarding lead before proceeding with any action or behaviour that could be in breach of the Code of Conduct and make them vulnerable to an allegation.

All within the organisation are to understand that parental permission to undertake activities or action with a child does not protect them from an allegation nor does it supersede the principles, guidance or procedures within this policy or others within the organisation.

5.4 Managing allegations against staff and volunteers

We are aware that all staff and volunteers at TOGMind are PIPOT's (People in a Position of Trust), therefore, allegations of abuse against anyone within TOG Mind in relation to a child are to be reported immediately to the relevant safeguarding lead.

Specific situations that relate to children that must be reported to the Childrens Safeguarding Lead are where the staff member or volunteer has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

It is the responsibility of everyone within the organisation to report any concerns they have relating to another member of TOG Mind, please see Whistleblowing Policy for further details.

Once an allegation is reported, the relevant safeguarding lead will gather information relating to the allegation and discuss with the CEO or other Director regarding further action required, this will include:

- Seek support from and report allegations to local safeguarding agencies, within a timely manner. This may include obtaining support from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- Decision to suspend the TOG Mind member until a thorough investigation has been completed by local safeguarding team.
- Reporting allegations to the police, where appropriate
- Informing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), where appropriate
- Informing the relevant commissioner/funder as required within our contracts/agreements.
- Communicating with the assigned lead Trustee for Safeguarding

Any concerns regarding the conduct or behaviour of a member of TOG Mind will be dealt with promptly, fairly and in line with this policy.

Any staff member of TOG Mind subject to allegations may also be subject to our disciplinary procedures following the outcome of external safeguarding investigations.

5.5 Recording and Reporting

TOG Mind recognises the importance of accurate, factual records in relation to safeguarding children and is committed to ensuring all information collected relating to a child is stored securely and in line with our Data Protection Policy.

All within the organisation are to ensure this guidance is followed when collecting and recording information about any safeguarding concern regarding a child:

- Ensure information recorded is exactly what has been said by the child or third party. All are reminded not to make assumptions or judgements regarding any information received.
- Ensure all relevant information relating to the child, others involved, details disclosed by the child or third party are clear, concise and accurate.
- Information regarding disclosures of abuse should be dealt with sensitively and calmly, ensuring the wellbeing of the child during a disclosure is as important as collecting relevant information. All are reminded not to ask a child about specific details without guidance from a relevant manager.
- Individuals should seek support and guidance from a relevant manager in relation to disclosures of abuse promptly in line with this policy and the Incident and Serious Incident Responding and Reporting Policy
- The relevant line manager or safeguarding lead should be alerted once all information is recorded on the internal system to check this policy has been followed appropriately.

Any suspicion, concern, disclosure or allegation of abuse should be recorded on the organisation's incident reporting system (SharePoint) within a timely manner, however recording information on the system should not prevent other agencies being contacted or relevant actions taking place. Volunteers should complete an incident report form (Appendix 9, incident policy), with the support of a member of staff.

All staff and volunteers will attend a half day of training on how to report incidents using this system and will be made aware of their responsibilities.

Any information shared with other agencies should be done so in line with the principles of this policy and in line with the Information Sharing Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Data Protection Policy. This should ensure, where necessary, seeking the relevant consent to share information but recognising this is not always possible, where doing so may pose a further risk to a child.

5.6 Appropriate handling of non-recent disclosures

TOG Mind is committed to the robust safeguarding of children upon a non-recent disclosure of abuse. TOG Mind is conscious of the effects that reporting of non-recent abuse may have on therapeutic, trusting relationships and how this may break down a child and their family's engagement in services when reports are made against their expressed wishes. TOG Mind is also mindful that non-recent disclosures may also be continuing to impact the child or may continue to place other children or vulnerable adults at risk. If disclosures of abuse are not reported through appropriate channels i.e. social care and the police and alleged perpetrators are not identified, this continues the cycle of abuse onto others. Therefore, TOG Mind staff and volunteers will obtain relevant information regarding non-recent abuse upon disclosure and make decisions on a case-by-case basis on whether to make further reports.

TOG Mind have a duty of care to report disclosures of abuse whether this is current or non-recent and will work with the child and their family around sharing this information to ensure this is done as tactfully and supportively as possible to minimise any disruption or distress and maintain the therapeutic relationship. TOG Mind staff and volunteers will receive robust clinical support, guidance, and supervision to aide in decision making in regard to the reporting of non-recent abuse. TOG Mind is committed to ensuring the principles of The Care Act 2014 are incorporated into this decision making process (Empowerment, Prevention, Proportionality, Protection, Partnership, Accountability)

6. Organisational commitments

TOG Mind is committed to ensuring all within the organisation are aware of their responsibilities for the safeguarding and protection of children. The organisation ensures this by:

- Providing access to training for each individual within the organisation relevant to their role and level of responsibility, for further details see our Safeguarding Framework -Appendix A. The safeguarding framework details mandatory training expectations and all client facing staff are encouraged to undertake continued professional development in relation to safeguarding via locality safeguarding boards, our internal training platform and from any other relevant organisation.

- Providing access to appropriate supervision and management for all individual within the organisation relevant to their role and level of responsibility.
- Ensuring all individuals undertaking direct and indirect activities with a child in the organisation have appropriate checks prior to undertaking activities, in line with our DBS Policy.
- Ensuring all individuals within the organisation have access to support and guidance via a line manager or safeguarding lead during all times when activities or services are taking place.
- Ensuring accurate records on named leads and designated roles are kept up to date and communicated throughout the organisation. – See Appendix B Safeguarding Statement.
- Ensuring all activities with children within the organisation are guided by a child’s capacity to consent to engage. The organisation will be guided by Gillick Competency and Fraser Guidelines for making this assessment; where a child does not have the capacity to consent this shall be sought by parental guardian of the child.

Appendix A-



Appendix
ASafeguarding Fram

Appendix B-



Appendix B Public
Safeguarding Stater

Policy Revisions

This policy will be reviewed annually, and any amendments made as necessary or earlier if changes to national legislation or operational procedures at TOG Mind occur. We welcome feedback on policies to help us continuously improve. If you would like to provide any suggested improvements on the content of this policy, please email your feedback to HR@togmind.org

All policies are subject to Executive Committee approval.