



## LUCKY EWE

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# CHILD AND VULNERABLE PERSONS PROTECTION POLICY

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## 1. Purpose

Lucky Ewe aims to adopt the highest possible standards and take all reasonable steps in relation to the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Lucky Ewe encounters children and vulnerable adults through its charitable activities.

This policy does not seek to discourage such activities. Instead, this policy seeks to support these activities and to offer assurances to both members and others that through its implementation, the Charity seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe from harm when in contact with Lucky Ewe.

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## 2. Scope

Lucky Ewe's policy applies to all volunteers working within the organisation and to all members working off premises or premises leased or loaned to the Charity. It extends to include people such as secondees, contractors, trainees, temporary members, consultants and any other workers or volunteers. The policy, in addition, covers the behaviour of members outside Lucky Ewe hours, which may impact upon the Charity or working relationships.

The policy statement demonstrates a commitment to working with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other organisations to promote the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

Lucky Ewe has a "zero tolerance" policy and will investigate vigorously any allegations of abuse either physical or emotional regardless of whether the matter has been raised formally or informally.

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## 3. Definitions of Child and Vulnerable adult

1. Children are those under the age of 18 years.
2. Lucky Ewe views a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has one of more of the following conditions:
  - a) A learning or physical disability; or
  - b) A physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
  - c) A reduction in physical or mental capacity.
  - d) Any person who by way of the circumstances resulting from a traumatic situation is less likely to be able to coordinate their actions and thoughts.

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## 4. Definitions and Signs of Abuse

### 4.1. Sexual Abuse Definition

Actual or likely sexual abuse/exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult. Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) and non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

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#### 4.1.1.1. Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a person has been abused

they may help Lucky Ewe Members recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of the following symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- i. Being overly affectionate or knowledgeable in a sexual way inappropriate to the child's age.
- ii. Medical problems such as chronic itching, pain in the genitals, venereal diseases.
- iii. Other extreme reactions, such as depression, self-mutilation, suicide attempts, running away, overdoses, anorexia.
- iv. Personality changes such as becoming insecure or clinging.
- v. Regressing to younger behaviour patterns such as thumb sucking or bringing out discarded cuddly toys.

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#### 4.1.1.2. Physical Abuse Definition

Actual or likely physical injury to a child or vulnerable adult; or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering), to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Factitious Illness may also constitute physical abuse.

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#### 4.1.1.3. Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, they may help adults recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child or vulnerable adult shows a number of these symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- a) Unexplained recurrent injuries or burns.
- b) Improbable excuses or refusal to explain injuries.
- c) Wearing clothes to cover injuries, even in hot weather.
- d) Fear of medical help or examination.
- e) Self-destructive tendencies.
- f) Aggression towards others.
- g) Fear of physical contact - shrinking back if touched

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#### 4.1.2. Emotional Abuse Definition

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the victim's emotional development. It may involve conveying to victim that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing them frequently to feel frightened or in danger. Some level of emotional damage is involved in all types of ill treatment of children and vulnerable adults, though emotional abuse may occur alone.

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#### 4.1.2.1. Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, they may help adults to recognise that something is wrong. Possibility of abuse should be investigated if a child shows a number of the following symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- a) Physical, mental and emotional development delay.
- b) Sudden speech disorders.
- c) Continual self-depreciation ('I'm stupid, ugly, worthless, etc.)
- d) Overreaction to mistakes.
- e) Extreme fear of any new situation.
- f) Neurotic behaviour (rocking, hair twisting, self-mutilation).

- g) Extremes of passivity or aggression.

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#### 4.1.2.2. Neglect Definition

The persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development or failing to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical and emotional harm or danger.

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#### 4.1.2.3. Signs

Although these signs do not necessarily indicate that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused, they may help members recognise that something is wrong. The possibility of abuse should be investigated if a suspected victim shows a number of the following symptoms, or any of them to a marked degree:

- a) Constant hunger.
- b) Poor personal hygiene.
- c) Constant tiredness.
- d) Poor state of clothing.
- e) Emaciation.
- f) Untreated medical problems.
- g) No social relationships.

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## 5. Child Protection Procedures

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### 5.1. What to do if you suspect a child or vulnerable adult is being abused

- a) If you suspect that a child is being abused, immediately contact the person who has been designated by Lucky Ewe (member of staff in charge or trustee) to take an incident forward. Complete an incident form.
- b) If the designated person is not available and you are unable to seek advice from another senior Volunteer, you may seek advice from the police or a social worker. It is preferable that you identify yourself and your details, however if you feel uncomfortable doing this you can remain anonymous. You can also ring the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) Help line (see 8 below).

**All members of Lucky Ewe must be aware of the procedure above.**

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### 5.2. What to do if a child or vulnerable adult tells you about abuse

- a) Stay calm and be reassuring.
- b) Find a quiet place to talk.
- c) Believe in what you are being told.
- d) Listen, but do not press for information.
- e) Inform the child/adult that you are glad that they have told you, but you will have to share this information with other professionals who will help to keep the child/adult safe and the information confidential.
- f) Inform the person designated to take this forward (a Senior Staff Member or a Trustee.)
- g) Contact the local Child Protection Social Work Team and or the Police
- h) Seek medical advice if required.

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### 5.3. What to do if you have witnessed a child/adult being abused

- a) Inform the designated person (member of staff in charge).
- b) Contact the local Child Protection Social Work Team and the Police.
- c) Seek medical advice if required.

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## 6. NSPCC Helpline notes

Telephone the NSPCC Helpline on **0808 800 5000** if you have concerns. The advisers are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Calls are free from landlines and a record of the call will not appear on your bill. Calls are also free from (3, T-Mobile, O2, Orange and Vodafone) mobiles.

A call handler will answer and ask about the nature of your concern.

If all of our advisers are busy we will offer you three options: either call back later, request us to call you back, or learn about other ways of getting in touch, such as email.

Next, you will be put through to an adviser who will explain our policy about remaining anonymous and ask you to talk about your concerns.

The adviser will assess the information, advise you, and decide upon a course of action with you.

If they need to refer the case to the police or children's services, they will ask you for some details to identify the child.

If the adviser decides a referral is not necessary, they will give you some advice about how you can help the child, if you want to.

You will always be in control of what you want to say.

If you wish, you can remain anonymous when you call. If you do give us your name or address we will not share them with the person or family that you have concerns about. If we need to refer the case to children's services or the police, and we have your details, we will share them. We will remind these agencies not to share your details with the person or family that you have concerns about.

All calls are recorded and records kept for 15 years.