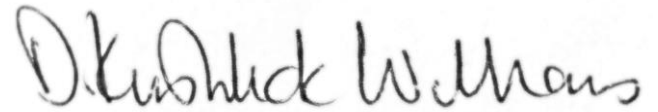


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Policy and Procedures for the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

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Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy Statement

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students, people on placement, or anyone working on behalf of Markfield. For the purpose of this policy all those listed above will be referred to as **'workers'**.

The purpose of this policy is to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Markfield's services (this includes the children of adults who use our services), and to provide workers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Markfield believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Adoption and Children Act 2002
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014

It is also based on relevant government guidance on safeguarding children including:

- The London Child Protection Procedures 2015
- The London Threshold Document 2015
- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers 2015
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners 2015
- Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. We will update our policy and practice if the law changes, and will use guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Roles and responsibilities

Markfield always has one worker who is called the Safeguarding Officer. This person has relevant training and experience about keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe. Anyone can talk to the Safeguarding Officer for advice and guidance.

Safeguarding Officer is: Sami Howard
Her phone number is 020 8800 4134 ext 5235
or via the on call number in the case of immediate safeguarding concerns
07919 812 011

Markfield works closely with service users, carers and other local organisations to stop people being abused and harmed. The Safeguarding Officer will decide when we need to ask for help or advice to keep someone safe. The Safeguarding Officer and Director will also decide if we need to tell anyone else that someone has been harmed.

At Markfield we recognise that:

- Abuse can happen to anyone
- Abuse can happen anywhere
- Abuse can be done by anyone

This is why everyone at Markfield must understand:

- What abuse is
- Ways to tell if abuse might be happening
- How to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe
- What to do if you think someone is being abused or harmed.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

At Markfield the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989. We recognise that:

- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Developing and implementing an effective 'e-safety' policy (for promoting safety when using the internet) and related procedures (this is still to be developed)
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers
- Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

Definitions & Key Principles

Our Safeguarding policy and procedures aim to meet the following two key principles:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each individual and organisation should play their full part
- A child centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

Working together to safeguard children 2015

What we mean by 'safeguarding'

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

What we mean by '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. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

What we mean by 'significant harm'

For England and Wales, harm is defined under section 31 of the Children Act 1989 as:

"ill treatment or the impairment of health or development". To decide whether harm is significant, the health and development of the child is "compared with that which could **reasonably be expected of a similar child**".

This was also extended in the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to include:

“impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another”

What we mean by 'child'

The legislation relating to safeguarding children defines a child as anyone under the age of 18.

Why disabled children may be more vulnerable to abuse

Research suggests that disabled children are at an increased risk of abuse and may be more vulnerable to significant harm through abuse and / or neglect than children that do not have a disability (London Child Protection Procedures 2015).

Disabled children may be especially vulnerable for a number of reasons:

- Many disabled children have an increased likelihood of being socially isolated
- Some children have speech, language and communication needs which may make it harder for other people to understand their wishes and feelings and/or may make it difficult for them to tell others what is happening
- Some children may have many different carers and agencies in their life
- Some children need practical assistance with daily living including intimate personal care which increases their risk of exposure to abusive behaviour
- Some children have an impaired capacity to resist or avoid abuse; this may be because they have not learned how to keep themselves safe or are physically unable to get away from harmful situations
- Some children need help to move around and this might be done in a harmful way
- Some children need medication, therapy programmes, health procedures or equipment, and this might be done in a harmful way
- Children may not have access to someone they can trust to disclose they have been abused
- Disabled children are especially vulnerable to bullying and intimidation.

Signs of abuse

People don't always tell you they have been abused or harmed. There are many other signs of abuse. Markfield workers should be aware of these. Although they do not always mean that abuse has happened, these signs must not be ignored. Always talk about them with the relevant session leader, a manager, or the Safeguarding Officer named at the start of this policy.

Some of the following signs might be indicators of abuse or neglect:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty
- Children with consistently poor hygiene
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid particular people
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or who are regularly missing school
- Children who often appear to be tired and hungry
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers
- Children who reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason
- Children who are regularly missing from school or education
- Children who are reluctant to go home
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why
- Children who talk about running away
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, a guide for practitioners 2015

Types of abuse

The essential responsibility of Markfield workers is to be alert and to share information or concerns with the right people. At Markfield it is not our role to determine whether abuse is taking, or has taken, place and it is not our role to categorise a type of abuse. It can be useful to understand the main categories of abuse (outlined below) and to understand that more than one type of abuse may happen at once.

