



Homes for Haringey Safeguarding for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Homes for Haringey Safeguarding for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy			
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1. **Policy statement and scope**

- 1.1. Everybody at Homes for Haringey agrees that it is always unacceptable for a child, young person or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind, and we recognise our responsibility to safeguard their welfare by commitment to working practices that protect them.
- 1.2. **Children and Young People** As an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) wholly owned by Haringey Council, we have a duty to adhere to the key provisions in the Children Act 2004 including:
- Section 10 - A duty to co-operate with the Children's Services Authority (in this case Haringey Council's: CYPS) to improve the well-being of children and young people.
 - Section 11 - A specific duty to ensure that HfH functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This requirement also extends to any body providing services on behalf of Homes for Haringey.
- 1.3. These duties relate to children and young people from pre-birth to the age of 19, or 25 if the young person has learning or other disability. Where "children" are referred to in this policy this is inclusive of any child or young person within the age range above.
- 1.4. **Vulnerable Adults.** We additionally have a duty - as set out in Safeguarding Adults, 2005 – to work with Haringey Council and other appropriate agencies to safeguard vulnerable adults and help prevent abuse from taking place.
- 1.5. This policy covers all the activities and services we provide and applies to all employees, volunteers, agency workers, contractors and partners working for and on behalf of Homes for Haringey who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst going about their everyday duties, and who may observe even the earliest signs of abuse or neglect.
- 1.6. Homes for Haringey will seek to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:
- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
 - Ensuring our recruitment and selection, training and vetting procedures are effective
 - Appropriate and timely information sharing
 - Effective management of staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training; and effective partnerships with contractors



2. Policy Aim

- 2.1. To help protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Homes for Haringey services by referring any safeguarding concerns to the appropriate investigatory authority.
- 2.2. 2.2 To provide procedures and practical guidance for all Homes for Haringey employees, contractors, volunteers, and other partners to safeguard children and young people, and vulnerable adults.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **What is Child Abuse?** Put simply, Child Abuse is when a child or young person suffers harm as a result of physical cruelty, emotional cruelty, sexual abuse or neglect by an adult. In many cases, the child will suffer more than one kind of abuse at a time.
- 3.2. *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006 (amended 2010)* sets out definitions and examples of four broad categories of abuse which are used as a basis for determining that a child should be subject to a Child Protection Plan. (Background information on these four broad categories is given below, 4.1. – 4.4.) Homes for Haringey's Safeguarding Children Work Instruction (procedure) for staff coming into contact with children and young people has been informed by and includes our response to this guidance.
- 3.3. **Who is a vulnerable adult?** A person aged 18 and over –
 - Who may be in need of community care services because of frailty, learning or physical or sensory disability or mental health issues, OR
 - Who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or take steps to protect him/herself from significant harm.
- 3.4. Abuse in the context of a vulnerable adult is the violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person/persons. This may consist of single or repeated acts. It can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person being abused.

4. Types of Abuse

The following are often regarded as indicators of concern in relation to abuse of both children and vulnerable adults:

4.1. Physical, this includes -

Injuries or 'marks':

- frequent bruising,
- fractures,
- cuts,
- burns,
- other injuries, grasp marks on the arm for example



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- repeat or multiple bruising on head, or on other body sites unlikely to be injured accidentally -such as the torso (whereas the shins are sites of frequent marking).

Other signs:

- torn clothing,
- grubby and dirty,
- underfed,
- failure to thrive.

4.2. Neglect –

Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time. Indicators include:

- Failure by parents or carers to meet basic essential needs e.g. adequate food, clothes, warmth, hygiene and medical care;
- Sudden weight loss or constant hunger, untreated injuries and deterioration of the skin
- Child with delayed skills development, e.g. unable to use cutlery to eat, very poor verbalisation.
- Child abandoned or left alone

4.3. Sexual abuse –

There may be no physical signs, and indications are likely to be emotional and behavioural including:

- Fondling or exposure of genital areas, open masturbation;
- Sexually aggressive behaviour towards others;
- Overly compliant and submissive;
- Strong dislike of physical contact;
- Children/Young People - over affectionate or inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge or hints about sexual activity

4.4. Emotional abuse –

May be difficult to recognise, as the signs are usually behavioural rather than physical.

