

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

ARKWRIGHT MEADOWS COMMUNITY GARDENS

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July 2021

Approved AMC Gardens Committee Meeting 07.07.21

CONTENTS

	Page No
1. Introduction	3
2. Definitions	4
3. AMC Gardens Safeguarding Guidance	5
4. Reporting Procedure	6
5. Lead Safeguarding Worker	7
6. Recruitment and Induction	7
7. The Process	8
8. Third Party Confidentiality	9
9. Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities	9
10. Recording Procedure	10
11. Allegations of abuse involving members of staff The Investigation	11

Appendix 1	Signs and Symptoms of Abuse
Appendix 2	Report Form
Appendix 3	Record of Training
Appendix 4	Safeguarding Contact Details
Appendix 5	Planning work and working with children

1) Introduction

Arkwright Meadows Community (AMC) gardens seeks to ensure that the gardens provide a safe, enjoyable, healthy and educational environment for all children and young people.

Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to investigate a young person's circumstances where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives or is found in their area is suffering from significant harm, abuse or neglect. This means that they must investigate when there are concerns for a child's safety, when this is reported either by a member of the public or by a professional agency.

AMCGardens Management Committee considers that there is a moral and professional imperative to engage fully with the guidelines and practices for both the protection of children, young people and of the staff working with them.

Consequently all staff of AMCGardens need to be aware that they have a direct responsibility to protect children and young people

As a voluntary organisation AMCGardens seeks to adhere to the Guidance for voluntary agencies working with children & young people as given by the Department of Health in the document *Working to Safeguard Children* as follows: - All those providing day care services* should know how to recognise and respond to potential indicators or abuse or neglect, and should know what to do when they have concerns about a child's welfare. Day care providers in the private and voluntary sectors should have agreed procedures for when and how to contact the social services department about an individual child. **Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, Department of Health, 2018. Published by Department for Education www.gov.uk/government/publications.**

2) DEFINITIONS

A Child:-

The safeguarding of children and young people according to the terms of the Children Act 2004 defines a child/young person as someone under the age of 18. In this policy the terms child and young person are used interchangeably.

Child Abuse:-

Child abuse can take many forms and includes physical injury, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation, or neglect of physical or emotional needs. A child or young person may be suffering from or at risk of suffering from significant harm as a result of some form of abuse. Appendix 1 gives an outline of some signs and symptoms but should not be regarded as giving comprehensive guidance.

Significant Harm:-

Under the terms of the 1989 Child Act, a court may only make a care order (committing the child to the care of the local authority) or supervision order (putting a child under the supervision of a social worker) in respect of a child if it is satisfied that:-

The child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm; and
The harm or likelihood of harm is attributable to a lack of adequate parental care or control; and
The court is satisfied that an order needs to be made.

'Where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health and development, their health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child'

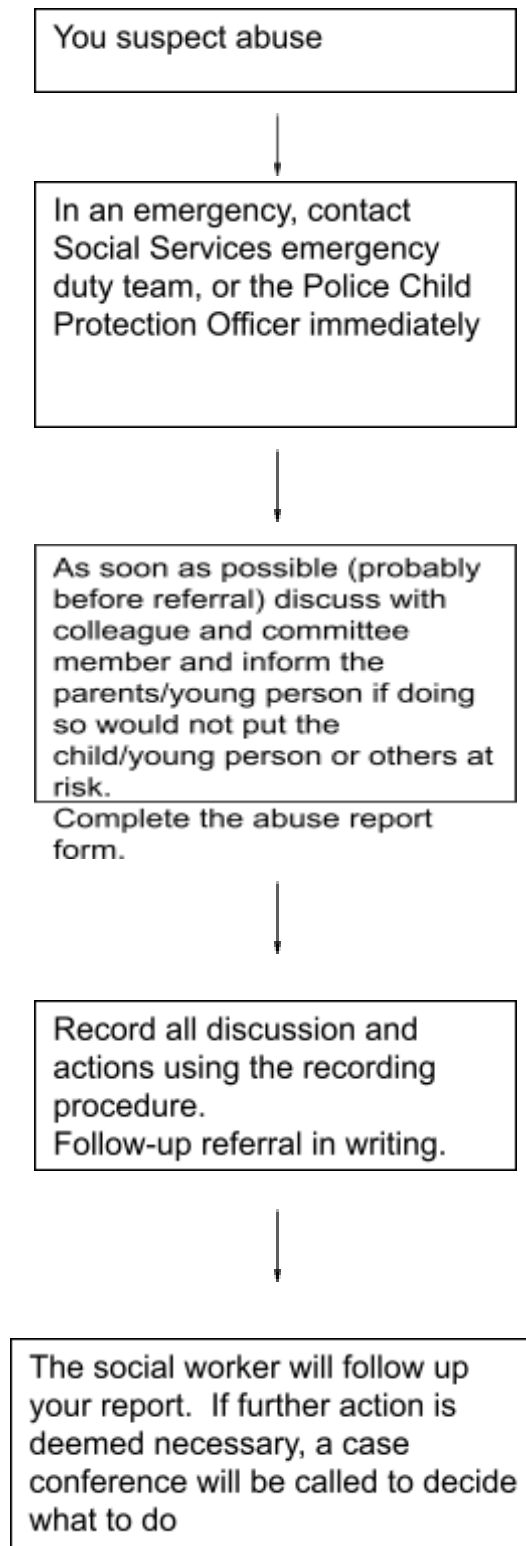
(Children Act 2004)

3) AMCGARDENS SAFEGUARDING GUIDELINES

- In any situation where there is suspected or potential risk of abuse to a child or young person, it is the responsibility of AMC Gardens' staff to refer such concerns to the Social Services Duty Team, who have a statutory duty to investigate. If it is after hours then the Emergency Duty Social Work Team or Police Safeguarding Team must be contacted.
- There is an expectation that before such a referral is made that these matters are discussed with another staff member and a nominated member of the management committee. If however this causes an inappropriate delay which could place the child or young person at further risk then the referral should be made and discussed with a colleague/ committee member at the first opportunity.
- Before such a referral is made there is also an expectation that the parents are informed of your concerns, unless informing them would place the child or someone else at greater risk. E.g. where there are concerns that a parent could adversely influence the child or be violent to staff.
- In the case of young people there is an expectation that the young person is informed that you intend to make a referral unless that may place the young person at increased risk.
- All concerns, referrals and discussions regarding possible concerns must be fully recorded and signed by staff and or management committee member.
- Any phoned referral must be followed by a written referral.
- Current contact details can be found in Appendix 4.

4) REPORTING PROCESS

This is intended as a guide only. REMEMBER ADVICE IS AVAILABLE FROM THE SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR OR THE DUTY SOCIAL WORKER



5) LEAD SAFEGUARDING WORKER. (LSW)

- A designated member of staff will take the role of Lead in Safeguarding. The LSW worker will have overall responsibility for minimising the risk of child abuse in the organisation and its operations.
- The duties of the LSW Worker will include:-
 - Ensuring appropriate vetting procedures are in place during recruitment and selection of paid/unpaid workers and volunteers.
 - Ensuring all staff, volunteers and committee members are aware of safeguarding issues as appropriate
 - Organising training for staff, volunteers and committee members on safeguarding issues as appropriate
 - Acting as an advice point when available, for referrals of alleged child abuse to Social Services
 - Ensuring that staff maintain Child Protection Files and that contact telephone numbers are up to date.
 - Keeping up to date with current issues in Safeguarding as they relate to the work of AMC Gardens and ensuring that our policies and procedures reflect these.

6) RECRUITMENT AND INDUCTION (STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS)

- In order to minimise the risks of child abuse, proper vetting procedures should be in place. All paid staff, committee members and sessional workers and volunteers who have contact with children should be subject to checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service. Reference checks and the taking up of references will be carried out by a suitably experienced member of staff.
- Upon appointment all salaried staff and volunteers with direct contact with children must receive training on the prevention and recognition of child abuse, including indicators of child abuse. It is advisable that all staff, including sessional workers and volunteers, working directly with children, should also receive training on the prevention and recognition of child abuse. The local Safeguarding Children Board will normally be able to supply this training. It is expected that all staff take up appropriate training within six months of being in post and that this is updated every three years.
- The LSW will ensure that all staff, committee members, sessional workers and volunteers are aware of the AMC Gardens' Safeguarding Policy and procedures. Translation services will be available to provide AMC Gardens' Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in other languages other than English if required.

7) THE PROCESS

Where abuse is suspected or a disclosure of abuse is made

- If you think a disclosure is about to be made, or a child or young person is in the process of disclosing, you must tell them that you will have to talk to other people. **NEVER** tell them that you will keep it a secret. Tell the child or young person that you must talk to other people who can help. Be open and honest. Tell the child or young person who you will have to speak to and why.
- Workers should be aware of the importance of adopting a supportive role whilst also being aware of the limits of their expertise. They should not subject the child to intrusive discussions but should listen and be open and supportive. Remember that it is not your responsibility to carry out an investigation into what has happened
- If a child chooses to talk to you and discloses that he/she has been abused – take the child seriously.
- Whilst the young person should have a reasonable expectation of confidentiality, i.e. that personal issues will not be needlessly disclosed to others, in situations where the young person discloses abuse staff **cannot** promise confidentiality.
- If there is a serious and immediate concern regarding a child's safety and welfare, you must make a referral to social services without delay. If after discussion with a staff member and/or committee member feel that there is cause for concern, but that you need further clarification before referral, you should agree a course of action with a timescale. This may include further discussion with the child or another person, but the purpose of the discussion should be **only** to obtain basic information about whether to take further action – AMCGardens staff should **never** undertake their own safeguarding investigation.
- In most situations it will be appropriate to inform the young person when a referral is going to be made to social services, to explain the reasons for this and to offer support as appropriate to the young person through the resulting investigation. The worker should also inform the young person's family that a referral is being made. The only exceptions to this are if, in the worker's view, informing the family would either impede the investigation, place the child at greater risk or place the member of staff concerned at risk. If such expectations apply the referral should be made to social services without informing the family first.

