



THE PARKS
Community Association

TPCA Children & Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy January 2018

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PART ONE

General Statement of Policy

General Policy

TPCA (The Parks Community Association) provides facilities for a wide range of activities. We have a duty of care to safeguard those who are particularly vulnerable, including children and vulnerable adults and to ensure the well-being of everyone who uses our facilities and to minimise the risk of harm. Our Lease requires us to demonstrate that we have appropriate policies and procedures in place.

The aim of this policy is to provide members of TPCA with clear guidance about their role and responsibilities in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and to provide information for the users of TPCA Community Centre about the safeguarding measures that TPCA employs to ensure that it meets its responsibilities to promote the welfare of and safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

General Principles

Whilst it is not the responsibility of this organisation to determine whether or not abuse has taken place (this is undertaken in liaison with external child protection professionals), it is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns in relation to children or vulnerable adults to the relevant authority.

TPCA does not have direct contact with children and vulnerable adults; however we do hire out the community centre to groups who do. Therefore it is essential that we have robust policies and procedures.

All volunteers and staff are expected to be familiar with and comply with this policy and its procedures.

PART TWO

Definitions

Whilst recognising that TPCA will have little direct contact with children and vulnerable adults, its work means that they may indirectly have contact with children and vulnerable adults. Therefore these procedures are designed to support the recognition of abuse of children and vulnerable adults and provide clear guidance about what processes and actions should be taken if this is identified to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded and protected.

2.1 Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout the Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures:

- **Child or Children**

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as a person under eighteen, for most purposes.

- **Young Person**

The term young person will include those aged under 18 years.

- **Vulnerable Adult or Adults**

An adult who has care and support needs and is, or is at risk of, being abused or neglected and unable to protect them self against the abuse or neglect or risk of it because of those needs.

An Adult at Risk may therefore be a person who:

- Is frail due to ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment;
- Has a learning disability;
- Has a physical disability and/or a sensory impairment;
- Has mental health needs;
- Has a long-term illness/condition;
- Is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

(This list is not exhaustive)

2.2 Forms of abuse

The Children Act 1989 defines four types of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect. These categories of abuse apply and will be relevant to vulnerable adults as well as to children.

- **Physical Abuse**

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

- **Emotional Abuse**

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal

social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is

- **Sexual Abuse**

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

- **Neglect**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological 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 (including exclusion from home or abandonment); § protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;

§ ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or

§ ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Staff should also be aware of other factors which influence these forms of abuse such as racial or homophobic abuse.

In addition, the following types of abuse have been recognised regarding vulnerable adults.

- **Financial or material abuse:**

Including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;

- **Discriminatory abuse:**

Including racist, sexist, that's based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

- **E-abuse:**

Neglect and poor professional practice also need to be taken into account. This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice, at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other. Repeated instances of poor care may be an indication of more serious problems and this is sometimes referred to as **institutional abuse**.

2.3 Status of Policy

This policy applies to all trustees and volunteers who have a legal duty to protect the personal safety of all children, young people and vulnerable adults using the facilities and resources provided byCA.

PART THREE Procedures

3.1 Responsibilities

All trustees and volunteers working on behalf of TPCA have a duty of care for the welfare of the children and vulnerable adults that use the community centre.

All trustees and volunteers have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child and vulnerable adult protection is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

The Chair of the Management Committee must be informed of issues which arise under this policy and ensure the implementation of this policy. It is the Chair's responsibility to take appropriate action following any expression of concern and make referrals to the appropriate agencies.

The majority of the time, it will be the hiring groups who will have responsibility for the children and vulnerable adults using the centre, as the latter will be attending sessions run by the hirers. The hiring group's responsibility will be highlighted in their hiring agreement with TPCA.

We will ensure that no activities or groups involving either children or vulnerable adults will be permitted at the Community Centre unless the relevant provisions of Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004, the Berkshire Child Protection Procedure, The Home Office Code of Practice Safe From Harm and any conditions required by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) are complied with by the hirer.

3.2 What to do if you suspect someone is being abused

Although trustees and staff will usually only have indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults within the community centre, they must be alert to the signs of abuse. Any suspicion or allegation must be reported as soon as possible on the day of the occurrence to the Chair. Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways including a comment made by a child or adult, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour, or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.

It is the responsibility of the Chair to contact, in the case of children, the Bracknell Forest Social Care Duty Service (01344 351582) and in the case of vulnerable adults Bracknell Forest Council (01344 351500) or, out of hours, the Emergency Duty Team (01344 786543).

If there is any concern about the immediate welfare of a child/young person or if the information suggests that a criminal offence may have been committed the Police and Social Care Duty/Out of Hours Services should be informed immediately.

Any suspicion or allegation of abuse must be recorded by the observer/s on the appropriate incident reporting form. This form must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely following the Data Protection Procedures. All trustees and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse or alleged abuse directly to their line manager or directly to the Chair.

All stages of the reporting procedure must be documented, marked CONFIDENTIAL and stored securely following the procedures laid out in the Data Protection Policy.

