

Dragon Bell Temple

Child Protection Policy

www.dragonbelltemple.org.uk

Registered charity no: 1142973

Introduction and Values

Dragon Bell Temple functions as a practice centre of the Serene Reflection (Soto Zen) tradition, as taught by the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (OBC). We make use of the temple both individually and in groups, taking part in meditation and other related activities. For some of us this is a source of great richness, support and strength.

However, it carries a risk that we may fail to notice, question or act on behaviours of concern, out of naivety, loyalty to friends or lack of awareness; or an assumption that “it couldn’t happen here” or “they would never do a thing like that.” Currently children do not routinely attend activities at Dragon Bell Temple, but even so, it is important to acknowledge that infrequency does not preclude the need for a well managed Safeguarding strategy

Dragon Bell Temple is a Buddhist organisation. Ensuring the sexual, physical and psychological safety of children involved in Dragon Bell Temple activities is an expression of the wisdom and compassion taught by the Buddha.

The trustees of Dragon Bell Temple recognise their responsibility to ensure the welfare of children and young people aged under 18, and are committed to their protection

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Ian Lucraft is our Designated Safeguarding Officer

Email: ianlucraft@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: **07784363751**

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer

(See Appendix 4)

Purpose

This document is to inform those people who are employed by, volunteering or taking part in the activities and services provided by Dragon Bell Temple, of the measures we have in place, to protect children and young people as well as those who engage with them

Aims

To provide:

- Protection and safeguarding for children and young people under 18 by setting out practices and procedures which are regularly reviewed and which positively contribute to the prevention of abuse of children and young people
- A course of action to be followed if abuse is suspected and/or allegations or disclosures made
- Protection for adults who may have contact with children

To recognise that:

- The welfare of the child or young person is paramount
- All children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or gender identity, have the right to equal protection from harm
- Partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare

To seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Implementing Dragon Bell Temple's child protection guidelines and code of conduct for staff and volunteers. For Dragon Bell Temple's Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (see appendix 2)
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff, Sangha members and volunteers
- Proactively sharing information about concerns with outside agencies on a need to know basis, and involving parents and children if it is safe to do so
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are made where necessary

Who is a "child"?

A "child" is a person aged under 18 years.

What is "child abuse"?

The World Health Organisation defines child abuse as "all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power."

The four types and some signs of child abuse –

Whilst we are minded not to jump to conclusions as some presentations *may* have perfectly acceptable explanations, we recognise that a child or young person may be experiencing abuse, sometimes more than one type of abuse at the same time and when we suspect this is the case we must act

- **Physical abuse** including hurting or injuring a child, inflicting pain, poisoning, drowning, or smothering. Look for any injuries that cannot be explained or injuries not consistent with falls or rough games
- **Sexual abuse** including direct or indirect sexual exploitation or corruption of children by involving them (or threatening to involve them) in inappropriate sexual activities. Look for indicators such as self harm or eating disorders; sexual activity through words, play or drawing

- **Emotional abuse** including repeatedly rejecting children, humiliating them or denying their worth and rights as human beings. Again look for indicators such as self harm or eating disorders, as well as unexpected behavioural presentations, either acting out of overly withdrawn
- **Neglect** refers to the persistent lack of appropriate care of children, including love, stimulation, safety, nourishment, warmth, education, and medical attention. There may be indicators such as malnourishment, hunger, inappropriate clothing, poor hygiene and so on

In addition, we recognise that sustained discrimination, harassment, and bullying are also abusive and can harm a child or young person, both physically and emotionally. Children and young people also have a right to be protected from any risk of radicalisation as per Prevent Strategy duties

Reporting concerns, allegations or disclosures

All allegations, disclosures or suspicions of abuse reported by a child, young person, or anyone else must be treated seriously; once a concern, allegation or disclosure has been made, Dragon Bell Temple is duty bound to take action.

Concerns, allegations or disclosures may include:

- Something you see; something you are told by someone else; rumours about a person's behaviour or the previous behaviours of someone in their close family; behaviour you observe in a child or young person; disclosure directly from a child or young person

What to do if a child or young person reports abuse

- Keep calm and reassure the child that they are doing the right thing and are not to blame, even if they have broken some rules
- Accept what the child says without judgment
- Be honest. Do not promise confidentiality; let them know you will have to tell someone else
- Be aware the child may have been threatened and may be very afraid
- Never push for information or question the child. Let them tell you as much as they are ready to tell you
- Never suggest that the child may be wrong or mistaken

What to do next

- Your first concern is ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the child. This may involve phoning the police straight away
- If you believe a child is at risk of serious harm it is not necessary to gain consent from a child's parent or carer for the referral