Indicators include:

- Inappropriate mood and/or behaviour changes;
- Aggression;
- Withdrawal;
- ‘I don’t care attitude’;
- Lack of attachment to parent/carer;
- Self-harm;
- Panic attacks.



Additional types of abuse that may apply to vulnerable adults are:

- 4.5. Self neglect – concerns relating to an individual's own lack of self-care or risky behaviour.
- 4.6. Financial – observed or disclosed inability to pay for heating, food and other essentials; disclosure of fraud or exploitation
- 4.7. Institutional – poor professional practice
- 4.8. Discriminatory – suggestion of discrimination or variable treatment based on race, faith, religion, age, disability, gender, sexual preference

5. The Internet and the abuse of Children

- 5.1. As technology develops, the Internet and its range of content and services can be accessed through various devices including mobile phones, text messaging and mobile camera phones as well as computers and game consoles. As a consequence the Internet has become a significant tool in the distribution of indecent/pseudo photographs and video clips of children and young people.
- 5.2. Where there is suspected or actual evidence of anyone accessing or creating indecent images of children, and/or there are concerns about a child being groomed, exposed to pornographic material or contacted by someone inappropriately, via the Internet or other ICT tools like a mobile phone, an immediate referral must be made to the Police and to Children And Young Peoples Service.

6. Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

- 6.1. Many activities of Homes for Haringey involve the taking of images which will often be used for publicity and/or to celebrate achievement. Staff need to be aware of the potential for these activities to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes and staff should remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation.
- 6.2. Using images of children for publicity purposes will require the age appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. It is recommended that when using a photograph the following guidance should be followed:

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- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the child (first name only is permissible)
- If the child is named in full, avoid using their photograph
- Establish whether the image needs to be retained for further use,
- Ensure appropriate measures are in place to securely store images, and to ensure that they are only used by those authorised to do so.

7. What to do if you are concerned

- 7.1. Referrals should be made to Children's Services or the Vulnerable Adults Team. This may be direct or indirect. Staff, trade staff or contractors will normally complete a "Concern Card" to flag to Tenancy Management who will refer cases on behalf of Homes for Haringey and liaise with these services. However, Homes for Haringey is clear that it is everybody's job to report concerns about the welfare of children and young people, and if the concern is sufficiently serious then this referral should be direct and immediate. The Safeguarding Work Instruction sets out clear directions for staff.
- 7.2. Concerns may arise from an actual disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult, from observations whilst on a visit to the home or estate. The following advice is (Bourneville Trust guidance) - Reassure the person that they were right to disclose what has happened to them, take a note of what is reported to you including times, dates and locations of any abuse. Tell the person that you will not be able to keep this information a secret and that you will report the issue to the appropriate agency.

Information sharing

- 7.3. No service or individual should ever guarantee a child or young person, or vulnerable adult, absolute confidentiality. Whilst we recognise the importance of reassuring people and respecting their confidentiality where possible, there may be circumstances when this needs to be overridden - for example where there is a child protection issue.
- 7.4. Depending on the action taken by the Council, any member of Homes for Haringey staff, or contractor working on behalf of HfH, may be required to attend a Case Conference to give information on the concerns they raised.



7.5. **Information sharing**

Homes for Haringey attends multi-agency forum set up to investigate concerns. Attendee's are the parent local authority and other partners from public voluntary sector. Homes for Haringey will pass on information on a privileged basis where there is a risk to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or to aid an investigation where there has been an incident.

