



The Network Code of Ethics is the fundamental point of reference and lens through which Network's suite of policies should be viewed. The intent of all policies of Network is to utilise language which aligns with the trauma lens, vision and values; safe, person-centred, kind, collaborative and empowered. As a learning space Network is committed to the ongoing development and improvement of our work to ensure that this is the case. Policies are regularly reviewed and membership feedback is welcomed as part of this process.

# Safeguarding Policy

## 1: INTRODUCTION

Trauma Informed Plymouth Network (The Network) abides by the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Network is committed to safeguarding practice that reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice requirements.

- We recognise the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions we take
- Everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation has an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children and adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with relevant stakeholders is crucial in ensuring the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

## 2: Statement of Intent:

The Network will:

- Protect those who engage in The Network activity from harm. This includes the children of adults who engage in The Network activity.
- Provide paid staff, members, CIC Directors, as well as those who engage in The Network activity with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of The Network including Directors, paid staff and volunteers. Failure to comply with the policy and related procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

## 3: Definitions:

**The Children Act 1989 definition of a child is:** anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or is in hospital.

**Adults at Risk, as laid out in the Care Act 2008 are:**

- An adult who has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs),



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- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

### **Child and Adult Abuse:**

Children and adults may be vulnerable to neglect and abuse or exploitation from within their family and from individuals they come across in their daily lives.

There are 4 main categories of child abuse, which are: sexual, physical, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Adult abuse takes many forms, including physical abuse, neglect, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse, discriminatory abuse, domestic abuse, and modern slavery.

**Safeguarding children:** Safeguarding children is defined in 2023 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment.
- preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

### **4: Safeguarding as Part of the Plymouth System:**

In safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, The Network is committed to the principles laid out by the [Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Partnership](#) and the [Plymouth Safeguarding Adults Partnership](#).

#### **Legal Framework:**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England. A summary of the key legislation is available from [nspcc.org.uk/learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning).

The Network have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as well as vulnerable adults.



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## 5: The Prevent Duty

Some organisations in England, Scotland and Wales have a duty, as a specified authority under section 26 of the Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015, to identify vulnerable children and young people and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. Children and vulnerable adults can be exposed to different views and receive information from various sources. Some of these views may be considered radical or extreme.

**Radicalisation** is the process through which a person comes to support or be involved in extremist ideologies. It can result in a person becoming drawn into terrorism and is in itself a form of harm.

**Extremism** is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.

Network Directors, employees, and members who deliver activities on behalf of Network (such as training) are invited to complete Prevent Awareness training annually and records are held within the annual skills audit by the Board of Directors.

## 6: Awareness:

The Network will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding awareness among its directors, employees, volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g. contractors). This is recorded within an annually updated skills audit held by the Board of Directors.

For all employees who are working or volunteering with children, this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in safeguarding.
- Recognize a child or adult potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.
- Understand how to report a safeguarding alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with children and adults.
- Have knowledge of The Network safeguarding policy.

## 7: Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

The Network expects all Directors, employees, branch leads, trainers and volunteers to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Data Protection.



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However, information should be shared with the Local Authority if a child or adult is deemed to be at risk of harm. **If they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed then the police should be contacted.**

### **8: Recording and Record Keeping:**

A written record must be kept about any concern regarding a child or adult with safeguarding needs. This must include details of the person involved, the nature of the concern and the actions taken, decision made and why they were made. The record is held by the nominated Directors for Safeguarding.

All records must be signed and dated. All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

### **9: Safer Recruitment & Selection:**

The Network is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to children and vulnerable adults from people unsuitable to work with them or have contact with them.

The Network has clear procedures that cover the recruitment of all directors, employees, trainers and volunteers are in development.

### **10: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check**

*Relevant and appropriate* roles in The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This will be clearly stated within recruitment documentation and, where this applies, embarking on such roles will be conditional on a satisfactory DBS check. For roles which involve working in regulated activity with children or adults at risk, the Enhanced DBS check will be undertaken.

Decisions about prospective recruitment are not entirely defined by the DBS check but may facilitate further discussion if concerns are raised.

### **11: Social Media:**

All employees and volunteers should be aware of The Network's social media policy and procedures and the code of ethics towards those we support.



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## **12: Use of Mobile Phones and other Digital Technology:**

All employees, Directors and Network members should be aware of the safeguarding risks around the use of mobile phones and other digital technologies. It is unlawful to photograph children and young people without the explicit consent of the person with parental responsibilities. Informed consent should be gained from adults participating in The Network activities before photographs or recordings of any sort are made.

## **13: Whistleblowing:**

It is important that people within The Network have the confidence to come forward to speak or act if they are unhappy with anything. Whistle blowing occurs when a person raises a concern about dangerous or illegal activity, or any wrongdoing within their organisation. This includes concerns about an employee, Director or member. There is also a requirement by The Network to protect whistleblowers. Procedures for whistleblowing are set out in Network Code of Ethics and as an appendix to this policy.

Any whistleblowing concerns should be reported to Directors with responsibility for safeguarding, Sarah Cox and Jodie Pitcher. The NSPCC also have a [whistle-blowing advice line](#): 0800 800 5000.

## **Important Contacts:**

### **Directors for Safeguarding:**

Sarah Cox

Email: [sarahcoxisw@outlook.com](mailto:sarahcoxisw@outlook.com)

Jodie Pitcher

Email: [jodie.pitcher@eci.org.uk](mailto:jodie.pitcher@eci.org.uk) Telephone number: 07725685280

### **To report concerns about a child**

- Call 999 if the child is in real danger now.
- If you're worried about a child or young person or think they're being abused, even if you're unsure, call 01752 668000 or email [mash@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:mash@plymouth.gov.uk). Outside of normal working hours call Plymouth Out of Hours Service: 01752 346984.
- In Cornwall, please call Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU) on 0300 123 1116



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- In Devon, call MASH on 0345 155 1071

#### **To report concerns about an adult:**

- Call 999 if the adult is in real danger now.
- In Plymouth 01752 668000 (ask for adult social care)[www.plymouth.gov.uk/reportabuse](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/reportabuse)
- In Cornwall, call 01872 326433.
- In Devon, call Adult Social Care on 0345 1551 007

#### **To report concerns about an adult working with children**

Local Authority Designated Officer for Plymouth  
01752 304769  
[LADO@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@plymouth.gov.uk)

Local Authority Designated Officer for Cornwall  
01872 326536  
[lado@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:lado@cornwall.gov.uk)

Local Authority Designated Officer for Devon  
01392 384964  
[ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk](mailto:ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk)

#### **Police**

Emergency – 999  
Non-emergency – 101

#### **NSPCC Helpline**

0808 800 5000

**Agreed by the Board of Directors**

**DATE: August 2024**

**Review Schedule: Annually**



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## Appendix 1

# Whistleblowing Procedure

The Trauma Informed Plymouth Network (The Network) is committed to being open, honest and accountable. It encourages a free and open culture in its dealings between The Board of Directors and those working with The Network; partners, members, volunteers and trainers. This is informed by the Code of Ethics and Vision and Values of Network.

This policy aims to help The Board of Directors, partners, members, volunteers and trainers. to raise any serious concerns, they may have about colleagues or their employer with confidence and without having to worry about being victimised, discriminated against or disadvantaged in any way as a result.

It is written in the context of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 which protects employees who 'blow the whistle' on malpractices within their organisation.

### What types of concerns?

The policy is intended to deal with serious or sensitive concerns about wrongdoings such as the following:

- A criminal offence
- A failure to comply with any legal obligation
- A failure in the protection of children or vulnerable adults
- A miscarriage of justice
- A health and safety risk to an individual
- Damage to the environment
- Or concealment of the above.

### How to raise a concern

The Director(s) designated to handle whistleblowing concerns is Jodie Pitcher or Sarah Cox. For the purposes of this policy this role is the nominated Whistleblowing Officer.





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Individuals should in most cases, first report their concern to one of Network Co-ordinators who are expected to respond to that matter. If the Co-ordinators cannot deal with the matter, or the matter is about them, they will refer the concern to the Whistleblowing Officer.

Dependent on the seriousness and sensitivity of the matter, and who is suspected of the wrongdoing, the individual can, if necessary, report directly to the Whistleblowing Officer. If the matter concerns the Whistleblowing Officer, it should be raised with The Chair of the Board of Directors.

Individuals are encouraged to raise their concerns in writing where possible, setting out the background and history of their concerns (giving names, dates and places where possible) and indicating the reasons for their concerns.

If any individual is unsure whether to use this procedure or they want independent advice at any stage, they could contact:

- ✓ their trade union (if applicable), or
- ✓ the independent charity, Public Concern at Work's legal helpline on 020 7404 6609, email: [helpline@pcaw.co.uk](mailto:helpline@pcaw.co.uk)

Public Concern at Work will be able to advise on how and with whom to raise a concern about malpractice.

Disclosures made to a legal advisor in the course of obtaining legal advice will be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act.

If the individual reasonably believes that the matter relates wholly or mainly to the conduct of a person or body other than NETWORK or any other matter for which a person or body other than NETWORK has legal responsibility, the disclosure should be made to that other person or body.

### **Protecting the individual raising the concern**

NETWORK will take appropriate action to protect the whistleblowing individual from any harassment, victimisation or bullying.—The matter will be treated confidentially if the individual requests it and their name or position will not be revealed without their permission unless NETWORK has to do so by law. If in other circumstances the concern cannot be resolved without revealing the individual's identity, the Whistleblowing Officer will discuss with the individual whether and how to proceed.

Concerns raised anonymously tend to be far less effective, but the Whistleblowing Officer will decide whether or not to consider the matter taking into account:

- ✓ the seriousness of the matter.
- ✓ whether the concern is believable.
- ✓ whether an investigation can be carried out based on the information provided.



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### **How The Network will deal with the concern**

How the concern will be dealt with, will depend on what it involves. It is likely that further enquiries and/or investigation will be necessary. The concern may be investigated by The Network's Whistleblowing Officer, The Board of Directors, using the Code of Ethics procedures and guidance. It may be referred to the police, other agencies such as Social Services, an external auditor or an independent investigator.

It may be necessary for the individual to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings. The Network will give the individual feedback on the progress and outcome of any investigation wherever possible. If the suspicions are not confirmed by an investigation, the matter will be closed. Individuals will not be treated or regarded any differently for raising the concern, and their confidentiality will continue to be protected.