3.3 Allegations against Employees, trustees or volunteers who work with Children or Vulnerable Adults

If you have information which suggest someone who works with children or vulnerable adults (in a paid or unpaid capacity) has

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child or vulnerable adult

- Behaved towards a child/ren or vulnerable adults in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children

You should speak immediately with the Chair who, in the case of children, will inform Bracknell Forest Social Care Duty Service (01344 351582). The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is available to provide advice or support in any allegations process, including advising whether or not immediate suspension of the person concerned should be initiated. In the case of vulnerable adults, the Chair will inform Bracknell Forest Council (01344 351500) or, out of hours, the Emergency Duty Team (01344 786543). If it is not possible to involve the Chair, contact them direct.

3.4 Unaccompanied Children in the centre

If staff or a volunteer attend the centre and find an unaccompanied child in the centre or waiting outside the Centre having just finished an activity, the activity organiser has left and no-one has come to pick up the child, they should try to establish whether the child is allowed by the parent / carer to come and go alone.

If you are satisfied that the child is allowed to come and go alone, then allow the child to leave. If you gather this information only from the child then you will need to use your judgement to ascertain whether the child is competent to leave alone -

- what age is the young person
- are they distressed etc.
- do they seem physically capable
- do they appear to know clearly and readily where they live

If possible, they should try and contact the young person's parent/carer. If they cannot find or make contact with a parent/carer then they should contact Children's Social Care and the police.

The CA is responsible for making sure that any hirer who runs a group involving young people is aware of their responsibilities regarding them.

PART FOUR Confidentiality

Confidentiality

All trustees and volunteers must work under the principle that confidentiality is extremely important, however, under no circumstances will any individual acting as a volunteer of TPCA keep confidential any information that raises concerns about the safety and welfare of a child or vulnerable adult. This statement relating to confidentiality is made known to all who access any provision of TPCA.

PART FIVE
Review of Policy

TPCA shall undertake to review this policy, its implementation and effectiveness annually. The views of all trustees and volunteers shall be sought where necessary and reflected in the review process.

Any new legislation or developments in existing legislation will be considered as and when required and the policy will be updated to reflect these developments.

This policy was approved and agreed by the Management Board on the date shown below.

Signed:

Name (please print):

Position (as a representative of TPCA):

Date:

Appendix I: Guidance on how to respond to a child / young person / vulnerable adult disclosing abuse

When a Safeguarding issue is raised it is important to record what is said or seen and what action was taken. This record or any other written record should be kept in a locked cabinet. Access should be limited to only:

- the person who has completed the form
- The Manager or the Chair of the Management Committee

The child/vulnerable adult can be shown this record but discretion should be used. Their permission should be sought before showing it to the parent/guardian/carer.

It may be shown to the police and/or social services, and could possibly be used in court although this is rare.

Guidelines for Responding to an Allegation of Abuse: General Points:

DO

- Keep calm – do not appear shocked and listen to them
- Accept what the child/vulnerable adult says without passing judgement (however unlikely the disclosure may sound)
- Look directly at the child/vulnerable adult
- Be honest
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else, don't promise confidentiality
- Be aware the child/vulnerable adult may have been threatened and fear reprisals for having spoken to you
- Make a written note of what you have been told

DO NOT

- Do not push for information or question the child/vulnerable adult as this can undermine any subsequent criminal investigation. If at any point a child/vulnerable adult decides not to continue, accept that and let them know that you are ready to listen should they wish to continue at any time.
- Do not assume that someone else is aware of the situation and will take action
- Do not contact the alleged abuser
- Do not be afraid to contact Social Services or the police to discuss it

Helpful things to say or show:

- Show acceptance of what the child/vulnerable adult says
- "I take what you are saying very seriously"
- "I am pleased that you have told me. Thank you for telling me"
- If appropriate,
"it isn't your fault and you are not to blame at all"
"I am sorry that happened to you"
"I will help you"

Things not to say:

- “Why didn’t you say something before?”
- “I really can’t believe it”
- “Are you sure this has happened?”
- “Why?” “Where?” “When?” “Who?” “What?” “How?”
- Don’t make false promises to the child/vulnerable adult – like confidentiality – be honest now, any lies will be further abuse and betrayal
- Never make statements such as ‘I am shocked!’ or ‘don’t tell anyone else’.

Concluding the conversation:

- Reassure the child/vulnerable adult that they were right to tell you
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and tell them that you will let them know what is happening at each stage.

Appendix 2 is an example of the template you can use.

Appendix 2: Record of Concerns

Name of Child/Vulnerable Adult:	
Address:	
Telephone Nos:	
Parent/Carers details: Name(s):	Telephone No(s):
What is said to have happened or what was seen?	
When and where did it occur?	
Who else, if anyone, was involved and how?	
What was said by those involved?	
Were there any obvious signs e.g., bruising, bleeding changed behaviour?	
Was the child/vulnerable adult able to say what happened, if so, how did they describe it?	
Who has been told about it and when?	
Do the parents/carers know?	
Signed and Dated:	