

Practice document

Managing a sex offender attending Stonewater Zen

From time to time a member of the sangha, or someone wishing to become a member, may disclose that they have a sexual interest in children and / or are subject to legal orders relating to this.

They are entitled to be offered the same training and study as other members but given the potential risk of harm to others, attendance and boundaries must be agreed with the person and any supervising probation or police officer

A person with a sexual interest in children needs to be regarded in the same way as someone with an addiction. It is a mistake to think that they can be cured or prevented from offending simply through practising zazen.

Any sangha member including the Sensei and local group leaders must advise the Safeguarding Officer if disclosure is made.

Whether or not such a person has ever committed a crime or been convicted the Safeguarding Officer should:

- check with probation and/or police / social services whether, in attending, the person is breaching any court order, prison licence or probation agreement made with them
- inform social services if there is a concern children are at risk from them elsewhere; e.g. if they have a job working with children.
- agree with them a contract setting out the terms on which they may engage in Stonewater Zen activities. If they refuse this, or do not keep to the agreement, or we lack the resources to manage the relation with them, we are entitled to exclude them for the sake of child protection.
- following disclosure in a local group, and discussion with the group leader, delegate the completion of the behaviour contract to the local group leader.

Confidentiality

Legally, information may be shared about this person only with those who need to know in order to ensure the safety of children, and those with legal or otherwise key responsibility; e.g., Trustees, Sensei, Safeguarding Officer and anyone else it has been agreed will act as their point of contact on our premises or at our activities. If you do share information, you may not share the details; simply the fact that they may be a risk to children or young people under the age of 18 years.

Nobody else necessarily has a “right” to know, including parents of children.

Proper implementation of **our Safeguarding Policy** will ensure that children and young people are safe from any this person while attending the group.

Care and support

It is important to be clear and realistic. As well as outlining the boundaries we expect this person to keep, it is also helpful to outline the types of care and support we are able to offer, and to be clear that we are **not able to offer** support outside Stonewater Zen’s normal activities. This is documented in the Behaviour Contract.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the Stonewater Zen
Safeguarding Policy