



## **CHILD PROTECTION and SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

### **Contact Details:**

#### **Nominated Safeguarding Person:**

Nominated Safeguarding Person: Community and Outdoor Learning Manager Sharon Morgan

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**Nominated Safeguarding Trustee:** Adrian Podmore [enquiries@barnescommon.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@barnescommon.org.uk)

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**Chairman:** M E Hildesley

**Safeguarding Trustee:** A. Podmore

### FOREWORD

Friends of Barnes Common (FoBC) acknowledges its duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. We are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and best practice.

FoBC acknowledges its duty of care and legal obligation to aim that all children involved in the activities of FoBC have protection from harm. FoBC acknowledges that some participants, including children with special needs, may be particularly vulnerable. In the delivery of our activities, we aim to ensure that each and every individual participating in any activity overseen by FoBC, has a positive, enjoyable experience in an environment that is safe and appropriate to their age and ability, regardless of age, gender, religion or belief, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

Safeguarding is everyone's business. This policy aims to provide all members of staff with knowledge of their responsibilities in relation to child protection and safeguarding and the procedure to follow should a disclosure be made.

The Children's Act 1989 defines a child up to the age of 18 and up to 25 for children with special needs.

This policy has been written using the legal and social care framework detailed in the following:

- London Child Protection Procedures (revised guidance 2017)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to interagency working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2015
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004 (Section 11)

The Richmond Local Safeguarding Board (LSCB) has oversight of all child protection and safeguarding activity in the borough and offers training and support for all multiagency providers.

[www.richmondlsqb.org.uk](http://www.richmondlsqb.org.uk)

## FoBC Mission Statement

Barnes Common is designated as a local nature reserve (LNR) and a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). FoBC works with a range of partners to protect and enhance Barnes Common for local residents, visitors and for the enjoyment of future generations.

## Links to other policies

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and young adults. It should be read in conjunction with the FoBC Health and Safety Policy, FoBC Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy, FoBC Code of Conduct, FoBC Equal Opportunities Policy and FoBC Recruitment Policy.

## Definitions

- **Children and Young People:** Anyone under the age of 18, even if they are living independently.
- **Children and Young People's Service:** For example, in Richmond, the Children's Care and Support team is part of the Council providing family support and child protection services.
- **Child abuse:** There are four main types of abuse: physical; emotional; sexual; and child neglect. It is always wrong and must always be stopped.
- **Child Protection:** this is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. It refers to actions undertaken to protect children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- **DBS:** The Disclosure and Barring Service is the government agency which replaced the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Agency. It processes requests for criminal record checks to prevent unsuitable people from working with children.
- **LSCB:** Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, which have a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements.
- **Safeguarding Policy:** This is the statement of intent setting out the principles the group will use to guide its decisions and plan of action.
- **Safeguarding Procedures:** The particular courses of action that the group will use.
- **Safeguarding Practices:** The actual performance and carrying out of the procedures.
- **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:** this is defined as protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best chances.
- **Staff:** All references to staff cover paid staff, whether permanent, full time, part time or temporary along with interns, trustees and volunteer post-holders, including assistant posts, as well as other volunteers who may during the course of FoBC activities have exposure to children.
- **Working Together:** Any organisation or professional that works with children has to follow guidance issued by the government in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' published in 2013.

## FoBC CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

We understand that if there is a concern about the risk of significant harm to the child, everyone has an overriding duty to protect the child.

FoBC strives to ensure:

- Children and Young People feel listened to, valued and respected. We recognize the importance of providing the space for young people to voice their experiences of contact with staff and volunteers and understand that this is crucial in building and maintaining a safe and responsive environment.
- Staff are aware of indicators of abuse as set out in *Appendix A* and *Appendix B* and know how to

share their concerns appropriately. In the first instance, concerns should be referred to the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) or the Safeguarding Trustee. **ALWAYS PHONE 999 IF THE CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER.**

- Staff are given appropriate support and training
- All allegations and suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.

In order to ensure children are adequately protected we will ensure:

- We have a Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) and a nominated Safeguarding trustee who attend multiagency training annually.
- Staff involved in delivering activities to children receive training in basic child protection awareness every three years.
- We take reasonable steps to recruit staff safely, using thorough recruitment procedures and once in post manage and supervise staff regularly.
- All staff to read and understand the child protection policy, including *Appendix A* (indicators of abuse) and that they are aware of how, and to whom, concerns or disclosures of suspected abuse are reported.
- All staff to comply with the FoBC code of conduct
- Contact details for the NSP and nominated trustee, and how to raise a concern are clearly visible on site and on the FoBC website.
- The child protection policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the NSP and board of trustees

### The Role of the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP)

The NSP takes the lead operational responsibility for child protection including support for other staff and information sharing with other agencies, developing policies and staff training.

