

# THE PIONEER GROUP

<b>Safeguarding Children Policy</b>		<b>Version: 6</b>	<b>Ref: 2101</b>
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Support Services Team Leader		
<b>Approved by:</b>	Compass Board	<b>Approval Date:</b>	November 2021
<b>Supersedes:</b>	Version 5	<b>Review Date:</b>	November 2024
<b>Standard Letters</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Standard Forms</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
None	-	None	-
<b>Guidance</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Process Map</b>	<b>Ref.</b>
Signs, symptoms and effects of child abuse and neglect		None	-

## 1. Policy Aim

- 1.1 Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility; The Pioneer Group is committed to ensuring that all members of staff take responsibility for the safeguarding of children and are equipped to respond appropriately to any concerns they may have.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is:
- To protect children who come into contact with The Pioneer Group's services. This includes the children of adults who use our services;
  - To provide staff, volunteers, contractors and the Board of Trustees with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection.
- 1.3 We believe that:
- All children/young people have the right to be protected from harm, abuse and neglect;
  - That every child has the right to services and children/young people need to be safe and to feel safe in our provision;
  - Children/young people need support that matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse;
  - All children/young people have the right to express their views, feelings and wishes and voice their own values and beliefs;
  - All children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other;
  - All children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs; and
  - Our services must contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying (including homophobic, bi-phobic, trans-phobic and cyber-bullying), exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk taking behaviours.

- 1.4 We will work with children and families to implement early interventions to reduce the risk or prevent abuse from happening through provision of support services internally and through good quality multi-agency working with statutory and other organisations.

## **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The scope of this policy includes all children and young people under the age of 18 who come to the attention of any member of staff. This will include children living in households, children accessing specific services, and children who we come into contact with through any work-related activity.

- 2.2 Any reference to The Pioneer Group includes services provided by and on behalf of the following parts of the group:

- Compass Support
- Castle Vale Community Housing
- Pioneer Places
- Stockland Green Community Housing

The policy is relevant to all staff, volunteers and Board of Trustee/Members within the group members identified above, and our contractors.

- 2.3 Where individuals or other organisations are hiring our facilities to deliver their own services, we will ensure we continue to respond to concerns or allegations of child abuse in line with this policy and associated procedures.

- 2.4 In the case of partnership working to deliver services, we will always work in line with our own organisational policies and procedures, but may need to agree additional measures or actions. Safeguarding arrangements will be agreed, recorded and communicated to relevant staff in all instances before the commencement of delivery.

## **3. Related Documentation**

- 3.1 The group policies and procedures that support the delivery of this policy are:

- 102 Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
- 103 Managing Induction and the Probationary Period Procedure
- 121 Code Of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers
- 100 Supervision Policy and Procedure
- 1424 Data Protection Policy
- 931 Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure
- 1424.2 Data Sharing Policy
- 1424 Data Protection Policy
- 2401 Family Support Policy and Procedure
- 709 Safeguarding Adults Policy
- 806 Domestic Abuse Policy
- 2101.1 Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child or young person - procedure
- 2102.3 Managing allegations against staff and volunteers - procedure

## **4. Compliance**

4.1 We will ensure adherence to the following legal and regulatory frameworks:

- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 2018
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Children and Families Act 2004
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 (s121 Forced Marriage)
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers; HM Government July 2018
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government 9 December 2020
- The Disclosure and Barring Service

4.2 The Pioneer Group may work and engage with children and young people from across a number of local authorities.

It is essential that we have clear procedures for each local authority that align to the structure and processes of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

## **5. Background/Context**

5.1 As an employee / volunteer / contractor working on behalf of The Pioneer Group there may be contact with children and families in a number of different contexts. We will ensure that training is provided and safeguarding procedures are in place through delivery and/or procurement processes to comply with this policy.

5.2 A full programme of activities and support for children, young people and families is delivered by Compass Support and in these settings there is more intensive contact with children. All members of staff have a number of important legal and ethical obligations to promote the welfare of children and ensure they are kept safe from abuse or harm.

5.3 Any questions or concerns about the interpretation or operation of this policy and associated procedures should be discussed with the Family Support Team Leader as the Designated Safeguarding Officer, or the Community Regeneration Director as the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer.

## **6. Policy Detail**

### **6.1 Definitions**

Safeguarding: A term used to denote measures to protect the health, Wellbeing and human rights of individuals, which allow people, especially

Children, young people and vulnerable adults, to live free from abuse, harm and neglect.

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO): The Designated Safeguarding Officer are the first point of contact for all staff and volunteers to go to for advice if they are concerned about a child

Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer: The designated safeguarding lead is the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues in organisation. The person fulfilling this role must be a senior member of the organisation's leadership team.

Child / Children: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines child as "a human being below the age of 18 years ". In the context of safeguarding, this definition includes babies during pregnancy.

Child protection: The legislation, guidance and practice to identify children Who are at risk of harm, and take action to protect those children and Prevent further abuse occurring.

Child abuse: Any action by another person that causes significant harm to a Child. This list includes abuse listed by the NSPCC:

- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Online abuse
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Child sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)
- Bullying and cyberbullying
- Child trafficking
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Criminal Exploitation

#### Contextual Safeguarding:

Contextual safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Often, parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

In Birmingham, contextual safeguarding relates to children and young people who are at risk of:

1. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
2. Children Missing from Home, Care and Education (Missing)
3. Criminal Exploitation - Gangs, County Lines, Gun and Knife Crime and Modern Slavery; and Prevent.