Emotional abuse

When someone is being harmed, some level of emotional abuse is usually involved, but emotional abuse can happen on its own. Emotional abuse can include lots of things. It could be:

- Making someone feel worthless, unloved, or not good enough
- Not giving someone opportunities to express their views
- Making them feel very frightened or insecure
- Teasing, shouting at, or threatening someone
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- Stopping someone from making choices and never letting them take risks and try new things
- Keeping them away from their friends, family and support networks
- Ignoring their privacy and dignity
- Expectations that are inappropriate for the child's age or developmental stage
- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing someone to feel constantly frightened or in danger
- Exploitation or corruption
- Seeing or hearing ill treatment of another.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong
- Parents or carers who withdraw their attention from their child, and persistently ignore them
- Parents or carers blaming their problems on their child
- Parents or carers who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

Neglect

This is the **persistent failure** to meet a child's **basic physical and/or emotional needs**, likely to result in the **serious impairment** of the child's **health or development**. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- Neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children who are living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe
- Children who are left hungry or dirty
- Children who are left without adequate clothing, e.g. not having a winter coat
- Children who are living in dangerous conditions, i.e. around drugs, alcohol or violence
- Children who are often angry, aggressive or self-harm
- Children who fail to receive basic health care
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.

Physical abuse

This is when someone causes physical harm to a child. This could be:

- Hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, scalding, kicking, drowning or suffocating someone
- Making someone ill, or pretending they are ill, or using medication in the wrong way, on purpose
- Using physical restraint in the wrong way or force feeding someone.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Children with frequent injuries
- Children with unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones
- Children with unexplained bruises or cuts, burns or scalds, or bite marks.

Sexual abuse

With children under 16, this involves forcing or encouraging them to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This could be:

- Penetrative acts such as rape or oral sex
- Non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging them to do sexual things they are too young to be involved in
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

With children over 16, sexual abuse can still happen. It could be:

- When someone is raped or sexually assaulted
- When someone is forced to do a sexual act that they did not want to do
- When someone is encouraged to do a sexual act when they didn't understand it, and didn't know they could say no.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Children who display knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age
- Children who use sexual language or have sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have
- Children who ask others to behave sexually or play sexual games
- Children with physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or underage pregnancy.

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status. Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation doesn't always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care and education at some point.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss school or don't take part in education.

Other abuse

People have lots of different ideas about how best to care for people, and what will harm other people. Sometimes people do particular things because of their cultural or religious beliefs. Markfield is committed to anti-discriminatory practice. Workers handling protection concerns will always bear in mind the person's religious and cultural background but the welfare of the child will always be the most important consideration. For instance, some religious and culturally based practices are illegal in England and are abuse. This could be:

- Female circumcision or arranging for a girl to go to another country to be circumcised
- Forcing someone to marry even if they don't want to. Arranging for any child under age 16 to get married
- Ritualistic abuse which is when people believe someone is possessed by spirits or demons, and use physical violence to get rid of them.

The internet and mobile phones have become very much embedded in most people's lives and are very helpful everyday tools. However, they are also open to misuse and can be a tool to cause abuse. This could be:

- Adults pretending to be children using social networking sites, for the purpose of 'grooming' children and young people into meeting them
- Using mobile phones to take photographs of children and young people for the purpose of bullying or blackmail
- Sexual acts online, and the production, distribution or possession of indecent images of children
- Accessing pornographic material via the internet and mobile phones.
- Financial gain can be a feature of online child sexual abuse and it can involve serious organised crime. (*NSPCC 2015*)

Early Help

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life.

No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, **everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.**

As well as 'universal services' which are services accessible to all families such as education, health, community and leisure, each local area should have specific early help services which may include family and parenting programmes, assistance with health issues and help for problems relating to drugs, alcohol and domestic violence. Some services may be delivered to parents/carers but should always be evaluated to demonstrate the impact they are having on the outcomes for the child.

Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (eg education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment such as the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). This should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

Statutory Assessments under the Children Act 1989

Child in Need

A child in need is defined as a child who is unlikely to achieve or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development, or their health and development will be significantly impaired, without the provision of services; or a child who is disabled. In these cases, assessments by a social worker are carried out under **section 17** of the Children Act 1989. When assessing children's need and providing services, specialist assessments may be required and, where possible, should be coordinated so that the child and family experience a coherent process and a single plan of action.

Child Protection

Concerns about maltreatment may be the reason for a referral to local authority children's social care or concerns may arise during the course of providing services to the child and family. In these circumstances, local authority children's social care must initiate enquiries to find out what is happening to the child and whether protective action is required. Local authorities, with the help of other organisations as appropriate, also have a duty to make enquiries under **section 47** of the Children Act 1989 if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare. There may be a need for immediate protection whilst the assessment is carried out.

Information sharing

Early sharing of information is key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems and can be essential to put in place effective child protection services. Serious Case Reviews have shown how poor information sharing has contributed to deaths or serious injuries of children.

Working together to safeguard children 2015

All Markfield staff, volunteers and people on placement must:

- Not assume that someone else will pass on information that you think is important to keeping a child safe
- Understand and follow Markfield's Safeguarding Procedures.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Definitions and Key Principles

What we mean by 'adult'

An adult is a person who is 18 years old or over.

What we mean by 'vulnerable adult'

Markfield's safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

Within this policy such adults are referred to as 'vulnerable adults'.

Where someone is aged 18 or over but is still receiving children's services and a safeguarding issue is raised, the matter should be dealt with through adult safeguarding arrangements.

What we mean by 'safeguarding'

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned
- raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect

Six key principles underpin all adult safeguarding work

Empowerment – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

“I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens.”

Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

“I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help.”

Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

“I am sure that the professionals will work in my interest, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed.”

Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.

“I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want.”

Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities.

Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. *“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me.”*

Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding. *“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they.”*

Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014

Types of abuse

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but an illustrative guide as to the sort of behaviour which could give rise to a safeguarding concern.

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, so called ‘honour’ based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Incidents of abuse may be one-off or multiple, and affect one person or more. Professionals and others should look beyond single incidents or individuals to identify patterns of harm. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and of what we now describe as organisational abuse. In order to see these patterns it is important that information is recorded and appropriately shared.

Everyone is responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults.

All staff working with vulnerable adults must:

- know about different types of abuse and neglect and their signs
- support adults to keep safe
- know who to tell about suspected abuse or neglect
- support adults to think and weigh up the risks and benefits of different options when exercising choice and control.

Information sharing

Early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response where there are emerging concerns.

No professional should assume that someone else will pass on information which they think may be critical to the safety and wellbeing of the adult. If a professional has concerns about the adult's welfare and believes they are suffering or likely to suffer abuse or neglect, then they should share the information with the local authority and/or, the police if they believe or suspect that a crime has been committed.

Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014

Markfield's Safeguarding Procedures

This section of the policy sets out the procedures that Markfield workers must follow to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Valuing, listening and respecting children, young people and adults

Markfield's purpose is to promote rights, independence, choice and inclusion for disabled people and their families. We aim to create an atmosphere that is friendly, caring and accepting. We expect all workers to support people sensitively, respect each person and value their opinions. Disabled people should be supported to have a voice, make choices and to be able to communicate these clearly. Our Code of Practice further outlines our expectations of workers when providing services.

Training and supervision

All workers have a time of induction before they start work. During this time they are required to read the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures, and the Health and Safety Policy. They are also given a copy of the Code of Practice. All of these include important information about how to keep children and vulnerable adults safe. Their line manager is responsible for making sure that workers and volunteers understand the policies at the time of induction. Workers will be offered the opportunity to discuss the safeguarding policy within their regular supervision and will be asked at each annual appraisal to state whether they still feel confident around this policy.

All contracted workers will have training in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within their probation period. Training will include recognising signs and symptoms of abuse, and responsibilities for monitoring, reporting and recording concerns.

Workers who only work from time to time will have a basic induction in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within their probationary period. Training will include recognising signs and symptoms of abuse, and responsibilities for monitoring, reporting and recording concerns.

If Markfield introduces a new policy or way of working about protection or safe caring, it will do some induction with all workers, volunteers and people on placement to make sure they understand the new information.

All workers and volunteers will be provided with regular supervision. This supervision and management support will be suited to the worker's level of responsibility for protecting children and vulnerable adults.

