

# Laburnum Boat Club

## Policy on Safeguarding Children & Young People



**September 2020**

## **Policy on Safeguarding Young People and Children**

### **Introduction and recommendations**

This policy was drawn up with close reference to the document “ Safe from Harm”, which was prepared by the Home Office (1993) as a code of practice for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people (up to the age of 16) in voluntary organisations in England and Wales.

It supports and reinforces “The Children Act (1989)”. It is applicable to all workers, staff, volunteers and service providers.

It is designed to encourage the development of good practice in Laburnum Boat Club, to prevent the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of children and young people whilst they are in the care of Laburnum Boat Club and to protect those who work with children and young people from unfounded accusations or from behaving in ways which may be well-intended but inadvisable.

The policy consists of:-

- A. Policy Statement
- B. Procedures
- C. Guidelines for the Implementation of the Procedures

#### **A. Policy Statement**

Laburnum Boat Club seeks to serve the needs of children and young people, promoting a sense of wholeness of life. In doing so we take seriously the welfare of all children and young people who access our services and activities with a view of preventing physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people and to this end recognises its responsibility to implement, maintain and review the following procedures.

We continuously remind staff, volunteers and service providers that there are positive ways of protecting children and young people. Children need:-

- to feel safe and secure
- health and happiness
- appropriate affection
- lots of smiles
- praise and encouragement
- to be able to talk to someone
- to be listened to
- new experiences
- respect for their feelings
- rewards and treats

#### **B. Procedures**

- To plan the work of the Laburnum Boat Club so as to minimise situations where the abuse of young people or children may occur.
- To introduce a system whereby children and young people may talk to an independent person or where applicable, refer children and young people to specialist agencies.
- To give all staff and volunteers clear roles
- Safeguarding is a standard item on all team meeting agendas, weekly and daily during the holiday projects.
- To give supervision as a means of protecting children
- To ask all workers to complete an application form
- To explore applicants experience of working or having contact with children and young people before appointment

- To confirm with other groups/organisations, who work with children and young people and who wish to work with Laburnum Boat Club that they undertake to follow the Home Office code of practice "Safe from Harm"
- To implement and issue guidelines to all workers on how to deal with abuse and to give training on the use of the same. These guidelines and training to include the following:-
  - A reminder of the worker's duty, both to prevent abuse and to report any abuse discovered or suspected
  - Guidance on what constitutes abuse and how to recognise it
  - Specific instructions on who to inform if abuse is disclosed or discovered
  - Where identified, the name, address and contact telephone number of the Contact Person (see procedure 2) in case it should be suspected that the abuser is someone holding a position of responsibility within Laburnum Boat Club
  - Some indication of what might happen if the abuse is reported
  - Guidance on how to support the abused child or young person

### **Definitions and examples of the different types of abuse**

The following may help you decide whether a child's welfare is at risk of abuse, harm or neglect

**Physical:** where children and young people receive physical harm or injury. This includes unexplained or hidden injuries or those which have received no medical attention.

Signs that may suggest physical abuse

- multiple bruising to different parts of the body
- bruising of different colours indicating repeated injuries
- fingertip bruising to the chest, back, arms or legs
- burn of any shape or size
- unwillingness to uncover eg don't want to wear shorts, t shirt, change in changing room
- an injury for which there is no adequate explanation

**Neglect:** Can take many forms; inadequate or erratic physical care, emotional neglect, abandonment, lack of boundaries and guidance, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, denial of medical care or treatment.

Signs that may suggest neglect

- squalid, unhygienic or dangerous home conditions
- parents who fail to attend to their children's health or development needs
- children who appear persistently undersized or overweight
- children who continually appear tired or lacking in energy
- always hungry, cold
- children who suffer frequent injuries due to lack of supervision

**Sexual:** where adults seek sexual gratification by using children and young people. This includes allegations made by the child or young person, pre-occupation with sexual matters, sexual activity through words, play or drawings, severe sleep disturbances with fears and phobias, being sexually provocative with adults.

