Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens

Safeguarding Children Policy

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens,
Kirkby Gardens, Nottingham NG2 2HZ

0115 986 7777

https://www.amcgardens.co.uk/

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1) Introduction: Purpose and Aim

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens (AMCG) Safeguarding Children Policy exists to protect children, to keep the organisation within the law (statutory requirements) and to safeguard adults against accusations.

This policy aims to promote safe practice. It aims to give clear direction to trustees, staff and volunteers regarding their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and to ensure that all concerns about care and safeguarding are taken seriously and effectively managed. It also aims to reassure parents, carers and funders that all possible steps will be taken to protect children who come into contact with AMCG or partners involved in any aspect of AMCG's work.

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens acknowledges that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All staff, volunteers and management committee/trustees working on behalf of AMCG have a duty to promote the welfare of children and responsibility for implementing safeguarding procedures. AMCG will strive to create a safe and secure environment where service users, volunteers and staff can work together in mutual respect.

AMCG will ensure all staff, volunteers and trustees understand abuse or neglect, what might indicate this and what action to take if they have concerns.

As a charity, Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens follows guidance from the Charities Commission, following Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

Designated child safeguarding leads at AMC Gardens:

- **Claire Simpson DSL Level 3 (part time, events and activities co-ordinator)**
- **Hannah Baily (trustee)**
- **Steve Mcloughlin (part time, Kids Club)**
- **Renata Hallett (trustee)**

If any of the safeguarding officers from AMC Gardens are absent, then another member of staff on site will be responsible for any safeguarding issues during the opening hours.

Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership:
https://nscp.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/

2. Definitions:

Child:-

A child is defined as “a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday, ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’ throughout”. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).

In this policy the terms child and young person are used interchangeably.

Child Abuse:-

Types of abuse
We acknowledge that there are five types of child abuse as defined in ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (2023) which is also defined in the ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens understands that there are indicators of child abuse; however, these should not be considered as a definitive list, but used when considering the possibility of abuse in children.

See Appendix 1 for further information.

3. Designated Safeguarding leads:

Designated Safeguarding leads – due to the part time nature of the staff at AMC Gardens, there needs to be 4 designated safeguarding leads (see below) in order to be able to act on any issues that might arise.

The Designated Safeguarding Leads will work together, having overall responsibility for minimising the risk of child abuse in the organisation and its operations. They will:

- Ensure appropriate vetting procedures are in place during recruitment and selection of paid/unpaid workers and volunteers.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers and trustees are aware of safeguarding issues as appropriate
- Organising training for staff, volunteers and trustees on safeguarding issues as appropriate
- Act as an advice point when available, for referrals of alleged child abuse to Social Services
- Ensure that staff maintain Child Protection Files and that contact telephone numbers are up to date.
- Keep 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.

Designated child safeguarding officers at AMC Gardens:

- **Claire Simpson (part time, events and activities co-ordinator)**
- **Hannah Baily (trustee)**
- **Steve Mcloughlin (part time, Kids Club)**
- **Renata Hallett (trustee)**

If any of the safeguarding officers from AMC Gardens are absent, then another member of staff on site will be responsible for any safeguarding issues during the opening hours. Bob Diamond, chair of trustees can also be contacted.

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4. AMC Gardens Safeguarding Guidance

All activities involving children and vulnerable adults should be undertaken with clear, informed consideration given to risk assessments and risk management as a routine aspect of our work.

Staff, trustees and volunteers should be clear about their responsibilities and know how to respond appropriately, supported by good practice in recruitment and procurement.

We expect trustees, staff, volunteers to have read, understood and adhere to this policy, related policies, and procedures.

Staff and trustees receive regular safeguarding briefings. New members of staff or Trustees will receive the Safeguarding Briefing and Introduction to Safeguarding Children Training Course, NSPCC online.

Volunteers will receive a safeguarding briefing prior to starting any programme of Activity with children and will be expected to respect the code of conduct at all times.

Staff, trustees and volunteers working with children should be aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse.

Staff, trustees and volunteers working with children should know what actions to take when they have concerns about a child, where to report concerns and who the designated safeguarding leads are.

Staff carry out risk assessments for specific events and activities using the AMC Gardens form.

Staff, trustees and volunteers working with children adhere to AMC Gardens values of keeping children safe from harm.

See also Appendix 4

5. The process of recording and reporting suspecting safeguarding issues:

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to the police immediately by calling 999.

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. (trustees). 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 then 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.

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.