Markfield operates an "on-call" system. Workers and volunteers can use the on-call support of a manager outside of office hours for support and guidance on protection issues. All workers and volunteers are given the on-call phone number and procedure within their induction.

Recruitment

Protocol for recruitment

- All recruitment publicity must include information about our safeguarding policy and procedures and the Disclosure and Barring Service checks (details below).
- All job or role descriptions must include safeguarding responsibilities.
- Personal specifications for applicants must include safeguarding criteria
- When assessing applicants we check that they have the essential qualifications and experience for the role.
- During the interview process we ask applicants questions about safeguarding practice.
- Applicants must show us ID to prove who they are.
- Two references are sought from people that can tell us in a letter, and over the phone, that the person is suitable for the job.

Safeguarding checks

- We do a Local Authority check for volunteers who will be working closely with families.
- For anyone that will have unsupervised contact with children or will have access to confidential information about children we will contact the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for an enhanced DBS check. This will check for any criminal convictions, cautions and for any additional information held by local police that's reasonably considered relevant to working with children. It will also check whether someone's included in the DBS 'barred lists' of individuals who are unsuitable for working with children.
- Workers who will be working directly with children or vulnerable adults are not allowed to start their role until their DBS check is completed.
- Sometimes workers come for a short time from an agency or on placement. Markfield will always ask the people who place them here to tell us in writing that they have done a DBS check. If this is not possible, these workers will always be supervised and not left alone when they are working with children or vulnerable adults. These workers will not be allowed to see confidential or personal information about children and vulnerable adults.

Staff conduct

All workers are expected to follow Markfield's Code of Practice and Health and Safety Policy. These include detailed guidance on safe caring and making sure a safe and suitable environment is provided for all service users.

All workers are expected to record and report incidents, and this helps make sure risks and concerns are responded to properly. Reports of incidents, accidents, complaints, grievances and disciplinary action are formally reviewed by the Director and Executive Committee every three months.

Concerns about the welfare of a child that do not suggest immediate risk will be monitored carefully. Workers may be asked to fill out monitoring forms which will be reviewed by their manager and by the Safeguarding Officer (see appendix 2).

Markfield workers should be aware that direct allegations and disclosures of abuse are rare. Some of the people we work with have limited verbal communication. Therefore everyone has to be extra careful to pick up on other things that might be signs of abuse.

Workers are expected to maintain careful boundaries in the way they relate to service users.

- Any sexual relationship or behaviour with a child under the age of 16 is illegal. Any actions which might encourage sexual behaviour with a child under the age of 16 is abusive and will be dealt with through disciplinary procedures as gross misconduct.
- Sexual relationships or behaviour with service users who are young people aged 16-19 or vulnerable adults will generally also be considered inappropriate and dealt with as gross misconduct.
- Markfield works with a wide range of service users. There will be occasions where relationships between workers or volunteers and service users are appropriate. Also, workers may already have a relationship with a service user before starting work at Markfield.

Workers **must** immediately inform their line manager about:

- Relationships they already have with a service user when they start work at Markfield
- Relationships with a service user that begin once they have started work at Markfield
- Where a service user appears to be developing an attraction towards a worker or volunteer, or where they are displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviour.

Failure to discuss these situations with your line manager will be dealt with through disciplinary procedures.

What to do if someone tells you they have been abused

Anyone who says they have been abused or harmed should be treated with respect and dignity.

The four Rs

R) Recognise what the person is telling you. Make sure they know you are taking it seriously and they have done the right thing in telling you.

R) Respond calmly and explain that you will need to tell someone else what they have said, eg. the session leader or a senior manager. Do not lead the conversation. Ask open questions e.g. 'What happened in the garden when you were playing?' This allows the person to speak in their own words. Do not ask closed questions e.g. 'Did X hit you or touch you?'. Do not appear shocked, horrified or disgusted. Do not make promises you cannot keep (for example do not promise to keep the matter secret).

R) Record check that you have understood them properly and write down what you have been told.

R) Refer to the session leader or a senior manager; tell someone immediately. Information will be passed to the Safeguarding Officer who will make a decision about whether a referral to social services is needed.

In some circumstances you may need to refer before you record.

Anyone can become aware that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused or harmed. Anybody might see or hear something that worries them. A child or vulnerable adult might tell anyone they have been harmed or abused.