8) THIRD PARTY CONFIDENTIALITY

- Situations may arise where staff are told about concerns regarding the safety and welfare of a young person but the referrer does not wish to be identified. This must not be used as a reason to refrain from whatever action is necessary to protect the young person who is the subject of concern. Such wishes should be respected if possible but there will be situations where action is necessary to protect the young person, but this action is likely to reveal the identity of the referrer. In such cases it should be explained to the

referrer that action will need to be taken and the likely consequences of this in terms of the referrer being identified.

9) CHILD ABUSE AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Child abuse occurs in all types and structures of families regardless of gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, religion or class. In situations where a worker is concerned about the care or treatment of a child or young person, it is important to be mindful that there are many different ideas and attitudes about how children should be brought up. It should not be assumed that a particular way of caring for children is harmful or not harmful just because it is different to that of the dominant culture. Considerations of harm should always be made in the context of the definitions of child abuse. Guidance can be sought from social services.
- For young people with disabilities there can be additional issues in relation to child abuse. It is important to be mindful of assumptions as to what is appropriate in terms of caring for children with disabilities. Sometimes practices which would clearly be seen as unacceptable in general terms are not challenged when the child has learning difficulties.

10) RECORDING PROCEDURE

- Staff should record details about the incident being disclosed as soon as possible, preferably on the "Suspected Child Abuse" Form (an example can be found in Appendix 2). All notes must be signed and dated.
- In addition to any notes made above a "Suspected Child Abuse" Form must be completed within 24 hours of the incident.
- Notes should be made of any discussion between staff members/ committee members. All notes must be signed and dated.
- If a referral is made this should be in the first instance by phone by the staff member. This must be immediately followed up in writing.
- When making a referral, the worker should note the name of the person on duty who they have contacted and the date and time when the referral was made.
- Information relating to individuals and child protection is strictly confidential. Records should be kept secure and separate from other documents. Only staff members and the nominated committee member should be able to access these files.
- AMC Gardens has a policy of open recording. As such, the young person should be informed of information about them that is put on the Safeguarding file. The family of the young person should also be informed of information about them that is put on the file, except in circumstances when this places the child or others at risk.
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11) ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE INVOLVING MEMBERS OF STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS.

- Where a young person makes an allegation that an employee/volunteer, sessional worker or committee member from within the organisation has perpetrated the abuse, these concerns should be shared immediately with the nominated management committee member and/or the LSW both to protect the child and the staff member/volunteers.
- The young person who makes the allegations should be told that this is a serious matter and that their safety will be paramount. They should also be told that they will be kept informed as to what is happening.
- The nominated management committee member/LSP worker will decide the next steps according to the Nottingham City and County allegation management process (see next page)
- The SPP worker and/ or committee member will make the referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and seek advice from them on further action.
- Where the allegations or concerns are with regard to another professional who is not an employee of AMC gardens, they should be shared with the LSW who will refer it to The Local Authority Designated Officer (Social Services) for advice.
- The safety and well being of the child will be paramount and the LSW committee member will ensure that the person against whom the allegation is made does not have contact with the child/young person or any other child/young person until the matter is resolved. If appropriate AMC Gardens disciplinary procedures will come into play.

For further guidance see Appendix 6

APPENDIX 7 –Safeguarding Child Abuse Report Form

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens

Name of staff/volunteer member

Date and Time of Incident/Disclosure

Place/event where Incident/Disclosure occurred

Incident/Disclosure/Injuries giving rise to concern (using person's words where possible):

Any action taken by Staff Member:

Name and address (if known) of safeguarded child

Date of birth of safeguarded child (if known)

Name and address of alleged abuser (if known)

Date and time of alleged abuse (if known)

Any other relevant information:

Signed _____

Date _____

Safeguarding Policy

Lead Safeguarding Officer- Sally Rootham
Deputy Safeguarding Officer -Rachael Hemmings
Local Authority Designated Officer - Karen Shead 01158764762 or 01158764747

If any of the safeguarding officers from AMCGardens are absent, the senior member of staff on site will be responsible for any safeguarding issues during the opening hours.