Longmead

Community Farm

**Safeguarding Children, Young**

**People and Adults at Risk Policy**

**Updated May 2015 by D Abrahall**

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**LONGMEAD COMMUNITY FARM (LCF)**

**Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy**

**Longmead Community Farm believes that children, young people and adults at risk have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to protecting all in our care from harm.**

**When children come to us currently on a child protection plan or supervision order we are made aware of this, and are thus especially vigilant with regard to any concerns, and these are immediately reported to the relevant social work referrer by the Manager.**

*[For simplicity the document will use the term ‘child’ or ‘Safeguarding’ as inclusive of vulnerable young people and adults]*

**1) Longmead Community Farm Protection Officer**

a) LCF will appoint one of its organisation’s staff / volunteers as the Protection Officer. This Officer will have suitable experience, training and expertise, and will be responsible for liaising with social services, the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Safeguarding Children/ Adults at Risk Boards and any other relevant authority in any child/adults at risk protection matter. The current officer is Denise Abrahall.

b) LCF’s safeguarding procedures comply with all relevant legislation and other guidance or advice from the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Safeguarding Boards.

c) LCF is committed to reviewing its Safeguarding policy and procedures at regular intervals.

d) The Safeguarding policy and its procedures will be shared with parents /

carers during the induction period at the start of a visit.

**2) Recognising Abuse**

a) Abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. All staff will have Safeguarding training and will be vigilant to signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

b) *Physical Abuse*: This involves hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, suffocating or any other physical harm. Deliberately causing a child’s ill health also constitutes physical abuse. Adults may also be subject to domestic violence.

c) *Sexual Abuse:* This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve inappropriate touching, physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. Showing children pornographic materials, sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways also constitutes sexual abuse. Sexual abuse may be same-sex or opposite-sex, and be by other children young people or adults.

d) *Emotional abuse:* Varying degrees of emotional abuse is present in virtually all Safeguarding incidents, but can also constitute abuse in its own right. Emotional abuse involves persistent or severe emotional ill-treatment or torture causing, or likely to cause, severe adverse effects on the emotional stability of a child. Such behaviour may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate, or making them feel unnecessarily frightened or vulnerable. It may also involve exploitation and corruption.

e) *Neglect:* Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical, emotional or psychological needs, such as is likely to have a severe impact on their health, development or emotional stability. Neglect may involve failing to provide adequate food, shelter or clothing for a child, or failing to adequately protect them from physical harm or danger or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. Neglect can also manifest itself in a failure to meet the basic emotional needs of child.

f) *Financial Abuse (in the case of adults at risk):* Usually involves an individual’s funds or resources being inappropriately used by a third person. It includes the withholding of money or the inappropriate or unsanctioned use of a person’s money or property or the entry of the adult at risk into financial contracts or transactions that they do not understand, to their disadvantage.

**3) Staff Support and Training**

a) Longmead Community Farm is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of Safeguarding through the provision of support and training to staff and volunteers.

LCF will ensure that:

b) Disclosure and Barring : All staff and volunteers working with families have full and up-to-date DBS checks at an enhanced level. No visitors, such as facilitators for craft workshops, will be alone with family members at any time unless they have an up-to-date DBS check on file at Longmead.

c) Safeguarding policy: All staff and family work volunteers are given a copy of the Safeguarding policy during their induction, and have its implications explained to them.

d) Training and supervision: All staff and volunteers receive ongoing training in Safeguarding issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.

e) Supervision and management support: All staff and volunteers are provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.

f) Indicators of child abuse: All staff / volunteers are aware of the main indicators of child abuse.

g) Disclosure: All staff / volunteers are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All staff and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the Longmead Manager.

h) Action: LCF will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of children and up hold fair processes for staff and volunteers. (see 5 below)

i) Disciplinary action: Any member of staff or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

**4) Accidents and injuries**

a) If a child, young person or adult at risk is injured while involved in a project that we have organised, a record of the injury will be entered in the accident book. This record must be countersigned by the person with responsibility for the individual.

b) If a child, young person or adult at risk arrives at LCF with an obvious physical injury, a record of this must be made in the accident book. This record should be countersigned by the person with responsibility for the individual. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later. It will also be a record that the individual did not sustain the injury whilst at Longmead.

**5) Safe Caring**

All staff must understand Longmead Safeguarding procedures and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:

a) All Longmead staff and volunteers working directly with children, young people or adults at risk, should be with a contact person with legal responsibility for the child, young person or adult at risk (i.e. parent/guardian or supervisor). *They must not assume sole responsibility for a child,*

*young person or adult at risk. (See also Lone Workers Policy)*

b) Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff and volunteers are left alone with a child. If staff/volunteers are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed.

c) If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, or volunteer, this will be recorded fully in the Incident Record Book.

d) Staff will never carry out a personal task for a child that the child can do for themselves. Where this is essential, staff will help a child whilst being accompanied by a colleague. Unless a child has a particular need, staff / volunteers should not accompany children into the toilet. This also applies to adults at risk. *Staff/volunteers should be aware that this and other similar activities could be misconstrued*.

e) Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children/adults at risk, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.