Signs of possible sexual abuse

- something a child has told you
- something a child has told someone else
- a child who shows worrying sexualised behaviour in their play or with other children
- a child who seems to have inappropriate sexual knowledge for their age
- a child who may be visiting or being looked after by a known or suspected sexual offender

**Emotional:** where children and young people are harmed by a constant lack of love and affection, or threats and taunting. This includes regression in behaviour, nervousness, sudden under-achievement, inappropriate relationships with peers/adults, attention-seeking, running away/stealing/lying, looking uncared for.

Signs which may suggest emotional harm

- Children whose behaviour is excessive. For example excessive bedwetting, overeating, rocking or head banging
- Children who self harm. For example, they may cut or scratch themselves or overdose
- Children who attempt suicide
- Children who persistently run away from home
- Children who show high levels of anxiety, unhappiness or withdrawal
- Children who usually seek out or avoid affection

**N.B.** Physical abuse and neglect are difficult to hide. Sexual abuse can be almost impossible to identify and prove. Many symptoms of distress can point to abuse but there may be other explanations. It is important, therefore, that the above signs are not taken as indications that abuse has taken place. They should make us stop and think, but not necessarily jump to conclusions.

### **Recording of disclosure/concerns**

If note taking is inappropriate, or not possible at the time, the member of staff involved should immediately afterwards make a written note of any key points, Using the "Confidential Disclosure Form" (found in master file in office) and using the child's own words and phrases, if possible. These notes must be kept as originals, timed, dated and signed, as they could well be used as evidence in court. As soon as possible the member of staff must seek out the Designated Person or deputy. If those persons are unavailable, the information should be forwarded to the Coordinator of Laburnum Boat Club.

Disclosure information from a child or young person should not be discussed with any member of staff, other than the Designated Persons or Coordinator of Laburnum Boat Club.

Following consideration the Designated Person may decide to make a referral to Children's Social Care.

### **Physical Evidence**

If any physical injuries or bruising are noticed it is appropriate, as a caring adult, to ask the child how they sustained the bruise, graze, scratch, bite or other mark on their body. All such marks or injuries howsoever caused, must be recorded on a "Body Map Record" and handed to the Designated Person with the child's explanation attached. You must not examine a child beneath their clothing, ask any leading questions or conduct any further investigations.

### **Designated Person for Child Protection**

The designated officer for Safeguarding at Laburnum Boat Club is **Dominic Hinshelwood**. The designated Deputy is **Beth Ettinger**. In the absence of the designated persons, the Coordinator will adopt the role as the designated senior member of staff.

The role of the Designated Person is to:-

- Ensure that child protection procedures are in place and updates as appropriate;
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and service providers are aware of both the London Safeguarding Children Board's Child Protection Procedures and Laburnum Boat Club's Policy;

- Be available to provide advice/support to staff, volunteers and service providers for confidential discussions about concerns;
- Be available to provide support to the children and young people who access our service;
- Liaise with Children's Social Care in accordance with London Safeguarding Children Board's Child Protection Procedures;
- Keep records of any concerns/suspected cases of abuse/referrals
- Review arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people on an annual basis, and support the implementation of any action plan arising from this review.

### **Making a Referral**

If you are unsure that a child may be suffering but are worried, or if you are concerned that a child has suffered harm, neglect or abuse you should inform the designated child protection officer. The current designated child protection officer for Laburnum Boat Club is:-

**Name:** Dominic Hinshelwood

**Role:** Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**Contact Tel No:** 020 7729 2915

When the Designated Person has been informed of a case of suspected abuse or of a young person who may be at risk of abuse they will make a referral to Children's Social Care. If it is unclear that the matter being referred is a safeguarding concern, the Designated Person will consult with the Local Authority using the FAST (First Access and Screening Team) from Children's Social Care to determine if a formal referral should be made. A log of the discussion must be kept if a referral is not made and the person who made the concern known should be informed of the outcome.