## **6.2 Responding to a safeguarding issue**

- 6.2.1 Employees, volunteers and contractors working on behalf of The Pioneer Group will come into contact with children and young people every day, and where a

concern or disclosure of child abuse is made we have a responsibility and duty of care to act.

6.2.2 A disclosure may be made directly by a child, by another on their behalf or there may be signs or indicators that cause a staff member to suspect that abuse may be taking place.

6.2.3 If a child is thought to be at risk the following principles should be applied:

- Treat the child with respect and take what they have to say seriously; the presumption should be made in favour of the child.
- Staff should not promise to keep a secret even when directly asked. It is a requirement to pass on information if the child is believed to be at risk.
- Staff members are not to investigate; questions must be open and not leading.
- Staff can discuss concerns with their line manager, the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Family Support Team Leader) or the Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer (Community Regeneration Director); however it remains the individual staff member's responsibility to make a referral if they have concerns.
- You should inform the person with parental responsibility of your intended actions unless you believe this will place the child at further risk.
- Any allegations regarding a staff member will be reported to LADO (full term) and actions will be taken in line with guidance from LADO and our internal policy.

6.2.4 There are specific procedures in place provide staff with the process for responding and progressing with a concern of child abuse. The principles of these procedures will be universal.

6.2.5 The same principles apply to dealing with allegations of child abuse made against a staff member, and the procedure for this is also outlined.

### **6.3 Recruitment of Staff and Volunteers**

6.3.1 The Pioneer Group staff shall be recruited in line with the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure, which incorporates the principles of safer recruitment.

6.3.2 All volunteers will be appointed in line with the Volunteers Policy.

6.3.3 For roles that involve regular work with children it will always be necessary for the organisation to carry out an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

6.3.4 For all other roles it is the responsibility of the recruiting manager to consider the role, the nature of the work and to make a decision about whether a DBS check is needed has to be based on each individual role.

6.3.5 Where an employee requires a DBS check, they will not undertake any lone-working with children until the organisation is in receipt of satisfactory check certificate.

6.3.6 The Pioneer Group Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers states that those working with vulnerable residents and services users will be required to have

a DBS check carried out every two years and outlines that *“if your status changes in the meantime, you must declare this to your Line Manager, Service (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. You must disclose any information which may subsequently show up on any future DBS once employment has commenced. You must declare this to your Line Manager or People Advisor.”*

#### **6.4 Contractors and sub-contractors**

- 6.4.1 Where The Pioneer Group contract or commission work to be done which brings the contractor into contact with children or families, the contracting manager has a duty to ensure that the contractor has relevant safeguarding systems in place.
- 6.4.2 The Pioneer Group will provide training briefings in relation to safeguarding children for the contractor’s staff.

#### **6.5 Training and awareness raising**

- 6.5.1 All staff will receive “Introduction to Child Safeguarding” training as part of the Corporate Training Programme.
- 6.5.2 All staff whose primary role is to work with children and young people will attend additional training provided by the local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 6.5.3 Line managers are responsible for ensuring that there is a regular review of knowledge and understanding of staff in relation to safeguarding, which could be achieved through discussions in team meetings or in monthly one-to-one supervision.
- 6.5.4 The DSO is responsible for ensuring that there is on-going communication across all sites to raise awareness and ensure that all staff remain conscious of their role in relation to the safeguarding of children.
- 6.5.5 The DSO should act as a source of support advice and expertise for all staff. Relevant training is beneficial for this role such as The Birmingham Safeguarding Children’s Partnership, Safeguarding for Senior Designated and Operational Managers, to update knowledge around what is required from this role and from supporting organisations as regulations and processes are regularly updated.
- 6.5.6 The Designated Safeguarding Officer is responsible for ensuring that our policy and commitment to safeguarding children is promoted clearly and appropriately to our customers, and that relevant literature, such as ChildLine and NSPCC, are displayed in key areas of our buildings frequented by children and young people.
- 6.5.7 The Pioneer Group will hold regular internal safeguarding meetings to review practice and learning across the group.

#### **6.6 Monitoring and Review**

- 6.6.1 Referrals made by The Pioneer Group staff and volunteers shall be monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

- 6.6.2 A Safeguarding Biannual Assurance Report will be submitted to relevant Boards (CVCH, Compass Support and Pioneer Group Board). The report will provide information on safeguarding referrals made, and update on the outcomes of any referrals made, learning and good practice.
- 6.6.3 Safeguarding is also monitored through departmental Risk plans.
- 6.6.4 The Safeguarding Children Policy will be reviewed every three years to ensure that it is effective and promotes best practice. A review will be carried out sooner should there be any changes to legislation or any internal issues that have identified the need for a review.

## **7. Data Protection Statement**

- 7.1 The Pioneer Group manages all of the data referred to in this policy in accordance with current data protection legislation.
- 7.2 Staff should be aware that where there are concerns about child safeguarding or that a crime has taken place they have a duty to share information with relevant agencies.
- 7.3 In a situation where a serious case review is to take place it will be the policy of The Pioneer Group to fully cooperate with any requests for data sharing.