- Staff 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 care without delay. If after discussion with a staff member and/or trustee, 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 – AMCG 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 care, 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.

Links and contact details:

https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/children-and-families/safeguarding/

Nottingham Multi Agency Safeguarding (Children) Hub (City MASH) (child social care, formally referred to as social services). 0115 876 4800

In Nottingham - for children needing Safeguarding/Protection please make the referral by telephoning the MASH on 0115 876 4800, you will be required to send in a completed MARF after the call.

NSPCC Free Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

2) 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, 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.

3) 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.

Recording Procedure:

- Staff should record details about the incident being disclosed as soon as possible, preferably on the **safeguarding concern report form** (an example can be found in Appendix 2). All notes must be signed and dated.

- In addition to any notes made above a safeguarding concern report 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 designated safeguarding lead. This must be immediately followed up in writing.

- When making a referral, the person making the referral 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. Only designated safeguarding leads 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.

Allegations of abuse involving members of staff or volunteers:

•Where a young person makes an allegation that an employee / volunteer, sessional worker or trustee has perpetrated the abuse, these concerns should be shared immediately with the designated safeguarding leads, 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.

•AMC Gardens designated safeguarding leads will decide the next steps according to the Nottingham City Council allegation management process and seek advice from Nottingham Local Authority Designated Officer LADO https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/lado **link for LADO referral form**.

•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 AMC Gardens designated safeguarding leads who will refer it to The Local Authority Designated Officer (Social Services) for advice (see above).

If the allegations or concerns are about one of the safeguarding leads then the concern needs to be passed onto Bob Diamond, chair of trustees.

• The safety and well being of the child will be paramount and AMC Gardens designated safeguarding leads 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.

6. DBS checks - Disclosure and Barring Service checks

AMC Gardens will ensure that:

- All staff have an enhanced DBS which is updated at least every three years
- All volunteers working with Kids Club and in any other capacity that brings them into close contact with children at the Community Gardens will have an enhanced DBS check which is updated at least every three years.
- All trustees to have a DBS check, to be updated every three years.

7. Recruitment and induction of staff and volunteers:

. In order to minimise the risks of child abuse, proper vetting procedures should be in place. All paid staff, Trustees, sessional workers (for Kids Club etc) 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 annually.

• The Designated Safeguarding Leads will ensure that all staff, committee members, sessional workers and volunteers are aware of the AMC Gardens' Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

Appendix 1

Types of abuse

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

"Abuse - A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children."

AMC Gardens acknowledge that there are five types of child abuse as defined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2023) which is also defined in the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Physical abuse
Neglect
Sexual abuse
Emotional abuse
Domestic abuse

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens understands that there are indicators of child abuse; however, these should not be considered as a definitive list, but used when considering the possibility of abuse in children.

"Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

unexplained changes in behaviour or personality
becoming withdrawn
seeming anxious
becoming uncharacteristically aggressive
lacks social skills and has few friends, if any
poor bond or relationship with a parent
knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age
running away or going missing
always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.
These signs don't necessarily mean that a child is being abused, there could be other things happening in their life which are affecting their behaviour – but we can help you to assess the situation.

You may also notice some concerning behaviour from adults who you know have children in their care, which makes you concerned for the child/children's safety and wellbeing."

NSPCC

Futher information can be sought at the following:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2

https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect

https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-abuse-and-neglect/recognising-and-responding-to-abuse/

https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/definitions-signs-child-abuse/

APPENDIX 2 – safeguarding concern report form

Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens

Name of staff/volunteer member completing form:

Date and time form is being completed:

Name of child and address if know:

Young person date of birth (if known):

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:

Follow up action required:

Any other relevant information:

Signed _____

Date:

Appendix 3.
Planning work and working with children

(the context at Arkwright Meadows Community Gardens)

AMCG is open to the public 5 days a week, approximately 4 to 6 hours a day; during this time children can visit the gardens, mostly accompanied by parents / carers but sometimes unaccompanied. This can include for:

- **Dropping in at any point during our opening hours**. Mostly children are accompanied by family, but not always. In school holidays and at weekends or after school we sometimes get children dropping in – similar to the way they might drop in at a park or pop into a shop, this might be to use the table tennis tables or to have a walk around the gardens. AMCG does not actively encourage or advertise that children can attend the gardens unaccompanied, but we recognise that there is a grey area around the ages that children can be out of the home unaccompanied and that this is something we need to be aware of at the gardens as a space open to the public.