Referrals to the relevant London Borough Children's Social Care should normally be made in writing but social care will accept telephone referrals on the understanding that the referral will be in writing within forty eight hours. All referrals should be made or confirmed using the appropriate pro-forma. All referrals to Children's Social Care should be screened/evaluated by that agency within 1 working day and a decision made regarding the next course of action. Where there is to be no further action, feedback should be provided to the Designated Person about the decision and the reason for making it in writing within 48 hours.

**If you suspect abuse DO NOT DELAY**

**If a child or young person wants to talk about abuse:**

- Accept what the child or young person says, keeping calm and looking at them directly
- Let them know that you need to tell someone else, do not promise confidentiality
- Even when a child or young person has broken a rule they are not to blame.
- Be aware that the child or young person may have been threatened.
- Never push for information.
- Reassure the child or young person they were right to tell you and you believe them.
- Let the child or young person know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
- Make notes as soon as possible, writing down exactly what was said and when he/she said it. Record dates and times of these events and keep the hand-written record.

**C. Guidelines for the implementation of the procedures:-**

- Plan the work of Laburnum Boat Club so as to minimise situations where the abuse of children and young people may occur.

- Arrange that, as far as possible, a worker is not left alone with a child or young person where there is little or no opportunity of the activity being observed by others. This may mean groups working within the same large room or working in an adjoining room with the door left open. This good practice can be of as much benefit to the adult as to the child or young person.
- When meeting with a child or young person individually off site, workers will take reasonable measures to ensure the safety of the child or young person and themselves by informing relevant people where they are going and the time of their expected return.
- Where possible have two workers present with a group.
- If there is only one activity taking place at least two workers must be present.
- Never take a group off the premises with fewer than two adults.
- Think about the use of premises. For example, do not expect children or young people to have to walk along a dark, unsupervised path in order to take part in an activity being hosted by Laburnum Boat Club.
- Where children and young people have to be transported by car or minibus arrange, as far as possible, to have more than one adult in the vehicle.
- When helping a young person to get changed, the member of staff should, if possible, do so in a communal changing room with another member of staff present. If an individual cubicle is the option, then the staff member should inform another member of staff and NOT lock the door.

### **Give all committee members, staff, volunteers and service providers clear roles.**

Abuse of children and young people is most easily concealed where there is confusion amongst adults about roles and responsibilities. Laburnum Boat Club's committee members, staff, volunteers and service providers should have a job description, which include their responsibilities for the protection of children and young people.

Volunteers and service providers should also have a clear idea of what is expected of them, as outlined in the Volunteer Contract accompanied by induction and training.

### **Use supervision as a means of protecting children and young people.**

Regular opportunities should be made for workers to meet together to review and plan their work, to share their experiences, to receive training and to talk about their relationships with the children and young people. Special attention should be paid to any situation in which a child or young person is being either highly favoured or harshly treated as these could be signs of abuse.

When possible, leaders of groups should take opportunities to observe those for whom they are responsible as they work with children and young people.

### **Service Providers**

All service providers must provide details of referees along with a copy of their DBS Certificate. References will be sought in writing for all service providers. It will be made clear that the person will be working with children and young people and that their views on their suitability for this work will be taken into consideration. If replies are vague or ambiguous it may be necessary for them to be followed up in person or by telephone.

### **All workers must complete an application form.**

All staff and volunteers need to fully complete an application form and provide details of referees.

References will be sought, in writing, for all workers. It will be made clear that the person will be working with children and young people and that their views on their suitability for this work will be taken into consideration. If replies are vague or ambiguous it may be necessary for them to be followed up in person or by telephone.

All convictions which involve children and young people are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. This means that all convictions which relate to children and young people, however old, must be declared. Information about other criminal convictions must also be given, as these may be relevant to the suitability of the person.

A determined, convicted abuser may well tell a lie. It is for this reason that a reference should be obtained. If the volunteer has moved frequently from one (voluntary) job/organisation to another it would be advisable to find out why.

