

# Safeguarding Children Policy

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## **1. Scope**

- 1.1 Peabody recognises its responsibilities under the terms of the Children Act 1989 and 2004 legislation and guidance with regards to the safeguarding of children and young people.
- 1.2 This policy applies to children and young people that live in, or visit, our properties or use our services. All Peabody employees and volunteers must comply with this policy. The term 'employees' used in this policy refers to both employees and volunteers.
- 1.3 We expect partners from whom we commission external services to adhere to this policy. However, we expect them to have appropriate safeguarding procedures of their own in place.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

- 2.1 This policy outlines our approach to preventing and reducing the risk of harm to children and young people who are experiencing, or are at risk from, abuse and neglect.

## **3. Key terms and definitions**

- 3.1 The four recognised categories of child abuse are: physical; sexual; psychological and emotional abuse; and neglect.
- 3.2 A child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday as defined under the Children Act 1989, irrespective of circumstances and including unborn children.

## **4. Policy**

- 4.1 All Peabody Group employees have a duty to act upon and report actual, suspected or allegations of abuse in line with the Code of Conduct.
- 4.2 We will record and refer all concerns, suspicions or allegations of abuse or neglect to the lead agencies responsible for carrying out safeguarding assessments and enquiries, specifically the Local Authority. Referrals will be made to internal teams where appropriate.
- 4.3 We will work in partnership with lead agencies and relevant partners to respond to suspicions, allegations or incidents of abuse in accordance with statutory procedures and guidance.
- 4.4 We will report any incidents of abuse that we suspect are a criminal offence to the Police. We will treat any disclosures of historical abuse in the same way as an allegation, disclosure or suspicion of current child abuse.

- 4.5 We will share information for the purposes of safeguarding with statutory services and other agencies, and will comply with the statutory duty to supply information where requested. We will develop processes and principles for sharing information.
- 4.6 We will handle data in accordance with the Data Protection Act, General Data Protection Regulation and our Data Protection Policy. Where there is a concern that a child may be being abused, is at risk of abuse or where seeking consent to share information would place the child at further risk, the law allows for the sharing of information without consent.
- 4.7 We will develop and implement internal procedures for employees that establish clear lines of accountability, responsibility and processes for reporting safeguarding concerns.
- 4.8 We will provide employees with role appropriate training so that they understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and are enabled to identify, and report the signs of abuse in accordance with our safeguarding procedures.
- 4.9 We will meet our responsibilities in the safe recruitment selection and vetting of employees by using the Disclosure and Barring Service and undertake any other pre-employment screening checks as appropriate.
- 4.10 We will provide support and supervision for employees, creating a safe environment in which they feel able to report safeguarding issues, including where they have concerns about the behaviour of another Peabody employee in line with our Whistleblowing Policy.
- 4.11 We recognise the emotional impact on staff of recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns. Employee support will be available through line managers and in line with our Wellbeing Policy.
- 4.12 We will address any allegations of or suspected abuse by Peabody employees through formal statutory investigative procedures and our own internal disciplinary procedures.
- 4.13 We will raise awareness of safeguarding issues in our communities through information and advice, and are committed to minimising the circumstances that make children vulnerable to abuse and neglect through our community initiatives and support services.

## **5. Monitoring and continuous improvement**

- 5.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years – unless legislation, business or sector developments require otherwise – to ensure that it continues to meet the stated objectives and take account of good practice developments.

## **6. Legislation and regulation**

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- Human Rights Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1992)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) & supplementary DfE guidance on specific safeguarding issues – Appendix C
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Housing Act 1996
- Forced Marriage Act 2012
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2011
- London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance – Updated October 2017
- Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulation

### **Related Documents:**

- Vulnerability Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Domestic Abuse and VAWG Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Data Protection Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- DBS Policy
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy

## Approval

<b>Version number</b>	V1
<b>Approved by</b>	Moira Griffiths, Executive Director Care and Support
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<b>Policy owner</b>	Moira Griffiths, Executive Director Care and Support
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<b>Consultation</b>	Housing Policy Group; Safeguarding and Vulnerability Panel; Sherri Vincent, Safeguarding Lead Officer; Kate Roberts, Research and Public Policy Officer; Ron Hull, Lead Practice Compliance and Projects Officer (Essex); Michelle Francis, Acting Head of Community Safety; Liz Hamlet Chambers, Head of Special Projects; Sonia Palfrey, Regional Manager; Housing Policy Group; Shadow Safeguarding and Vulnerability Panel.; Joe Joseph, Regional Director East; Moira Griffiths, Executive Director Care and Support.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>	October 2017
<b>Data Protection Assessment (DPIA)</b>	October 2017

## Version control

Date	Author	Version	Details of review