

## **Safeguarding Policy**

### **General Policy**

Longford Park Community Association (LPCA) is committed to the belief that all children and vulnerable adults have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and fully recognises its responsibility for child and adult protection. The safety and protection of all vulnerable people that the organisation supports is paramount and has priority over all other interests, unless life is at imminent risk. All LPCA's employees, volunteers and contractors are required to comply with the procedures contained within this policy.

There are five main elements to the policy:

- i. ensuring that LPCA practices safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with young people and vulnerable adults;
- ii. raising awareness of child protection and vulnerable adult issues amongst all paid and regular unpaid staff;
- iii. developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases or suspected cases of child or adult abuse;
- iv. supporting the child or adult who has been abused;
- v. establishing a safe environment in which children and adults can develop and grow, where they are able to talk and be listened to.

### **Definitions, Forms of Abuse, and Status**

2.1 The following definitions apply throughout this Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures:

- Child or Children

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen, for most purposes.

- Young Person

The term young person will include those aged between 5 and 24 years. For the purposes of this policy, a young person aged under 18 years is regarded as a child and a vulnerable adult includes all people aged 18 and over subject to the criteria of the Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) Scheme.

- Vulnerable Adult or Adults

The Protection of Vulnerable Adults Scheme (PoVA 2004) defined a vulnerable adult as a person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:

A substantial learning or physical disability;

A physical or mental illness or mental disorder, chronic or otherwise, including addiction to alcohol or drugs;

A significant reduction in physical or mental capacity.

- Regulated Activity

The emphasis now is on activities and there are new definitions which scale back the breadth of regulated activities.

Regulated activity relating to children covers:

- i) Unsupervised activities: teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children, or provide advice/guidance on well-being, or drive a vehicle only for children.
- (ii) Work for a limited range of establishments ('specified places'), with opportunity for contact: for example, schools, children's homes, childcare premises. Not work by supervised volunteers.

Work under (i) or (ii) is regulated activity only if done regularly.

(iii) Relevant personal care, for example washing or dressing; or health care by or supervised by a professional.

(iv) Registered child-minding; and foster-carers.

The definition of regulated activity relating to adults places the emphasis on the kind of activity carried out for any adult who requires them rather than on any specific groups of people or vulnerabilities.

These activities cover:

- i) Provision of healthcare
- ii) Provision of personal care
- iii) Providing social work
- iv) Assistance with cash, bills, shopping etc.
- v) Assistance with conduct of personal affairs
- vi) Conveying e.g. to receive healthcare

## **2.2 Forms of abuse**

The Children Act 1989 defines four types of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. These categories of abuse apply and will be relevant to vulnerable adults as well as to children who LPCA has contact with as part of its activities and social care role with people of all ages.

- **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse may take many forms e.g. hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating.

It may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child or vulnerable adult. This unusual and potentially dangerous form of abuse is now described as fabricated or induced illness.

- **Emotional Abuse**

Emotional abuse is continual emotional ill treatment causing severe and persistent effects on the child or vulnerable adult's emotional development and may involve:

- i. conveying the message that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person;

ii. imposing developmentally inappropriate expectations;

iii. causing the child or vulnerable adult to feel frightened or in danger – e.g. witnessing domestic violence;

iv. exploitation or corruption of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in most types of ill treatment, although emotional abuse may occur alone.

- **Sexual Abuse**

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 and includes penetrative and non-penetrative acts.

It may also include non-contact activities such as looking at, or being involved in, the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or encouraging children or vulnerable adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- **Neglect**

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

Staff should also be aware of other factors that influence these forms of abuse such as racial or homophobic abuse.

## **2.3 Status of Policy**

This policy applies to all employees, trustees and volunteers. Its purpose is to protect the personal safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults using the facilities, resources and activities provided by LPCA at the Longford Park Community Centre, , actively promoting awareness, good practice and sound procedures. The Trustees will review this policy regularly and as informed by risk assessments relating to all activities of LPCA, and will make member organisations using the premises and working with vulnerable groups aware of the policy.

