



Red Lion House Charity

Charity Number; 1176422

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures

Reporting child abuse

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Aims

- 1.1 Red Lion House Charity recognises that it has a commitment to ensure that all people working with children/young people at Red Lion House have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This policy will aid them to: 1.5
- have an understanding of the potential risks to themselves, and ensure good practice is adhered to at all times;
 - recognise signs of improper behaviour from other workers, and take appropriate action;
 - be protected against allegations of abuse;
 - be able to recognise the different signs of abuse, and what appropriate course of action should be taken in these circumstances.
- 1.2 The Charity has a responsibility to recognise, and respond to, child protection situations and concerns appropriately.

- 1.2 The terms 'child' and 'children/young people' are used throughout the document, but this policy relates to anyone under 18 years of age.
- 1.3 It is the duty of anyone undertaking to care for a young person to protect the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the young person from all reasonably foreseeable risk.
- 1.4 It is impossible to ensure that no undue incidents occur whilst a young person is in contact with an employee / representative of an activity arranged at Red Lion House. However, implementing this policy and following the guidelines enables users of the facility to undertake their work confidently, knowing that they have taken all reasonable precautions to prevent harm occurring whilst prepared to deal with an incident should it occur.
- 1.5 We aim to make leaders and volunteers aware of their individual responsibilities and what to do if they suspect or have evidence of any form of abuse or neglect taking place against a child or young people with whom they have contact.
- 1.6 We also aim to make leaders and volunteers aware of the procedures and rights where abuse has been alleged against them.

Our Approach

- 2.1 Through this Policy we aim to adopt the highest possible standards and take all reasonable steps in relation to the safety and welfare of the children/young people at Red Lion House.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of all Red Lion House users to do their best to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children/young person and young people and to report any abuse, alleged or suspected.
- 2.3 Red Lion House management will respond without delay to any complaints made that a child or young person, may have been harmed.
- 2.4 Red Lion House management will satisfy themselves as to the suitability of any person applying to use the facilities in any role where contact with children/young people is possible.

Golden Rule – Safety in Numbers

- 3.1 In as many situations as possible we should aim to ensure that no adult is in a one to one situation with a child. If this is unavoidable then it must be an adult that has been checked appropriately. Safety in numbers should be the golden rule, whether the numbers are other children/young person or adults.
- 3.2 Leaders of groups should endeavour to be aware of situations that can be misconstrued or manipulated by others.

Those working with Children/Young people and Young Adults must...

- 4.1 Be professional and maintain the highest standards of personal behaviour at all times, giving an example they would wish others to follow. Remember that children/young people regard adults as role models and ensure that behaviour, language, gestures etc. are appropriate and above reproach.
- 4.2 Take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child in contact with Red Lion House. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy.
- 4.3 Take appropriate action if they become aware of anyone physically, emotionally or sexually abusing a child or acting in ways that might be misconstrued.
- 4.4 Treat all young people with respect and dignity, whilst encouraging respect and care for others.
- 4.5 Respect a child's/young person's right to personal privacy.
- 4.6 Provide time for children/young people to talk to them.
- 4.7 Inform the group leader of any suspicions or allegations about abuse.
- 4.8 As far as is possible conduct all dealings with children/young people in a public environment in full view of others, in order that all behaviour can be observed
- 4.9 Report any concerns within the area of Child Protection (physical, emotional, sexual or neglect) in confidence and without delay, to the designated Child Protection Officer. This includes issues of bullying. Employees/volunteers will not, at any time, discuss an allegation or suspicion with another person.
- 4.10 When reporting an allegation or suspicion, record information, including relevant details. This includes the nature of the allegation, background information of the parties involved, the period of time to which the allegation relates and the degree to which the information is known to be fact rather than opinion or hearsay. The written record must be signed and dated.
- 4.11 At no time make comment to the media. The Child Protection Officer should be made aware of any media interest.
- 4.12 Be identifiable – wear a form of identification at all times.
- 4.13 Obtain written consent from parent or guardian for permission when children/young people are under 18 years to use IT equipment, access the Internet and for the taking of photographs or video for publicity purposes. This policy to be read in conjunction with The Use of Internet Policy.

