



Staff Handbook

The Role of Designated Safeguarding Officer

THE ROLE OF THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO)

In order to make it easier for all staff to keep themselves informed of Bowerbirdy's policies and any changes made to them, we will highlight any changes made from one update to the other.

New text will be highlighted as follows: **This is new text xxx xxx xxx.**

Any old text that has been deleted will be highlighted as follows: ~~This is old text that has been deleted yyy yy yyyyyy.~~

We hope this will help you to quickly be able to identify any changes made to our policies.

Introduction

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is the named individual within Bowerbirdy responsible for the day-to-day operational management of safeguarding and child protection concerns.

The DSO works under the strategic oversight of the Lead Safeguarding Officer and acts as the primary point of contact for safeguarding issues arising during delivery of Bowerbirdy activities and programmes.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for:

- Acting as the first point of contact for staff, volunteers, children, and parents regarding safeguarding concerns
- Receiving, recording, and responding to safeguarding disclosures and concerns
- Assessing risk and determining appropriate action in line with Bowerbirdy's safeguarding procedures
- Making referrals to children's social care, the police, or other agencies where required
- Maintaining accurate, confidential safeguarding records
- Ensuring concerns are escalated promptly to the Lead Safeguarding Officer where necessary
- Providing advice and guidance to staff and volunteers on safeguarding matters
- Supporting children and young people following a disclosure
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed during programme delivery
- Liaising with parents, carers, and external professionals where appropriate
- Contributing to safeguarding reviews and updates to policy and practice

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer

Where a Deputy DSO is appointed, they will support the DSO and act in their absence, carrying out the same responsibilities to ensure continuity of safeguarding oversight.

Training and Competence

The DSO and any Deputy DSO must:

- Hold appropriate safeguarding training for their role
- Keep training and knowledge up to date in line with legislation and guidance
- Be familiar with local safeguarding procedures
- Understand the increased vulnerability of children with additional needs or disabilities

Confidentiality

All safeguarding concerns handled by the DSO will be managed confidentially and shared strictly on a need-to-know basis, in line with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to changes in legislation or operational practice.

NOTE: This Policy was approved by the following officer on 01/01/2026 and is due for review every 1 year: John-Paul White