### **Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Requirements**

Enhanced DBS checks should always be carried out on all who work with children or young people. Due to the fact that sometimes DBS checks take a long time to be processed, while the check is moving through the system the person will be allowed to work with Laburnum Boat Club but will never be left in an unsupervised situation, with no co-worker.

### **Explore applicant's experience of working or having contact with children and young people before appointment.**

More time talking with a worker before appointment will give the opportunity to find out about the candidate's contacts with children and young people. These may be through previous work within or with Laburnum Boat Club, through family contacts, through work with a voluntary organisation or in other ways. If there is any doubt about the suitability of the staff, volunteer or service provider, this should be explored further through searching questions.

Confirm with other external groups/organisations, who work with children and young people and who wish to work with Laburnum Boat Club that they undertake to follow the Home Office code of practice "Safe from Harm".

It is recommended that should Laburnum Boat Club acquire their own premises in the future and are contemplating hiring out the premises to other groups/organisations whose work involves children and young people that the following clause be added to licenses: "The Licensee confirms that he/she is familiar with the Home Office code of practice "Safe from Harm", has an understanding of it and undertakes to follow the code of practice contained therein in relation to work with children and young people under the age of 16 years".

### **Duty to Refer**

Wherever possible, staff will deal with incidents and disclosures within Laburnum Boat Club by reporting it to the Designated Officer (Dominic Hinshelwood). In his absence, the deputy designated officer (Beth Ettinger) of Laburnum Boat Club should be informed. In the absence of both the Designated Officer and the Deputy, staff should refer the matter to the Coordinator (Jim Armstrong) and/or Committee Member **Rohney Saggat**. When an incident is more serious a referral or reporting of the information will take place. Such agencies could be Children's Social Care, Childline, NSPCC, CCPAS or the Police Child Protection Unit.

If staff, volunteers or service providers are uncomfortable reporting incidents to the designated person, they can contact an independent whistleblowing company, Safecall. They can be contacted on 0800 915 1571 or online on [www.safecall.co.uk/report](http://www.safecall.co.uk/report) where an anonymous report can be made detailing any concerns raised.

Consult with the designated child protection officer (Dominic Hinshelwood) for Laburnum Boat Club or Deputy (Beth Ettinger) or Rohney Saggat, Committee Member, in his absence.

### **Issues of confidentiality**

If a child or young person requests confidentiality they must be told that this cannot be promised and it should be explained that staff have a responsibility to share information with those adults who will be able to help protect them from harm. The child or young person should be reassured

that only staff who need to know about it will be told. This could result in the young person not continuing the conversation, in which case your enquiries should not be pursued but concerns recorded in writing and handed to the Designated Person.

Staff should take care not to discuss information given in confidence outside the appropriate professional contexts. All documentation regarding the disclosure should be treated and marked as **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL** and should only be shared with others on a need to know basis.

If another organisation requests information on a young person then we need to ensure that this is dealt with correctly and in confidence. Request of this kind should be handled by the designated safeguarding lead or, in their absence, the deputy or the club coordinator. Ideally this should be a written request on official stationery with clarification on how long it will be held and how/when it will be destroyed. If there is a need for expediency then this could be done electronically, but the lead needs to be absolutely certain that the information is going to those that need it, and it will be treated as if it were Laburnum's.

### **Working with Parents and Carers**

The Designated Persons and other professionals should aim to work in partnership with parents and carers by attempting to discuss any concerns they have with them where possible. Permission should be sought by the Designated Person from the person holding the parental responsibility for the child before discussing a referral about them with other agencies, unless this process may in itself place a child at risk of significant harm or prejudice a criminal investigation, Social Care advice may be sought on the issue, as appropriate.

### **Regulating and Vetting Visitors**

All visitors, parents/carers to any premises at which Laburnum Boat Club are holding activities for children and young people will be required to wait outside, or in the company of another staff member. They will not be permitted to enter any rooms or parts of the building in which the children or young people are taking part in activities, without a staff member. Should they need to speak to or see their own child or young person, that child or young person will be escorted to and from them.