The NSP will:

- Refer suspected abuse / neglect of children and young people to Richmond SPA.
- Report allegations made against members of staff to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO). This is known as the duty to refer.
- Develop and update child protection and other safeguarding policies, ensuring staff are made aware of responsibilities and there is clear guidance on how anyone can raise a concern.
- Ensure that secure, confidential records are kept of any concerns about a child or young person, and of any conversation or referrals to statutory agencies.
- Provide support and advice to all members of staff within the setting regarding safeguarding concerns.
- Ensure all staff have appropriate child protection and safeguarding training and maintain training records.
- Develop an e-safety policy and clear rules regarding the use of the internet, social media, mobile phones and any other modern technology tools within the workplace

### The duty to refer and the role of the local area designated officer (LADO)

The LADO is employed by the local authority and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children

The LADO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. The LADO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will

provide advice, guidance and help to determine whether the allegation sits within the scope of the procedures.

The LADO helps co-ordinate information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible. The LADO will attend local strategy meetings and chair managing allegation strategy meetings. If you have concerns about a staff member or volunteer relating to child protection you are legally obliged to refer the case to the LADO, This is known as "the duty to refer" The ultimate duty to refer rests with the board, as trustees are legally accountable for ensuring sufficient safeguarding practice is in place to ensure the safety and welfare of children engaged in FOBC activities. Referrals to be made through the Richmond SPA.

#### Recruitment Induction and Supervision of Staff and Volunteers

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with FoBC.

- FoBC commitment to safeguarding and child protection will be stated in all job adverts.
- An awareness of safeguarding and child protection will be part of all job descriptions and the interview process.
- A written application form is to be completed for applicants to posts. The application form will include a question on any past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases. Applicants will be asked if they have ever had any complaints of abuse against them.
- Prior to appointment two references will be taken and proof of ID required.
- Where necessary, DBS checks will be required for all roles working with children and be renewed every three years.
- At induction, all new staff will be expected to read this policy and be aware of their role/responsibility with regard to confidentiality and safeguarding issues and be aware of how to identify signs of potential abuse and how to report any concerns. (*Appendix A*)
- Supervision and support of all staff will include monitoring of safeguarding practice.

#### Creating a Safe Environment / Organisation

- A risk assessment will be completed, with mitigating actions, for all indoor and outdoor activities delivered by FoBC
- Adult to young person ratios will reflect best practice dependent on activity (Generally 1:8 for 10 years+ and 1:6 for under 10's. Under 5's are required to be accompanied by their parent/carer)
- Staff working with children should be appropriately trained and qualified to ensure the safe provision of services, use of equipment and delivery of activities.
- We will ensure insurance policies are up to date and provide appropriate cover relevant to the activities we deliver.
- A condition of attendance will be a) a signed consent of parents, guardians or carers for their children to take part in activities b) a completed emergency contact form which includes the child's medical and dietary needs, any allergies or extra support required.
- Hard copies of records and any portable electronic equipment that holds or provides access to personal information will be stored securely and appropriate encryption used
- We will maintain an accident book for recording incidents or accidents
- Wherever possible we encourage an open environment, avoiding private or unobserved situations. Ideally staff should not be alone with a child at any time. When this is unavoidable it should be done with consent of someone in charge of the activity, and/or the children's parent/carer

#### Creating a Caring Environment

- Staff must treat all children/young people with respect.
- Staff must not make racist, sexist or other remarks which upset or humiliate
- Staff must take care to avoid showing any favouritism.

- It is the responsibility of staff to address and prevent abuse through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation.
- Arrangements for parents/carers dropping off and collecting children from activities/trips are clearly stated and agreed by parents/carers, children and staff
- Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member

### Responding to allegations or suspicions

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in FoBC, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, as stated, we acknowledge our duty of care to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities.

FoBC assures all staff that it will fully support and protect anyone who in good faith reports his/ her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child.

Any concerns will be clearly recorded. It is not the role or responsibility of the NSP to investigate any concern or issue raised with them. It is their role to record the information as they have been told and to refer this to the Richmond SPA. The NSP's decision and the process that was gone to reach the decision will be recorded and kept in a securely locked filing cabinet. The board member responsible for child protection and safeguarding should be informed of any referral made. Records will be retained for five years and then destroyed securely.

### Recording a Disclosure

To ensure that this information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should ideally be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. (*Please see Appendix C*). HOWEVER do not delay reporting your concern to the NSP verbally and then following up with a written record which should include the following:

- The child's name, age and date of birth.
- The child's home address and telephone number.
- Whether or not the person making the report is expressing their own concerns or those of someone else.
- The nature of the allegation. Include dates, time and special factors and other relevant information.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries. Any indirect signs such as behavioural changes.
- Details of witnesses to the incident/s.
- The child's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or other injuries occurred.
- Have the parents been contacted?
- If so, what has been said?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

# **Appendix A**

## **Definitions of Abuse**

Child Abuse is generally divided into four categories

### **1. Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

### **2. Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

### **3. Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling.

Sexual abuse may also 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.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

### **4. Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **Appendix B**

### Possible signs of abuse

#### Physical signs of abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse
- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home

#### Physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child puts on weight in other circumstances: e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

#### Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse:

- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Being unable to play
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

#### Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money or expensive gifts
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in an inappropriate sexually explicit way with adults.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

## **Appendix C**

### Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse

DO:

- Do treat any allegations seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do tell the child what you are doing, when, and who you have to tell, and keep them up to date with what is happening
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to police officers or social workers, who have experience in this
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt them or change the subject
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated Safeguarding Children person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to contact for further advice.