- 4.14 Be aware of Child Protection issues in relation to work and do not become complacent and believe "it could never happen to me". Be aware that, someone else might misinterpret their actions even if they are well intentioned.

Those working with Children/Young people and Young Adults must not engage in any of the following...

- 5.1 Physical, emotional or sexual abuse of any child or young or vulnerable person.
- 5.2 Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person.
- 5.3 Sexual relationships with young people under our responsibility even if they consent.
- 5.4 Let allegations a child makes be ignored, or go unrecorded. Staff should not jump to conclusions without checking facts, while ensuring that allegations of child abuse are not exaggerated or trivialised.
- 5.5 Make inappropriate or intrusive touching of any form.
- 5.6 Do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do themselves. It may occasionally be necessary for staff to do things of a personal nature for children/young people, particularly if they are very young or disabled. These tasks should only be carried out under full consent from the parent/carer and with another adult present. If an emergency occurs that requires this type of help without prior consent, the parent/carer must be fully informed as soon as possible.
- 5.7 Young people should not be asked to partake in activities that are potentially dangerous, illegal or unreasonable.
- 5.8 Take child/young person into an employee's home.
- 5.9 Never enter a house when a child is alone.
- 5.10 Children/young people should only be taken alone in a vehicle in an extreme emergency.
- 5.11 enter into communication with children/young people via social media, email, text unless the message is in the public domain i.e sent to a third party.
- 5.12 arrange to meet a child outside work, unless you have full consent of the child's/young person's parent and your manager.

Job Appointments

- 6.1 **Definition of Controlled Activity** is defined as covering the work of: ancillary support workers (e.g. cleaner, caretaker, catering staff, receptionist) which is done frequently and gives the opportunity for contact with children/young people.
- 6.2 The appointment of a cleaner/caretaker will include a completed application form with a concise time line, references, and a DBS application for an Enhanced Disclosure.
- 6.3 Whilst waiting for a disclosure the worker must be supervised if children/young people are present.

Partner Organisations, Users, Volunteers

- 7.1 The role of the Charity is to let the facility for use by groups and individuals. We require relevant users to be DBS checked and signed up to the principles of this policy. Some groups will have their own Safeguarding Policy and a copy of this will need to be attached to the Booking Form.

Definitions of Abuse

- 8.1 The definitions below are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children/young person (Department of Health, Home Office, Department of Education and Employment, 1999). They are intended to ensure that all staff has a comprehensive understanding of their responsibilities when working with children/young person. They should allow staff to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse.
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/safeguardingandsocialcare/safeguardingchildren/youngperson/workingtogether/workingtogethertosafeguardchildren/youngperson/>
- 8.2 It is generally accepted that there are four main categories of abuse.
- Physical Abuse;
 - Sexual Abuse;
 - Emotional Abuse;
 - Neglect.

Physical Abuse

- 9.1 Physical abuse can involve the actual, or likely, physical injury to a child from actions such as hitting, burning, shaking, throwing and suffocating. It can also be the deliberate poisoning of a child, whose symptoms or physical signs have been secretly induced by a parent or carer. This is known as fabricated illness.

- 9.2 It is sometimes difficult to spot non-accidental injuries, as most cuts and bruises are part and parcel of everyday life.
- 9.3 Some physical signs to be aware of:
- injuries that the child cannot explain, or explains unconvincingly;
 - cuts, bruises and burns situated on parts of the body where accidental injury is unlikely, such as cheeks, thighs;
 - bruising that resembles hand or finger prints;
 - cigarette burns;
 - bite marks.
- 9.4 Behavioural signs to be aware of:
- fear of the parent/carer being approached about injuries;
 - covering arms and legs, even in hot weather, unless for religious reasons;
 - fear of going home;
 - flinching when touched or approached;
 - depression or mood swings that are out of character.

