Trustee Role Description - Safeguarding

Board Trustee and Chair of the Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Risk Committee

Location: Board and committee meetings held in the Bristol area (Gympanzees Centre, Aust, South Gloucestershire) or virtually - to be confirmed with the Chair

Time commitment: Board meetings every 6-8 weeks, plus chairing the Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Risk Committee (frequency and hours to be agreed with the Chair)

Term: Two years, renewable, in line with Gympanzees' constitution

Remuneration: Voluntary - unpaid

Reporting to: Chair of Trustees, working closely with the CEO (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and COO & Centre Manager (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead)

About Gympanzees

Gympanzees is a Bristol-based charity building the UK's first fully inclusive exercise, play and leisure centre for disabled and neurodivergent children and young people aged 0–25, and their families. We exist to tackle poor access to exercise, social isolation and health inequalities by creating spaces and services shaped by lived experience.

We're redeveloping a 43,000 sq ft building on a 14.5-acre site at Brightside Park in Aust, South Gloucestershire, and are on track to open in Spring 2027. We've raised or secured £8.96 million of the £11.5 million needed to complete the build and fit-out, and fundraising continues at pace to get the doors open.

The welfare of the disabled and neurodivergent children and young people we work with, and their families, sits at the heart of everything we do. We are a member of SAFE CIC for specialist safeguarding support, and hold Child and Adult Safeguarding policies together with all other policies related to Safeguarding issues. These are reviewed annually or earlier if indicated by statutory guidance. These are core staff training policies and procedures. As we move from Pop Up events into running a permanent, high-footfall centre - with many more staff, volunteers and daily visitors - the strength of our safeguarding culture and practice matters more than ever.

The opportunity

This is a board-level safeguarding role.

Lead Safeguarding Officer = CEO

Deputy Safeguarding Officer's = COO & Centre manager

Your role is independent scrutiny and expert advice: making sure safeguarding never slips down the board's agenda, chairing the committee that brings oversight of safeguarding,

health & safety and risk together, and being a trusted, experienced voice the DSL and Deputy DSL can turn to for advice and support.

It's a role in two halves.

Before we open, you'll help make sure our safeguarding, health & safety and risk arrangements are genuinely ready for a permanent centre with far higher visitor numbers, more staff and volunteers, and specialist equipment. After we open, you'll provide ongoing board-level scrutiny and act as a senior sounding board for the DSL and Deputy DSL, while chairing the committee that keeps the board properly assured.

What you'll do

Before we open

- Chair the Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Risk Committee through the transition from Pop Up delivery to permanent centre operation, ensuring policies and procedures are updated and fit for purpose.
- Work with the CEO, COO and Centre Manager to make sure the DSL and Deputy DSL arrangements, referral pathways, and staff and volunteer training plans are properly set up and tested ahead of opening.
- Scrutinise safer recruitment practice as Gympanzees scales up recruitment for opening (around 40 staff in Year 1, rising to 50 in Year 2, alongside a substantial volunteer base).
- Ensure lessons from years of Pop Up safeguarding practice are captured and carried into the centre's procedures.
- Help the board understand how safeguarding, health & safety and physical risk interact in a centre with specialist equipment, hoists, sensory environments and high visitor numbers.

After we open

- Chair the Safeguarding, Health & Safety and Risk Committee on an ongoing basis, bringing together the right people and feeding assurance and key issues back to the full board.
- Be the trusted, experienced point of advice and support for the CEO (DSL) and COO & Centre Manager (Deputy DSL)
- Keep safeguarding permanently visible and substantive at board level - a standing item that is genuinely discussed, not simply noted.
- Provide independent scrutiny that safeguarding and health & safety policies are working in practice, not just on paper - for example through case reviews, incident reports, or requesting assurance from the operational team.
- Ensure serious incidents, allegations or concerns are properly actioned, recorded, reviewed, learned from, and escalated externally where required (for example to the LADO or as a serious incident report to the Charity Commission).

- Champion a culture in which staff, volunteers, children, young people and families feel safe and able to raise a concern.
- Contribute fully to all standard trustee duties - governance, strategy and financial stewardship - alongside your safeguarding specialism.

What we're looking for

This is a senior, specialist role. We're looking for someone with significant, senior-level safeguarding experience - from education, health, social care, policing or a youth or disability-sector organisation - who can operate at board level: scrutinising and advising, rather than carrying out day-to-day casework themselves.

You'll likely have

- A confident, constructive challenge style - comfortable chairing a committee, asking hard questions of the executive team, and holding the board to account on safeguarding.
- Sound, up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and best practice for children and young people and adults at risk.
- The judgement to support on situations at arm's length, supporting the DSL and Deputy DSL rather than directing operational casework yourself.
- Ideally, experience of safeguarding in a setting working with disabled and neurodivergent children and young people, or a genuine willingness to build that understanding quickly.
- Willingness to be contactable, from time to time, for advice on urgent or complex matters between scheduled meetings.

What we offer

- The chance to help build safeguarding into the foundations of the UK's first fully inclusive exercise, play and leisure centre, at the exact moment it moves from campaign to reality.
- A values-led, ambitious organisation - built on Gold Standard Inclusion, Pioneering Co-Creation and Unlocking Potential - with a genuinely warm, collaborative culture.
- A full induction, including access to our governance documents, safeguarding policies, business plan, and safeguarding training.

Practicalities

- Trustees are appointed for a two-year term, renewable, in line with our constitution.
- The full board meets every 6-8 weeks; all trustees complete mandatory safeguarding training and an enhanced DBS check as part of induction - given the nature of this role, we'll agree any additional or more advanced safeguarding training with you directly.
- This trustee would be a natural candidate for our Crisis Management training, provided every two years for at least two board members.

Gympanzees is a registered charity in England and Wales (charity number 1189375) and is a registered trademark.

- You'll be asked to declare any conflicts of interest and to agree to our Trustee Code of Conduct.

How to apply

To apply, please send your CV and a covering letter outlining your relevant experience, your interest in the role and why you would like to become a Trustee of Gympanzees to steph@gympanzees.org

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a face-to-face interview.

Closing date: Thursday 26th November 2026

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