Arrangements for visiting children or young people whilst taking part in activities being organised by Laburnum Boat Club can be agreed in advance by the Coordinator or a committee member or senior member of staff in her absence, where appropriate.

All staff, volunteers and service providers are responsible for ensuring that visitors are carefully monitored, in a manner appropriate to the individual circumstances. **Under no circumstances, should any visitor ever have unsupervised access to children.** Staff are expected to challenge anyone on site if they are unsure of their identity.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

Laburnum Boat Club has and follows an anti-bullying policy, with which children and staff are familiar. Children who are bullied are supported, and those who may bully others are also subject to a risk assessment. Laburnum Boat Club recognises the fact that bullying is a form of abuse most children fear and will not be accepted. The Designated Person, Deputy and Coordinator will review records of bullying incidents at least once a month in order to take action where feasible to reduce or counteract the risk of bullying.

### **Use of Mobile Phones and other Multi-Media Devices**

Given the potential for misuse, Laburnum Boat Club provides comprehensive guidance for staff, volunteers, service providers and children and young people on the use of mobile phones, laptops and other multi-media devices. Young people, for example, are encouraged to hand mobile phones, with image capability (i.e. camera or video facilities) or internet access, to canteen staff

for safe keeping and staff are not permitted to use personal mobile phones or other multi media devices, to record or store images of any children or young people taking part in activities organised by Laburnum Boat Club at any time.

### **Internet use and email policy**

Laburnum Boat Club has a written policy on the acceptable use of its internet and email facilities (E Safety Policy), made clear to staff, volunteers, service providers, parents and referring authorities. All staff are aware of, and follow in practice, the policy to protect staff and young people from harm via the World Wide Web.

### **Children and young people may wish to talk with an independent person**

Arrange for a person to be available for children and young people to talk to if they feel that they have been abused in any way. The person should be totally independent of the activities of the children and young people but should be someone to whom they could relate. It may be necessary or appropriate to ask someone from a different organisation, for example Childline or NSPCC to undertake this role. **PLEASE SPEAK TO LABURNUM BOAT CLUB'S CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER (DOMINIC HINSHELWOOD) FOR DETAILS.**

If this is done the appointed person must be given clear, written guidelines as to what action to take to stop any abuse disclosed by a child or young person, otherwise they may unwittingly permit the abuse to continue. It is strongly recommended that contacts should be by telephone rather than one-to-one.

### **Ways of letting the children and young people know that such a person is available for them to talk to**

Display the number of Childline or a similar organisation on a notice board which is regularly seen by children and young people.

Make sure that all adults working with children and young people know the name of a suitable person with whom they could put the child or young person in contact, or to whom they could turn to for help.

Consider the need also to provide opportunities for workers to talk to independent people about any difficulties or anxieties in relation to their work.

### **Concerns involving a member of staff**

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff, volunteer or service provider should be referred immediately to the Designated Person who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the relevant Borough Council, (to discuss and agree further action to be taken in respect of an allegation). Any child protection allegation concerning the Chair should be referred to the Vice Chair and vice versa. Full guidance is available to the Designated Person in "Concerns/Allegations Regarding People who Work With Children in London Safeguarding Children Board's Child Protection Procedures".

### **Support for staff subject to allegations**

The Designated Person will inform any member of staff who is subject to an allegation about that allegation as soon as possible but (s)he will have to follow directions from Children's Social Care and/or the police as to what can be shared and when.

It is recognised that any allegation of abuse will cause the member of staff anxiety and advice will be given as to possible avenues of support from, for example, the Citizen's Advice Bureau or their union, professional association or Committee Members.

Any member of staff subject to an allegation will be given a copy of the leaflet "A guide for staff and volunteers who work with children and are faced with an allegation of abuse".