- Immediately contact Dragon Bell Temple's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) named at the start of this document, or Dragon Bell Temple's Prior if the DSO is unavailable. Do not be distracted from this by loyalty to the person who has been accused nor by any desire to protect or maintain the good name of The Dragon Bell Temple. Do not discuss with anyone else
- Refer to Dragon Bell Temple's Child Protection Flow Chart (see appendix 1)
- Make notes about the discussion, including time, date and location. Record as accurately as possible and keep the notes safe, in line with Dragon Bell Temple's Data Protection legal responsibilities (see appendix 3)
- Do not be tempted to investigate yourself
- Do not discuss the matter with anyone else. This could prejudice a court case and put the child in danger

If the disclosure/allegation is about a member of Dragon Bell Temple:

Follow the procedure outlined in the Child Protection Flow Chart. Do not be distracted from this by loyalty to the person who has been accused nor by any desire to protect or maintain the good name of The Dragon Bell Temple

If the allegation may be criminal:

Without giving personal details of those involved the DSO or the Prior should email the Charity Commission to inform them that there has been a serious Safeguarding incident; that Dragon Bell Temple charity has addressed it according to its Safeguarding policies; that the police have been informed.: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

Dragon Bell Temple

Prior's name **Willard Lee**

Prior's signature

Willard Lee

Designated Safeguarding Officer's name **Ian Lucraft**

Designated Safeguarding Officer's signature

[Signature]

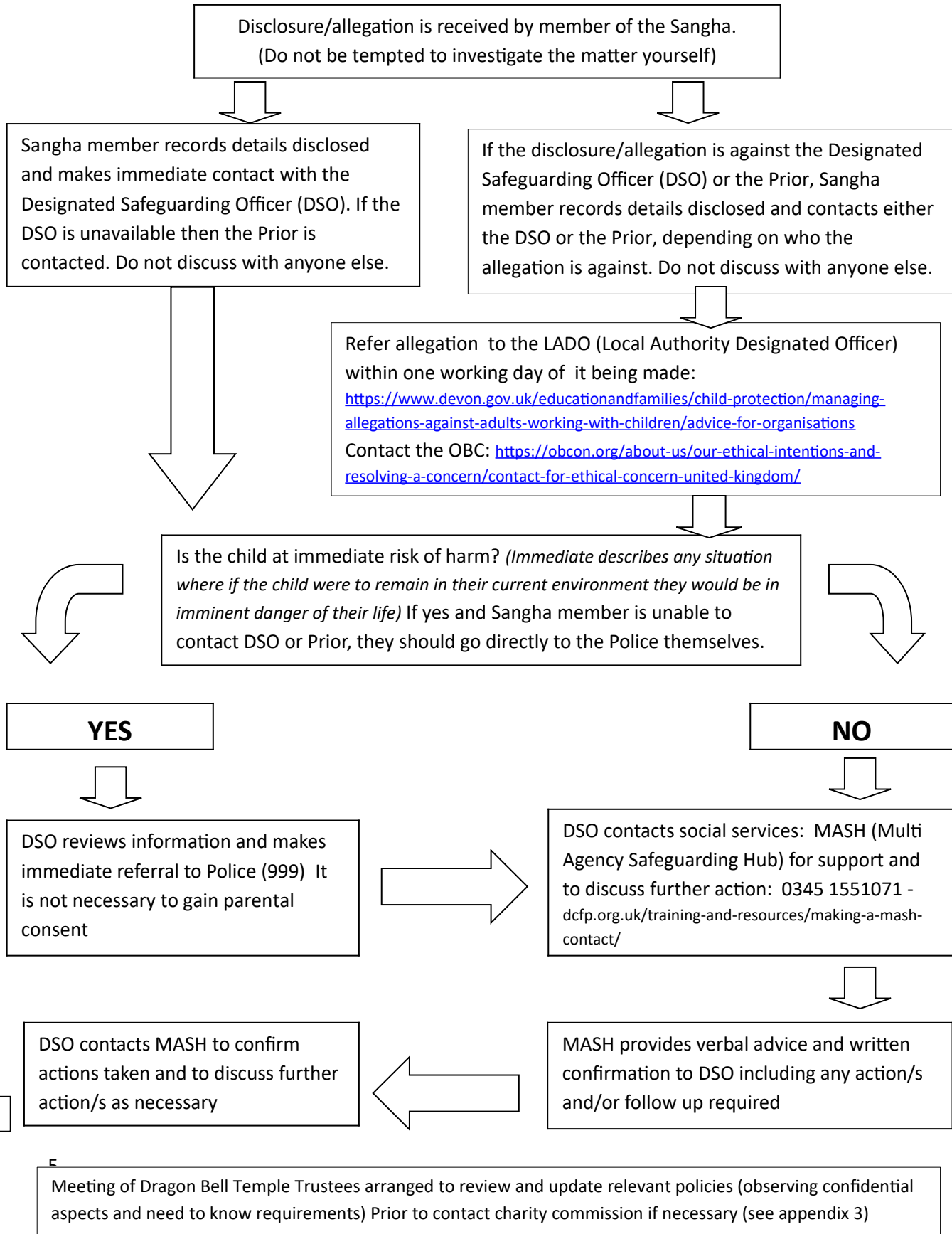
Date

28/08/2021

This document is to be read in conjunction with Dragon Bell Temple's Child Protection code of conduct (see appendix 2) Published [year] by the trustees of the [Name of Buddhist organisation]