## **Procedures**

### **3.1 Personnel/Recruitment**

All employees, trustees and volunteers are required to provide references that LPCA deems appropriate. References are always verified.

All paid and unpaid staff involved in regulated or intensive contact with vulnerable people as part of their work for LPCA will be subject to the Disclosure and Barring procedures of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

If the job or role is eligible then a DBS 'Standard', 'Enhanced' or 'Enhanced check with list checks' as appropriate will be carried out. The check will be required to be repeated every 3 years at a minimum.

if an individual has a job or role with another organisation that involves the same degree of unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults as their role in providing a service for LPCA, their existing occupational DBS certificate will suffice, if it is no more than 12 months old.

No new employees, trustees or volunteers should start employment/volunteer work until references have been verified and where one is required DBS checks received. If this is not possible: then new employees, trustees and volunteers must not be involved with regulated activities as set out in section 2 until references and DBS checks are completed. Details of the checks to be carried out are set out in Part 5.

All employees, trustees and volunteers will receive, and will be required to read and sign, the Safeguarding Disclosure and Barring Policy. All employees, trustees and volunteers will receive regular support in their work with children and vulnerable adults and further Safeguarding training will be sought if such work is undertaken by LPCA.

### **3.2 Responsibilities**

All employees, trustees and volunteers working on behalf of LPCA have a responsibility for the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults that they work with, in relation to their employment.

All employees, trustees and volunteers have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child and vulnerable adult protection is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

LPCA has a Designated Safeguarding Officer and a nominated deputy. The Chair of the Management Committee must also be informed of issues which arise under this policy. The Designated Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding Officer are responsible for child and vulnerable adults protection and the implementation of this policy. It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agencies.

#### **3.2.1 Designated Safeguarding Officers**

The Designated Safeguarding Officers will attend training as appropriate and make referrals to external agencies. Other aspects of their role include:

- obtaining information from staff, volunteers, children, parents or carers who have concerns relating to the protection of children or vulnerable adults and to record this information;
- assessing information quickly and carefully and asking for further information where appropriate;
- consulting with statutory child and vulnerable protection agencies e.g. the local social services department and police, to clarify doubts or worries;
- making referrals to Social Services, the DBS or the police, without delay.

All employees and volunteers will be made aware of the named Designated Safeguarding Officers and how to contact them.

Contact details also appear in Part 12 of this policy. The Designated Safeguarding Officers have contact telephone numbers for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) and other statutory agencies.

### **3.3 Reporting Procedures: What to do if you suspect someone is being abused**

All staff, volunteers and others working in direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults as part of the organisation's activities or as part of the environment where the activities take place, must be alert to the signs of abuse. Anyone who suspects that abuse is taking place in this environment or to whom a child or vulnerable adult discloses issues relating to safeguarding should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately. Any suspicion or allegation must be reported as soon as possible on the day of the occurrence to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child or adult, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour, or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.

It is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer to liaise with other relevant agencies where necessary and seek clarification from the Safeguarding and Protection Unit of the local Constabulary if there is any concern about the validity of any allegation.

Any suspicion or allegation of abuse must be recorded by the observer/s on the appropriate incident reporting form. This form must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely following the Data Protection Procedures. All employees and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse or alleged abuse directly to their Line Manager who will inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

All trustees will report such incidents directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. All stages of the reporting procedure must be documented, marked CONFIDENTIAL and stored securely following the procedures laid out in the Data Protection Policy.

### **3.4 Allegations against employees, trustees or volunteers**

When any form of complaint is made against an employee or volunteer, it must be taken seriously and the complaint should initially be dealt with by the safeguarding lead or their deputy. Report the complaint to the designated Safeguarding Officer immediately, giving details of the circumstances

SIGNATURES:

NAME:

DATE: