

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Evergreen Care UK (ECUK) is fully committed to safeguarding children and young people and believes that it is always unacceptable for any child to experience any kind of abuse.

1. Aims of the Policy

- To provide protection for the children and young people who directly or indirectly come in to contact with ECUK's services.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers or anyone working on behalf of Evergreen Care Bexley (ECUK).

The Chief Executive is the Safeguarding Officer.

2. Definitions

2.1 Definition of a child

The Children Act 1989 defines a child as anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders Institution does not change his or her status or entitlement to service or protection.

2.2 Abuse

The following gives examples of some different kinds of abuse. (The list is not exhaustive):

- Physical Abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Psychological and Emotional abuse.
- Neglect and acts of omission.
- Financial or material abuse.
- Bullying, including Cyber bullying.

3. Evergreen's responsibility

3.1 ECUK will ensure that:

- The welfare of the child remains paramount.
- All children whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and or sexual identity have the right to be protected from harm.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately as well as providing support to the individual/s involved or raised the concerns.

- Everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify, and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people.

4. Roles and responsibilities of Trustees, Staff and Volunteers

4.1 Trustees

Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy and guidelines are implemented.
- Monitoring incidents to ensure that best practice is adopted.
- Ensuring that proper support and supervision is available to all staff in the event of an incident occurring.

4.2 Staff and Volunteers

The Chief Executive of ECUK who is the Designated Safeguarding Officer will be responsible for:

- Ensuring on behalf of the trustees that this policy is implemented.
- Informing and discussing with the Chair any concerns reported to them about the welfare of children or young people.
- If appropriate, reporting concerns to the Council and/or to the Police.
- Providing support and supervision for staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive adequate instruction and training in the implementation of this policy.

Other staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Reporting any concerns they may have about children and young people to the Chief Executive either directly or via their line manager.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers whom they supervise receive adequate instruction on the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that all concerns reported to them are recorded in writing and kept confidential, but the disclosures will not be prompted.
- Advising the person disclosing the information that it cannot be kept secret, but to say who it will be passed onto and that it will be held confidentially.
- Advising the person disclosing the information that any information written or recorded should be stored securely.
- Advising the person disclosing the information that it will not be possible to provide progress on the investigation.

All staff and volunteers will receive instruction on this policy as part of their formal induction.

5. Reporting Procedures – Guidelines for all staff and volunteers

5.1 Any staff member or volunteer who has concerns about a child should report it to their supervisor or line manager who should immediately notify the Chief Executive. Individuals may report suspected abuse to the Council's 'Safeguarding Children and Young People at Risk' service if they have concerns that are not being sufficiently addressed internally or are urgent.

If it is suspected that the supervisor, line manager, staff or volunteer is involved in the abuse, it should be reported direct to the Chief Executive.

If it is suspected that the Chief Executive was involved in the abuse it should be reported to another Manager or the Chair of Trustees.

5.2 If someone reports to a staff member or volunteer that there has been, or if the staff member or volunteer suspects there may have been, instances of abuse, they should:

- If possible, ensure victim of the alleged abuse is safe.
- Check that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged.
- Preserve evidence.
- Report to line manager.
- Say what you have seen.
- Make accurate record.

5.3 The line manager should report the allegation to the Chief Executive as soon as possible. He/she will discuss the situation with the staff member or volunteer making the report, and their line manager.

The Chief Executive will decide in consultation with the line manager about whether or not a referral should be made about the concerns and will contact the Safeguarding Officer at the London Borough of Bexley for advice if required. He/she will make a written record of their decision and the reasons for it and will also discuss it with the person who has made the report and their line manager.

Where a referral should be made the Chief Executive will contact:

- The London Borough of Bexley Safeguarding Children's Service (Tel: 0208 303 7777).
- The Emergency Duty Service out of hours (Tel: 0208 303 7171).
- The Police in emergencies.

The Chief Executive will decide whether the Trustees need to be informed of his /her decision.

5.4 All written information regarding an allegation of abuse will be uploaded into a secure folder on ECUK's system in line with GDPR with restricted access to that folder.

5.5 If a decision is taken not to report concerns about someone at that time, the situation will be kept under review by the Chief Executive, who will keep in close contact with the staff member or volunteer involved with the client.

6. Recruitment and Placement of Staff and Volunteers

Staff and volunteers should **not** be working directly with children within ECUK but may come into contact through client's family members. ECUK will follow the recruitment policy with regard to references, DBS disclosures and requirements to check against barred lists for working with vulnerable children and young people. On-going supervision and appraisal will be provided to staff.

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