Appendix 1 –

CHILD PROTECTION FLOW CHART FOR REPORTING INFORMATION FOLLOWING A DISCLOSURE OR ALLEGATION



Appendix 2 – Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct: Engaging safely with children and young people

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If involved with children or young people under the age of 18 taking part in activities organised by, or in association with, Dragon Bell Temple we will engage safely with them by:

1. In person – we will:

- Gain written parental permission to conduct meetings with a child or young person under 16
- Arrange for any such meetings to be conducted in a public space, or with the door open and others in sight outside
- Ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children or at least that we are within sight or hearing of others
- Not give lifts to those under 16 on their own; if this is unavoidable, the child or young person will be asked to sit in the back seat
- Treat all children and young people with respect and kindness; not be drawn into inappropriate, attention-seeking behaviour; not make suggestive, demeaning, derogatory remarks or gestures
- Be an example of the good conduct we wish to see in young people and others
- Respect a child or young person's right to personal privacy
- Encourage children and young people to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret actions, no matter how well – intentioned they may be, including (especially) physical contact
- Ensure we do not show favouritism to any child or young person

2. Acting on concerns:

- I must challenge any belief that "things like this could never happen here"
- It is unacceptable to rely on our good name or that of Dragon Bell Temple to protect us of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives
- I will act in accordance with Dragon Bell Temple's Child Protection policy and procedures, including ensuring that I do not jump to conclusions without checking facts, nor exaggerate or trivialise matters related to the abuse of children and young people
- I will challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse to Dragon Bell Temple's Designated Safeguarding Officer

3. Engaging online and on social media:

We are aware that individual contact with under 18s online, by email or using social media carries the risk of accusations of 'grooming', relationships established with a view to sexual contact. Therefore we will not engage *personally* by email, text or online with anyone under 18 using social media, for example by 'friending' them on Facebook or including them in WhatsApp groups or similar – except with written permission from their parent/guardian. The written permission will

specify the agreed medium and the named Order member who will be running any such group. As a Buddhist temple, we may receive emails from school pupils wanting information about Buddhism. Having answered their questions, we will not engage in further personal correspondence

I have read the guidance above, and the accompanying Dragon Bell Temple's Child Protection Policy, and agree to abide by them

Name Willard Lee
Signature *Willard Lee*
Date 16/09/2021

This document is to be read in conjunction with Dragon Bell Temple's Child Protection policy.

Published 2021 by the trustees of Dragon Bell Temple

Appendix 3 – Sharing and securing information on a ‘need to know’ basis

- 1 If the allegation is likely to be of a criminal nature, without giving personal details of those involved the Prior will email the Charity Commission to inform them that there has been a serious safeguarding incident, Dragon Bell Temple charity has addressed it in accordance with its safeguarding policies and that the police have been informed.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>
- 2 Notes made of the allegation/concern/disclosure will be passed directly to the DSO with no copies being made. The DSO will ensure any such notes are logged and together with all paperwork are stored on Dragon Bell Temple’s computer, password protected.
It is understood that insurers may wish these notes and logs to be kept for up to 50 years. If Dragon Bell Temple closes down, records will be transferred to another temple of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives to keep with their own confidential records
- 3 All records kept will be in line with Data Protection Act (2018) legal requirements. This means Dragon Bell Temple understands the need for all records to be worded in a form that ensures that if they are requested by a subject, they can be comfortably shared. Notes kept will be factual and respectful, free of interpretation and value – judgments

Dragon Bell Temple

Appendix 4 -

The role and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

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Dragon Bell Temple has a named Designated Safeguarding Officer in place:

Name: **Ian Lucraft**

Email: ianlucraft@hotmail.co.uk

- . The Designated Safeguarding Officer is a member of the Sangha who has previous direct experience of safeguarding and protection of vulnerable children and adults
- . The Designated Safeguarding Officer has successfully completed Safeguarding Training with www.thirtyoneeight.org
- . The DSO will ensure their training is renewed every 2 years

Responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Officer

- . To be the first point of contact for all individuals, staff and volunteers if there are concerns about a child or vulnerable adult
- . To understand that all concerns/allegations/disclosures must be followed up with outside agencies; the DSO will under no circumstances make a unilateral decision about whether or not any allegation/disclosure is true or false
- . To follow up all concerns/allegations/disclosures as per Dragon Bell Temple's safeguarding policies and flowcharts
- . To liaise on a need to know basis with other agencies and within the Dragon Bell Temple
- . To ensure that concerns are followed through and not left to sit with any other agency/institution
- . To escalate concerns if/when necessary
- . To know and keep updated the contact details of all relevant statutory agencies (see relevant flow chart)
- . To ensure that all records are logged as required and kept securely (see appendix 3)
- . Together with the Dragon Bell Temple Trustees, to ensure Safeguarding policies are regularly reviewed and updated