- **Kids Club, our after school sessions**, which take place weekly for children aged 5-13. Children are left at the gardens with the Kids Club staff / volunteers for the duration of the session (at present this is 3.30 – 5pm). Occasionally Kids Club staff also take the group on off site visits.

- **Saturday Family sessions,** these run every week at the gardens and are for families to drop in; children must be accompanied during these sessions by a parent / carer.

- **School holiday sessions,** mostly these are run as one-off activities where parents / carers attend with children.

- **Community events at the gardens**, these happen approximately 5 times a year, such as our Light Night event or our Summer Event. These events are open to the public and anyone can drop in during the event; mostly children are accompanied, but occasionally we find children will drop in unaccompanied.

- **School visits**, we have several visits from schools during the year, children will be accompanied by staff and volunteers from the school. Usually they will be either self led visits or they will be shown around the site by a member of the AMCG staff.

- **Visits to the gardens from residential care homes and respite care homes**, with staff from those settings. Sometimes these are booked in but often they are drop in visits, especially as we have a couple of residential settings nearby.

- **Off site community events and workshops in the community**. AMCG occasionally runs activities and stalls at off site events such as the Nottingham

Green Festival, we also run a few community planting workshops in the local area where members of the community can drop in.

- **Placements such as Duke of Edinburgh award pupils and work experience**. These happen throughout the year and can be temporary placements ranging from 3 days to 16 x 1 hour sessions over multiple months, which might be accompanied by an adult but often will be unaccompanied.

- **Room bookings and site hire** – which might happen during our usual opening hours when other people are also on site, or they might happen outside of our usual opening hours. We have booking forms for all room and site bookings.

- **Groups who use the gardens** who have children with them – this can include groups who have an arrangement with us to use the gardens when we are not open to the public – where either a trustee or a member of staff will usually be present. It might include families coming on site to use the tandoor oven or groups such as Care For Calais; again booking forms are completed.

- **Parties / social gatherings** – these don't happen very often and at present we do not normally hire out the gardens for parties and social gatherings; but very occasionally then a member of staff, a trustee or close friend of the gardens might use the site for a small gathering and this might include children being present. Booking forms are filled in for all of these events too.

Appendix 4.
Code of conduct

AMCG recognises that community gardens are, by nature, friendly and relaxed places, but that a friendly, relaxed atmosphere must also guarantee a safe environment for children.

The code of conduct has been developed for the protection of both service users and Staff members /Volunteers. To this end AMCG expects all staff members / volunteers to abide by this code of conduct. AMCG staff have a full contract in place and an employees handbook which sets out details around conduct, duty of care, whistleblowing, equal opportunities, supervision, confidentiality and more. The points below are a summary which staff and volunteers working with children should adhere to.

Staff, trustees and volunteers should:

- Minimise the chances of spending time alone with children and where required tell other workers that you are doing so in advance.
- Where close contact is required (e.g. learning to use tools safely), ensure that it takes place in a group, so that all involved are in an appropriate situation.
- Language should always be appropriate to the age and nature of the people you are working with. Avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- AMCG is a no smoking site (including no e-cigarettes), staff, trustees and volunteers must abide by this.
- Dress should be suitable for the duties and responsibilities being carried out, including the wearing of appropriate safety clothing and equipment, in accordance with all Health and Safety regulations.
- Abide by the gardens GDPR policy, including use of photographs as well as contact information.
- Care, caution, safety and respecting the code of conduct must be adhered to with all use of social media.
- Abide by all site and activity risk assessment so that the Community Gardens remains a safe environment (e.g. ensure tools are put away, gates closed as needed etc).
- Alcohol should not be consumed at the gardens during working hours.
- Lifts in cars should not be offered to children unless under extreme circumstances and then only with the agreement of at least one other Children's safeguard lead.

Appendix 5.
Risk assessments

AMCG should ensure that risk assessments are in place for:

- The gardens site and general site maintenance
- All community events and workshops
- Kids Club – for the regular sessions and also for any specific activities and for off site visits, this includes information about ratios and numbers of staff etc.
- Saturday family Sessions
- Any work placements / D of E placements

The AMC Gardens risk assessment pro forma for risk assessments is on the office Z Drive

Appendix 6.
Further information and contact for support:

https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/children-and-families/safeguarding/

Nottingham Multi Agency Safeguarding (Children) Hub (City MASH)
0115 876 4800

NSPCC Free Helpline on 0808 800 5000.

https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/rk0hq4fx/what-to-do-if-you-are-worried-about-a-child-summary.pdf