8. Staff Recruitment

- 8.1. We recognise the need to be alert to the possibility that any person we engage or employ (either in a paid or unpaid capacity) may pose a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Procedures to be followed which are relevant to all employees of Homes for Haringey include:

Applications, Job Descriptions and Person Specifications

- 8.2. The provision of detailed job descriptions and person specification for the job role, which must be issued along with an application form.

References and Agency Staff

- 8.3. References should be obtained for all staff. All staff working directly with residents will have an up to date DBS check.
- 8.4. References for Agency Staff involved in working with children and vulnerable adults must include seeking confirmation from the employment agency that:

- the individual was registered with the agency in the period/s claimed
- the agency disclose any cause for concern within the agency including any request by a client for the person to be withdrawn from an assignment, which upon investigation was found to be justified
- the employment agency should also be asked to confirm:
- all the appropriate pre employment checks that Homes for Haringey do when recruiting directly.

This should include relevant references, Right to Work in the UK and a valid up to date DBS check (last three years).

- from which previous employers references were obtained and whether or not these expressed any reservations about the individual in question



- 8.5. All contractors, agents, partners working for and on behalf of Homes for Haringey must be advised that appropriate safeguarding procedures are required to be in place (and evidenced on request) if they are involved in delivering services which children and vulnerable adults may use.

This would include contractors who are involved in maintaining Haringey Council's assets where such contracting staff could come into contact with children and vulnerable adults. I.e. carrying out maintenance works in tenanted properties.

- 8.6. All contractors and agents to be briefed on the Safeguarding policy, procedure and also Concern Card procedure and be required to brief their staff, and confirm they will adopt the procedure.

9. Training, Education and Communication

Training and Education

- 9.1. In accordance with the recommendations of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, Homes for Haringey will ensure that a minimum standard of training will be set and put in place accordingly:-
- a) An appropriate induction programme
 - b) Development of specific training for designated champions / relevant to role
 - c) Promote and provision of ongoing programmes of Safeguarding / Child Protection training opportunities (both online and classroom based)
 - d) Ensure that relevant managers are kept updated on current information and policies regarding Safeguarding / Child Protection
 - e) Ensure that relevant staff are briefed in a timely manner of local policy and practice changes and developments relevant to safeguarding and child protection.

Communication

- 9.2. This policy and supporting procedure (Work Instruction) will be available to all office-based staff on the Intranet. Awareness will be raised via existing staff communications mechanisms by the Communications Team. Briefings will be held with all relevant frontline staff and this will be refreshed at regular intervals as outlined in the procedure.



10. Allegations Against Staff

- 10.1. Any allegation about abuse or neglect of a child that is made about a member of staff, volunteer or contractor will be immediately referred to CYPs for investigation and notified to the relevant Director

Considering whether suspension is appropriate

- 10.2. The suspension of an employee is a traumatic experience. For this reason, despite the need to act quickly, it is essential that the facts of a case are considered carefully in deciding whether to suspend. The decision to suspend will be taken after discussion with the Head of Service and when authorised by a Director, not by the police or Social Services. However, Social Services, in collaboration with other agencies, may give advice to ensure the protection of children, protection of employees or the safeguarding of information.
- 10.3. Any suspension is intended as a neutral act to safeguard the interests of all concerned and does not imply either blame or punishment. This should be communicated at the point of suspension and reiterated throughout the process until such time as a decision is made otherwise. Homes for Haringey disciplinary procedure details the investigatory and remedial process.
- 10.4. Any formal action ensuing will be undertaken in line with Homes for Haringey Human disciplinary procedure.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1. This policy applies to everyone involved with Homes for Haringey and covers all the children and vulnerable adults with whom we come into contact, reflecting our commitment to ensure that they are protected from harm.

12. Monitoring and review

- 12.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years by the relevant Senior Manager in Tenancy Management who leads on Safeguarding unless a change in legislation or learning from a Serious Case Review prompts an earlier review.



13. Policy Control

Revision	Date	Description of changes	Was a consultation carried out? Who	Reviewed by
1.1	21/11/14	Light touch review and transfer to new framework template	N/A	Sharon Morgan

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