f) Photography, videos, mobile phones and other forms of recording of children will only be allowed with permission of the parent(s) or carer(s)

g) Staff/volunteers may encounter issues of mental capacity and protecting people who are not able to make their own choices - for instance when someone might attempt to undertake more strenuous activity than they can medically manage, or where some in our care. Staff/volunteers should never encourage visitors to attempt physical activities they feel unable or reluctant to do, and if they have any concerns, they should raise them immediately with the manager/leader. (LCF does not normally host visitors with mental disability or mental health issues who are not living independently without an accompanying carer).

h) An adult at risk might wish to give a volunteer a present or gift. Any occurrence of this kind must be reported to the LCF manager/ team leader, who will be trained to clarify our policy with the adult at risk concerned. On no account should an adult at risk, parent or child be asked by a volunteer for money or gifts.

i) All allegations made by a child against a member of staff or a volunteer will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

**6) Suspicions**

If abuse of a child, young person or adult at risk is suspected then the person with legal responsibility for the child, young person or adult at risk should be made aware of the problem. This will normally be done by the LCF Manager/team leader by use of the Incident Form (attached).

If the person with legal responsibility is actually the source of the problem, then the chairperson of the LCF board should be informed, see procedure in 7(g) below.

The individual should complete an Incident Form (see below), stating what was witnessed as well as their response and make the Manager (or other relevant person) aware of the situation, in case there is follow-up in which they are involved.

**7) Dealing with Allegations**

a) LCF is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of

Safeguarding by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively.

b) LCF will not carry out any investigation itself into a suspected child abuse incident. On discovering an allegation of abuse, the manager or, if appropriate, chair of LCF’s trustees, will immediately refer the case to the local statutory Safeguarding agencies.

Further to this, the following principles will govern any suspected or reported case of abuse:

c) Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff / volunteers, they will report this to the LCF Manager/team leader at the earliest possible opportunity.

d) Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is taking place, to report this.

e) Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained. Information recorded will include:

 full details of the alleged incident;

 details of all the parties involved;

 any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties;

 relevant dates, times and locations and

 any supporting information or evidence from members of staff.

Great care will be taken in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.

f) The LCF Manager will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.

g) If an allegation of abuse is made against the LCF Manager, the Chair of the Board will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation or delegate this role to an appropriately qualified person.

h) Staff will ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.

i) Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured. In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the

member of staff concerned will:

• Remain calm and in control but don’t delay acting

• Listen carefully to what is said. Allow the person to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don’t ask questions that suggest a particular answer.

• Don’t promise to ‘keep it a secret’. Use the first opportunity you have to say that you will need to share the information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help

• Reassure the child, young person or adult at risk that ‘they did the right thing’ in telling someone.

• Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.

• Tell the child, young person or vulnerable person what you are going to do next

• Speak immediately to the person who has designated responsibility for protection of children, young people or adults at risk. (LCF Manager/team leader). It is that person’s responsibility to liaise with relevant authorities, i.e. social services. The telephone number for the out of hours team is

01202 657279. [Social services will liaise with the relevant departments on a need-to-know basis and will, if appropriate, inform the police. It is the responsibility of the authorities to determine whether abuse has occurred.]

• As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, complete the Incident Form recounting what was said, using the child’s /young person’s /adult at risk’s own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date the form.

• Staff and volunteers will be made aware of the Department of Health’s booklet ‘What to do if You’re Worried a Child Is Being Abused?’ (2003), and its recent guidance on ‘Protecting Children from Harm’.

**8) Referring Allegations to Safeguarding Agencies**

If the Project Manager or Protection Officer has reasonable grounds for believing that a child has been – or is in grave danger of being – subject to abuse, the following procedure will be activated:

Contact will be made, at the earliest possible opportunity, with the local social services department. Any allegations about staff/volunteers should be discussed with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The appropriate person for this area is currently Patrick Crawford on 01305

221122.

a) The LCF Manager will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by social services and the police.

b) At all times, the safety, protection and interests of children concerned will take precedence. Staff will work with and support parents/carers as far as they are legally able.

c) LCF will assist the social services and the police, as far as it is able, during any investigation of abuse or neglect. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence.

**9) Rights and confidentiality**

If a complaint or allegation is made against LCF’s staff or volunteers, he or she should be made aware of his or her rights under both employment law and internal disciplinary procedures by the chair of the board.

No matter how you feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the person who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.

In criminal law the Crown or other prosecuting authority has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

**10) Policy Review**

The Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed by the LCF board annually.

November 2012- updated May 2015

**INCIDENT OF CONCERN FORM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Agency/Establishment:Child’s Name: |  |
| Child’s Address: |
| Date of Incident: |
| Location of Incident: |
| Type of Contact:( ) |
| If Other Please Specify: |
| Witnesses/Others (please specify) |
| Level of Concern:( ) | High | Medium |  |  |
| Detail of Concern: |  |  |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **LONGMEAD COMMUNITY FARM** |  |
|  | DoB/Age |  |
|  |
| Time of Incident: |
|  |
| Telephone Email Home Visit School VisitObservation Disclosure Third Party Other |  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

Low

**Action Taken:**

Referral to Other Agency: ( ) Yes No Referral to CP: ( ) Yes No

Contact with Parent/Carer: ( ) Yes No

Date & Time Discussion with Manager/Supervisor: Date & Time Passed to Manager/Supervisor:

Any other Action Taken:

Date of recording Time of Recording

Name: Line Manager

Name: Designation Date

Signature: Signature: Contact Tel No: Contact Tel No: Email Address: Email Address: