Safeguarding Policy

Safeguarding Lead: Anne Towill
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Andrew Price

The safeguarding of children, young people and adults is a priority for ParkLife SW CIC (ParkLife). This document sets out ParkLife's policy with regards to safeguarding and expectations of staff and/or sub-contractors, volunteers and partners. It is the responsibility of all ParkLife staff, volunteers and sub-contractors to implement this policy.

This policy covers the abuse of children, young people, and adults: physically, emotionally, sexually, financially and also through neglect, coercion and control.

ParkLife acknowledges the rights of children, young people and adults to be safeguarded from abuse of all types, ParkLife makes a commitment to uphold these rights by creating and maintaining an environment free from abuse.

ParkLife staff have a zero-tolerance of abuse wherever it occurs and whoever is responsible. If safe to do so, staff will challenge abusive behaviours, and will always report any abuse seen to the Safeguarding or Deputy Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.

1. Policy statement - general

a. ParkLife recognises its responsibilities to safeguard children under the terms of the Children Act 1989 and 2004.
b. ParkLife recognises its responsibilities under the terms of The Care Act 2014.
c. ParkLife staff and sub-contractors will record and refer all concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Should neither be available, they will report to one of the other Directors.
d. The Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will record any incidents of abuse or suspected abuse, which will be securely stored. Any occurrences or observations that meet the threshold will be reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and/or the police. It might not be clear whether an incident constitutes an 'allegation'. To be an allegation, the alleged incident has to be sufficiently serious as to suggest that harm has or may have caused

harm to a child/ren or that the alleged behaviour indicates the individual may pose a risk of harm to children.

e. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease. All should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead for them to assess as to whether a referral to the LADO is needed. If in doubt, the Safeguarding Leads will report to LADO to obtain advice.
f. All concerns, allegations or incidents that meet the threshold shall be reported to LADO within one working day, and sooner if possible. If there is a significant risk of immediate harm, they and/or the police will be informed without delay.
g. The LADO will advise ParkLife whether or not informing the parents of the child/ren involved will impede the disciplinary or investigative processes. Acting on this advice, if it is agreed that the information can be fully or partially shared, ParkLife should inform the parent/s. In some circumstances, however, the parent/s may need to be told straight away (e.g. if a child is injured and requires medical treatment).
h. ParkLife staff and sub-contractors will work with any partners to respond to any suspicions or incidents of abuse raised by them, in accordance with statutory procedures.
i. ParkLife staff and sub-contractors will share any information for the purposes of safeguarding with statutory services, with any relevant agencies and comply with any information request to meet statutory duty.
j. ParkLife will ensure that all data is handled in accordance with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, which allows the sharing of information without consent where there is concern that a child is suffering or at risk of abuse – if seeking such consent would place a child / adult at risk.
k. ParkLife staff and sub-contractors who have witnessed and reported incidents or suspicions of abuse, will be supported by ParkLife directors and management to deal with the mental health impact it may cause.

2. Allegations towards or concerns about a member of staff, sub-contractor or volunteer.

In addition to the above measures, this procedure will be applied when there is an allegation or concern that a person who works with children, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (transferable risk).

a. Low level concerns for staff, sub-contractors or volunteers will also be taken seriously. They may include, but are not limited to:

Being over friendly with children or vulnerable adults;
Having favourites;
Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone without the express permission of a responsible adult;
Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or
Humiliating a child or vulnerable adult.

b. Incidents which fall short of the threshold for reporting to the LADO could include an accusation that is made second or third hand and the facts are not clear, or the member of staff alleged to have done this was not there at the time; or there is confusion about the account. If in doubt the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will consult with LADO.
c. An allegation can relate to an adult's behaviour outside work, and their relationships with others, if they:

- Have behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child but could, for example, include an arrest for the illegal possession of a weapon;
- Have, as a parent or carer, become subject to child protection procedures;
- Are closely associated with someone in their personal lives (e.g. partner, member of the family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the adult is responsible in their employment/volunteering.

d. If it is difficult to determine the level of risk associated with an incident the following will be considered:

Was the incident a disproportionate or inappropriate response in the context of a challenging situation?
Does the member of staff, sub-contractor or volunteer understand that their behaviour was inappropriate and express a wish to behave differently in the future? For example, are they willing to undergo training?
Does the child or family want to report the incident to the police or would they prefer the matter to be dealt with by ParkLife?
Have similar allegations been made against the employee, sub-contractor or volunteer – is there a pattern developing?

e. Where it is decided that the incident does not meet the threshold of harm/risk of harm and is a concern only, then ParkLife will take steps to ensure any conduct or behaviour issues are addressed with the member of staff, sub-contractor or volunteer through normal employment practices.
f. Parklife will seek advice from the LADO about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person. The LADO may liaise with the Police and/or Children's Social Care regarding this. Subject to restrictions on the information that can be shared, ParkLife will, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome (e.g. disciplinary action, dismissal, or referral to the DBS or regulatory body).
g. The accused member of staff will:
Be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;

Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process;
If suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace.

h. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person, (where this would not place the child at further risk), up to date with progress, information will be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries and manage related disciplinary or suitability processes. If the situation has been referred to LADO, then ParkLife will follow their guidance on who they can and can't speak to and about what.

3. Definitions

A child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in a secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

An adult at risk is someone over the age of 18 years, has care and support needs, is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect.

4. Initial action by person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern

The person to whom an allegation or concern is first reported will treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind.

They will not:

- Investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification. Listen rather than question;
- Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations;
- Promise confidentiality, but do give assurance that the information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

They will:

- Make a written record of the information (where possible in the child / adult's own words), including the time, date and place of incident/s, persons present and what was said immediately afterwards;
- Sign and date the written record;
- Immediately report the matter to the Safeguarding Lead, or the deputy in their absence or; where the Safeguarding Lead or deputy is the subject of the allegation, report to another appropriate Director.

5. Reporting - child protection

ParkLife staff will report the following information:

- information about the child - name, age, gender and ethnicity
- nature of concern - what the child said or someone told them, and physical signs or behavioural indicators
- staff name and role, and the name and role of the person who told them
- when and where the concern happened
- who else was present
- what the child said or what was observed about the child if they were telling them directly
- any relevant past observations, e.g., has the child's behaviour changed?
- the name and address (if known) of the alleged abuser
- their response to the child and what was said
- what they said to the child about confidentiality, and the child's response
- their opinion, if relevant - but make it clear when it is their opinion and not fact
- who they told, including statutory agencies, and any advice received or action taken

Signed:



Andrew Price Dated: 27-10-26

Signed



Keith Rennells Dated: 27-10-26