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Safeguarding Policy

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| **Brief Description** | Policy providing details of the Safeguarding intentions of Godly Play UK |
| **Effective** | 26 March 2025 ***To be reviewed annually*** |
| **Approved by** | Trustees |
| **Written by** | Ben Twelves, Godly Play Safeguarding Adviser |
| **Created** | March 2025 |
| **Next review date** | March 2026 |
| **Applies to** | Godly Play UK administrator, trainers, trustees and advocates |

Godly Play UK (GPUK) recognises childhood spirituality as an instinctive and profound capacity that includes a natural sense of God’s mystery and presence. We have found that the Godly Play Method is a powerful way of building communities, exploring stories, creating sacred spaces and searching for meaning. GPUK wants the Godly Play Method to be widely available and, therefore, most of our work concerns training adults to be able to lead Godly Play sessions within their own settings.

# Aim and Purpose of this Policy

1.1 The vast majority of the work of GPUK does not involve direct work with children. This direct work is done by the adults that have received our training (participants). However, children are at the very heart of our mission. The purpose of this document is to help ensure that the protection of children, and adults at risk of abuse, is the priority in all the actions and decisions of GPUK.

1.2 This overarching policy should be read alongside the GPUK Safeguarding Procedures document which contains the details of how our organisation safeguards children.

1. **Scope of Policy**

2.1 This policy applies to all activities of GPUK and anyone working on their behalf. It applies to:

* our charity trustees
* paid staff
* volunteers
* advocates
* trainers working on our behalf as self-employed practitioners
* anyone else carrying out work for GPUK in any capacity
* participants taking part in training sessions.

2.2 Once people have been trained by GPUK, they are able to lead Godly Play sessions in their own settings. Those sessions fall outside the scope of this policy and anyone leading Godly Play sessions must ensure that they follow the Safeguarding Procedures of the setting in which they are working.

1. **Principles underpinning this policy**

* 3.1 Everyone involved in our work should be able to do so without experiencing abuse, harm, neglect or exploitation.
* 3.2 Children are at the heart of our mission and, along with adults at risk of abuse, we put their welfare first.
* 3.3 Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility at GPUK.
* 3.4 We are committed to comply with relevant legal and regulatory frameworks.
* 3.4 Every person involved with GPUK is equally valued and has the same protections regardless of their age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

1. **Definitions**

4.1 Child - anyone under the age of 18 years.

4.2 Adult at risk - any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation, are permanently, or for time being, unable to take care of themselves, or to protect themselves against significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

4.3 Setting - a place where a GPUK trainer uses or demonstrates the Godly Play method such as a church, school, hospital, care home or other group.

4.4 Trainer – anyone appointed by GPUK to lead or support training in the Godly Play method.

4.5 Participant – anyone receiving training from a GPUK Trainer.

# Creating a safer culture and safer activities

5.1 We are committed to creating a safer culture at GPUK, which will help us to prevent harm from occurring and provide an environment in which all can flourish.

We will:

* 5.1.1 Appoint a Safeguarding Trustee and Safeguarding Advisor and ensure their contact details are available.
* 5.1.2 Have a safeguarding policy which is reviewed annually and updated when necessary.
* 5.1.3 Practice safer recruitment procedures for paid and volunteer roles.
* 5.1.4 Carry out risk assessments, including safeguarding risks, for relevant activities or events.
* 5.1.5 Ensure adequate staffing for activities.
* 5.1.6 Ensure safeguarding is a regular agenda item on trust meetings.
* 5.1.7 Ensure appropriate insurance is in place for our activities.
* 5.1.8 Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
* 5.1.9 Record, store and use information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
* 5.1.10 Ensure that children and adults involved with GPUK know where to go for help if they have a safeguarding concern.
* 5.1.11 Use our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
* 5.1.12 Build a safeguarding culture where everybody treats each other with respect and is comfortable about sharing concerns.
* 5.1.13 Follow the safeguarding policy of the local setting where an activity is taking place. If this conflicts with the GPUK policy then the trustees will be informed.

# Recognising and responding to concerns

6.1 We acknowledge that, although promoting safer culture and safer activities will help to protect all those in contact with the GPUK, some concerns will inevitably arise and we are committed to responding well in such circumstances.

6.2 We will:

* 6.2.1 Promote awareness of different kinds of abuse, other vulnerabilities and types of safeguarding concern.
* 6.2.2 Seek to create a ‘listening culture’ and help people develop listening skills to respond appropriately in situations where sensitive information is disclosed.
* 6.2.3 Respond to all concerns sensitively and act quickly to address them.
* 6.2.4 Create and use a clear structure for reporting concerns within our organisation which is known by all parties involved with GPUK.
* 6.2.5 Share information with statutory services as appropriate and co-operate with them during any investigations.
* 6.2.6 Report all allegations of abuse by any paid staff or volunteers to the Local Authority Designated Officer.
* 6.2.7 Contact the police immediately when an allegation suggests that a criminal offence may have taken place.
* 6.2.8 Report any serious safeguarding incident to the Charity Commission.

# Key Contacts

# GPUK Safeguarding Advisor

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# GPUK Safeguarding Trustee Contact Details: 01223 430630.