Sexual Abuse

- 10.1 Sexual abuse involves an adult enticing a child to take part in sexual activities to which the child cannot give their consent because of their dependency on adults. This can include direct actions, such as genital or anal sexual contact, and penetrative acts, such as rape, buggery and oral sex. Indirect actions can include showing a child pornographic material, genital exposure, and encouraging children/young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- 10.2 Some physical signs to be aware of:
- pain, itching, bruising or bleeding to genital or anal areas;
 - stomach pains or discomfort when the child is walking or sitting;
 - sexually transmitted diseases.
- 10.3 Some behavioural signs to be aware of:
- sexually explicit behaviour, including the use of inappropriate language;
 - sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour;
 - reluctance to change clothes for sports etc unless for religious reasons;
 - fear of being left with a specific person.

Emotional Abuse

- 11.1 Emotional abuse can involve cases where the parent/carer shows a persistent lack of affection and/or basic emotional care. Emotional abuse can have a severe impact on the child's/young person's behaviour and/or physical development. A child may be constantly threatened, taunted, or shouted at, leading to the child becoming withdrawn and nervous. This can also result from excessive over-protection and unrealistic pressure to succeed. However, some children/young people are naturally shy and withdrawn, and it is important not to confuse this with abuse.
- 11.2 Some physical signs to be aware of:
- delayed emotional or physical development;

- sudden speech disorders;
- failure to thrive and grow.

11.3 Some behavioural signs to be aware of:

- self-harming;
- excessive need for approval, attention and affection;
- incontinence;
- reports of young people frequently visiting a particular home;
- excessive lack of confidence.

Neglect

12.1 Neglect is the failure to meet a child's/young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, including failure to protect the child from any danger, such as cold or starvation. This can result in a significant impairment in a child's/young person's health or development. Neglect can also involve children/young person being left unsupervised or unattended.

12.2 Some physical signs to be aware of:

- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others;
- loss of weight;
- dirty/smelly;
- untreated medical conditions – injuries and illnesses.

12.3 Some behavioural signs to be aware of:

- Constant tiredness;
- Hardly any friends;
- Compulsive scavenging;
- Left alone or unsupervised regularly.

Caution in Diagnosing Abuse

13.1 It is important to remember that many children/young person may exhibit some of these signs, and their presence should not be taken as proof of abuse. There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour and physical appearance, such as moving house, a new baby or a medical condition.

13.2 It is also important to note that there is a high correlation between domestic violence and child abuse. If a child discloses domestic violence at home, consideration must be given to the risk of that child facing emotional abuse, physical abuse and neglect.

Specific Safeguarding Issues

- 14.1 **E-safety** is a growing issue with the use of an ever developing variety of devices, mobile data, and social media sites.
- 14.2 Group leaders must be vigilant to the use of mobile phones, in respect of what is being downloaded and shared.
- 14.3 Phones must not be used to take photos without permission.
- 14.4 If the Internet access is provided by Red Lion House, then all users must sign an Internet Users Agreement.
- 15.1 **Child Sexual Exploitation** involves situations where young people receive 'something' (eg food, accommodation, drugs, gifts) as a result of them performing sexual activities. It can also occur through the use of technology, for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet or mobile phone.
- 16.1 **Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage** are a form of abuse and need to be reported.
- 17.1 **Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation** is part of our duty under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015.

All planned contact with a Child/Young Person should include:

- 18.1 A clear purpose.
- 18.2 Information to be gathered, shared and discussed by all involved in planning of the event prior to the date.
- 18.3 Reference to any immediate concerns, including missed contacts and how these issues will be addressed.