## **Safe relating with our Children**

Staff, volunteers and service providers must be aware of the potential problems associated with making physical contact with children, especially with children of the opposite sex. Contact must always be appropriate to the relationship of professional carer with a client. Some children and young people may have been damaged by inappropriate contact and they may be very sensitive or unable to process contacts appropriately. Acceptable “safe hugs” can be beneficial to our children and should normally take place in the presence of another member of staff. As a staff team we should always be alert and ready to advise our colleagues, if anything might be seen as improper.

There may be times when it is appropriate for staff to spend one to one time with a child. Staff should always ensure that proper safeguards are in place for the protection of both themselves and the child e.g. making sure that other staff are aware and will check regularly that everything is okay, and keeping doors open. Regard should always be given to the potential additional problems of caring for children of the opposite sex. Advice should be taken from senior staff regarding what is acceptable or unacceptable risk-taking in this area.

## **Relationships between Peers**

Laburnum Boat Club needs to be concerned about the quality of relationships between girls and boys. Day to day management will depend upon the judgement of staff in changing circumstances. In managing such relationships we need to consider what a sensible parent would do.

- Children must be supervised. Staff will be deployed such that all areas of the club, where children have access, a staff member is present and aware.
- Holding hands, walking arm-in-arm and cuddling are exclusive, and should be discouraged.
- “Love bites” or any deliberate marking of young people, including tattoos, should be reported.
- Sexual intercourse or any other intrusive sexual activity is absolutely forbidden. It is child abuse for children under the age of 16 and should be reported as such. Staff need to take special care to supervise children who are thought to be sexually active.
- Should not act as messengers or letter carriers between couples. Nor should they write letters or cards on behalf of children in relationships.
- If children are unable to show a reasonable degree of self control in relationships then it may be necessary to take steps to ensure that contact is minimised.

## **Film Classifications and Computer Games**

When hiring or purchasing a film for children and young people or taking them to the cinema, staff should satisfy themselves that the classification of the film e.g. “U”, “PG”, “12A”, or “15” is appropriate for the age of the children and young people, even if only one young person is in the “wrong” category. This also applies to DVD’s brought in by young people.

## **The above conditions also apply to Computer Games**

## **Other useful information and telephone numbers**

### **Monitoring**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Designated Person and Management Committee, and monitored in accordance with best practice. Staff, volunteers, service providers and committee members will be asked to evaluate the effectiveness of the procedures whenever they have had occasion to put them into practice.

Child protection (Access and Assessment and Children in Need Services) involves taking steps to safeguard vulnerable children and young people at risk or suffering from physical, emotional or

sexual abuse. In Hackney, child protection work is done by the teams in the Access and Assessment Service and Children in Need Service. **Contact details:-**

- Children and Young People's Access and Assessment Social Work Service (0208 356 5500) Mon- Fri 9am - 5pm. Emergency out of Hours Team (0208 356 2710). Email FAST@hackney.gov.uk
- LADO: 0208 356 4659 Email [lado@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:lado@hackney.gov.uk)

**Childline: 0800 1111** [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**NSPCC: 0808 800 5000** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

**Victim Support Helpline** 0845 30 30 90 [www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

**City & Hackney Safeguarding Children's Board: 0208 356 4183** [www.chscb.org.uk](http://www.chscb.org.uk)

### **The City and Hackney Children's Safeguarding Board (CHSCB)**

Everyone is responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Sharing information and practice across agencies helps protect children. The CHSCB is the designated multi-agency group with the authority to carry out this responsibility.

It works by:-

- leading collaboration across the agencies
- developing and setting policies and procedures
- monitoring and auditing their implementation
- providing training
- promoting awareness in the wider community

They meet regularly and throughout the year, and is made up of representatives from:-

- Social Services
- Education Services
- Health Services
- Probation Services
- Metropolitan Police
- Youth Offending Team
- Connexions
- Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service

### **Review:**

**Date:** Oct 2020

**By whom:** D Hinshelwood