All workers have a **duty** to report any allegation of abuse, or any concern that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused or harmed. **You must tell your line manager, or a duty manager as soon as possible.** Failure to report concerns or allegations may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

All concerns will be considered sensitively and straightaway. Markfield will monitor and record these concerns carefully.

The Director or Safeguarding Officer has responsibility for making sure that concerns or an allegation that suggests a child is being harmed or is at risk of harm will be referred as quickly as possible to social workers at the Children's Service.

It is not the responsibility of Markfield workers to decide if abuse is happening, and Markfield will not carry out any investigation into a suspected incident of abuse. Investigations will be carried out by Social Workers at the Children's Service.

What to do if the allegation or concern is about another Markfield worker

It can be very difficult to report allegations or concerns about a worker, volunteer or person on placement, but everyone has a **duty** to do this. If it is difficult to approach the line manager, or if the line manager is the person you think is abusing or harming someone, you must contact a more senior manager. If the concern is about the Director, you should contact the Chair of the Executive Committee. If the concern is about an Executive Committee member, please contact the Director, and they will ensure it is dealt with by different members of the Committee.

Allegations made against a worker, volunteer, or person on placement will be fully recorded, and referred to Local Authority Social Services for investigation in the same way as any other concern. The Local Authority Lead on Allegations Designated Officer (LADO) will always be contacted to seek advice and report incident when required.

The LADO for Haringey is: Sarah Roberts 020 8489 2968 LADO@haringey.gov.uk

Concerns about a worker's conduct will be dealt with through Markfield's disciplinary procedures. Markfield acknowledges that workers or volunteers who are the subject of allegations will have support needs. Information about their rights to representation and support will be provided. The Director or Chair of the Executive Committee will do their best to ensure the investigation does not take more time than is necessary.

What to do if concerns are not dealt with properly

If a worker or volunteer passes on a concern or allegation to their line manager, but feels this has not been acted on properly, they must contact a more senior manager or Chair of the Executive Committee. In the unlikely event that there is not a senior manager or Chair of the Executive Committee available, and they feel the action being taken, or not taken, is putting a child or vulnerable adult at immediate risk of harm they should also report their concerns to Haringey Social Services.

Confidentiality

Markfield recognises that families may ask for information to be kept confidential. When people first start using Markfield's services they should be made aware, and supported to understand, that this may not be possible if there are concerns that a child is being abused or harmed.

Workers with concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, must not discuss these with other staff, parents, carers or other people involved with the person, until they have passed on the concerns and got advice and instructions from their line manager or duty manager.

The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for making sure written records of concerns about the protection of children and vulnerable adults are kept confidentially.

If Markfield is given information about a service user that may impact on the safety of workers or other users, senior managers may share this information with other workers, with the consent of the service user or person with parental responsibility. Workers are responsible for keeping this information confidential and not sharing the information outside of the Markfield team. Decisions to share information without the person's consent will only be taken by the Director, or in her absence the Safeguarding Officer where the risks to service users or workers outweigh an individual's right to confidentiality.

Markfield will assist Social Services and the police, as far as possible, during any investigation. This will include disclosing written and oral information, where this is necessary to ensure the welfare of children or vulnerable adults.

Sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.

Every effort will be made to work in partnership with parents and carers when dealing with concerns. Carers themselves may need support once they hear about the concerns. However, when dealing with concerns, the safety, protection and interests of children and vulnerable adults will come first at all times.

When there is a concern about a child or vulnerable adult, we will try wherever possible to talk to parents/carers (or the adult themselves) before making a referral to Social Services. However, we will not do this if there is reasonable evidence that doing so may put the person at further risk, or if it will delay action too much. In any situation where this is unclear the Safeguarding Officer or the Director will seek the advice from a Local Authority Child Protection Advisor or Adults Safeguarding Advisor. Appendix 1 outlines the referral process and guidance for the Safeguarding Officer or Director for making a referral.

Markfield's role beyond referral

Markfield workers may be:

- interviewed in relation to investigations
- asked to attend case conferences or review meetings held by Social Services
- asked to support vulnerable adults or children during the process of investigations
- be involved in putting protection plans in place with service users.

If workers have to do any of these things, they will be offered guidance and support on their role from a manager.

Reminder: What to do if you are worried a child or vulnerable adult is being abused