Allegation of abuse

- 19.1 Though our focus must be on safeguarding children/young people you must also be aware that allegations of abuse made by children/young people about adults do occasionally happen. Some prove mistaken or, very rarely, malicious. The Policy and Guidelines are there to help you to avoid situations in which well-intentioned actions could be misinterpreted and ensure that you do not find yourself in a situation where an allegation by a child, young or vulnerable person can be made.
- 19.2 There are three likely scenarios that people should be aware of and be prepared to deal with if necessary. These are:

- 19.2a • There is suspicion or evidence that a child is being abused by a member of staff or volunteer.
- 19.2b • A child accuses a member of staff, volunteer or other person associated with Red Lion House of abusing them.
- 19.2c • Abuse takes place or is suspected in the property of Red Lion House, or at an event at Red Lion House by an individual unrelated to Red Lion House.

When a disclosure is made

1. Listen carefully.
 2. Inform the young person that you will need to share this information, make it clear that you will only tell people who need to know.
 3. Reassure the young person that they have done the right thing in telling you. Do not take any notes while you are with the young person.
 4. Record the information (in private) immediately using the young person's own words. Date and sign the record
 5. Only record the facts given, do not question further except for clarification.
 6. Speak to the designated Child Protection Officer immediately.
- 19.3 In all cases you must contact your designated Child Protection Officer for a confidential discussion on how the matter is to be resolved.

Use of Information relating to children/young person

- 20 Information about children/young people e.g. name and address must be treated confidentially. It must be kept securely, stored only as long as necessary and disposed of in a way which maintains their confidentiality.

Discussion of the issues

- 21 Open discussion of child protection should be encouraged since this helps to make staff more comfortable with the issues involved. Do not keep it "under wraps" for fear of upsetting or embarrassing people.

Working Practices

- 22.1 It is the responsibility of all adults working directly with children/young people and supervisors of staff working with children/young people to undertake Child Protection training.

- 22.2 It is the responsibility of group leaders to ensure that work involving contact with children/young people is planned and managed in accordance with this policy.
- 22.3 All referrals to external agencies concerning the well-being of a child/young person must be confirmed in writing within 24 hours.
- 23.4 Service requests relating to the well-being of child/young people are given equal weight regardless of whether the contact is from an identified or anonymous source.
- 24.5 The group leader will need to assess the nature and urgency of the situation and take action accordingly, completing a written report (Appendix 1).
- 24.6 If the situation is deemed dangerous for the child/young person, then social services or the police must be contacted immediately.
- 24.7 Investigations will only be undertaken by social services or the police.
- 24.8 During an investigation due regard will be paid to the rights of the vulnerable child or young adult; the person alleged to have carried out the abuse and the person making the allegation (if it is not the person being abused). All those involved can expect to be treated in a fair and unbiased way and to receive the appropriate level of support and information throughout the investigation. Confidentiality will be maintained except where, in the broader public interest and duty of care, the information needs to be shared with statutory bodies or other persons/organisations.
- 24.9 If a group leader or a volunteer is involved in an allegation of abuse this could involve immediate suspension or it could be sufficient to ensure that the person concerned does not work with the vulnerable individual concerned.
- 24.10 Where the alleged perpetrator is not a group leader or a volunteer the line manager should contact the Child Protection Office, First Response or the police.

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with:

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy
 Health and Safety Policy
 Equality and Diversity Policy
 Safer Recruitment Policy

Agreed by the Red Lion House Charity

Date September 2021

Review Date September 2022

Signed*CDean*.....

Appendix 1

Child and Young Adult Protection Report Form

Details of child or young adult who may have been abused

Name _____ Gender _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Any relevant information about this child or young adult

Organisation _____

Details of person making this report

Name _____

Position in Organisation _____

Telephone Number _____

Details of contact with person

Name of Group Leader _____

Telephone Number _____

Describe what happened or attach a copy of the notes you took at the time

Details of any other witness (name(s), address(es), telephone number(s))

Action taken by Group Leader

Continue on separate sheet if necessary

Group Leader signature _____

Red Lion House Charity Lead Child Protection Officer Signature

Print Name _____

Date _____