

SEQUOIA MOVEMENT LTD

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

WORKING WITH CHILDREN.

s e q u o i a



OUR STATEMENT

The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 define children as anyone under the age of 18 years.

Sequoia Movement acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard, protect and promote the welfare of children. We are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and requirements.

This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and young people are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, ability or disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, socio-economic background, all children:

a) Have a positive and enjoyable experience of Sequoia Movement in a safe environment.

b) Are protected from abuse whilst participating in or outside of an activity at Sequoia Movement.

Everyone involved in providing activities for children and young people at Sequoia Movement will be given access to appropriate communication channels and learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people

Organisation: Sequoia Movement

Designation Safeguard Lead: Sarah Taylor

Contact: training@sequoiamovement.com | t: 07770427368

OUR POLICY

As part of our safeguarding policy at Sequoia Movement we will:

1. Promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Value, listen to and respect children.
2. Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.
3. Adopt safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and code of conduct for coaches.
4. Ensure 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.
5. Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about our policies, procedures and behaviour codes and follow them confidently and competently
6. Ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents or concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual(s) who raise or disclose the concern.
7. Record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
8. Prevent the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

9. Appoint a nominated safeguarding lead for children and young people. Lead person - Sarah Taylor

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and compliance is mandatory for every coach involved with training children at Sequoia Movement. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal or exclusion from the organisation.

All staff working with children are subject to Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced/standard Disclosure prior to being allowed to work unsupervised with children.

Basic child protection training is provided to all new coaches within their induction who work with children and young people.

This includes:

- Awareness that abuse can be found in any community.
- Awareness that abuse does not always occur in the child's home - it may take place at school, in the homes of friends, in places of entertainment and in public places.
- The four basic types of child abuse - physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.
- How to respond if, they find evidence that a child may have been abused.



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REPORTING PROCEDURE

CONCERNS ABOUT THE WELFARE OF A CHILD

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

Sequoia Movement understands it is not the responsibility of anyone working at the facility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns by reporting these to the appropriate safeguarding officer or the appropriate authorities as soon as concerns are raised.

Firstly, staff are required to determine whether or not the child is in immediate danger and/or are they injured?

If YES,

1. Contact the emergency services immediately - 999 / 112
2. You can also ring the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000 to report immediate risks
3. Report the concern to Sequoia Movement management - Sarah Taylor.
4. Ensure you keep a written record of your concern and how you reported it and the actions taken.

If NO,

and the matter is not immediate, please raise your concern to the safeguarding lead and ensure you keep a written record of your concern and how you reported it.

Sequoia Movement will work with the complainant, the respondent and any statutory agency that is appropriate in order to manage the concern.

All safeguarding concerns are treated with confidentiality and information is only shared on a need to know basis.

NON-EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

RECOGNISING A SAFEGUARDING ISSUE

A safeguarding issue may come to the attention of a staff member in several ways:

- a child may make a direct allegation.
- a child may make a comment which seems to suggest abuse.
- a child may have bruises or marks.
- something about a child's behaviour may suggest the possibility of abuse.
- something about the behaviour of a Staff member may suggest that he/she is not a suitable person to care for children.

Staff should respond to each of these situations by first bringing their concerns to the Safeguarding lead.

DEALING WITH A DIRECT ALLEGATION

1. If a child makes a direct allegation, the coach must not promise to keep the allegation a secret. When an abusive or exploitative relationship exists, the Staff member cannot agree to keep this secret.
2. The Staff member should let the child speak but should not question him/her. Ask only questions that are necessary to clarify whether the child is alleging that abuse has taken place.
3. The Staff member should write down exactly what the child said (*not what they think he/she meant*) and/or details of any significant marks or behaviour observed, noting any names, dates and times.
4. A note should also be made of any witnesses - did anyone else hear what the child said, see the marks or notice the behaviour? This should be done while the details are still fresh in the Staff members mind.
5. If the child seems to be suggesting abuse, but it is not clear, Staff should try to find a suitable time and place to talk to him/her, which will allow him/her to talk freely. The Staff should listen carefully, remembering that a young child may not have the vocabulary to explain clearly what it is that distresses him/her.
6. Staff should always take the child seriously, but this does not necessarily mean accepting everything that the child says as a fact. As soon as it becomes clear that the child is alleging abuse, all further questions must be made by the Police. This does not mean that the Staff should tell the child to say nothing more until the authorities arrive. Allow the child to speak for as long as he/she wants to.

If the child makes a clear allegation about a specific person or if there is suspicion about a person, Staff must not try to question that person themselves.

If, at any time, it becomes clear that the Staff member has misunderstood the situation and that the child is not alleging that abuse has taken place, the situation should be re-assessed, as it may not be appropriate to follow this procedure.

A written record should always be kept and provided to the safeguarding lead.

ALLEGATIONS TOWARDS AN STAFF

If an allegation is made about a member of staff at Sequoia Movement, this will be referred to the Safeguarding Manager who will make enquiries.

It will often be necessary to suspend the member of staff from involvement in any contact with children until enquiries are complete.

Sequoia management will make it clear that this action is intended to safeguard the welfare of children and does not assume the guilt of the Staff. It is also important to recognise the Staff's need for support at this time and to help him/her to identify suitable sources of support.

When suspicion falls on a staff member, there are three possible outcomes:

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. it may be proved to Sequoia management's satisfaction that the Staff has abused one or more children,
2. it may be proved to Sequoia management's satisfaction that the Staff is not guilty of abuse, or
3. the enquiries may be inconclusive, leaving suspicion, but no proof about the Staff's behaviour.

The third possibility always raises sensitive issues and further investigation may be required.

UNSUITABLE STAFF

Questions about the suitability of a staff member to work with children should not be limited to situations in which there is positive evidence of abuse.

Other pointers include failure to respond appropriately to the needs of children, neglecting some children in favour of others and failure to respect the wishes of parents all of which will be investigated further by Sequoia Movement management and where necessary the staff member will be removed from their position and or suspended.

DEALING WITH AN 'ON SITE' ALLEGATION

Should an allegation be made by a child against a member of the public all efforts should be made to ensure that the child and person in question do not come into contact again. The accusation should be taken seriously from the outset with the member of staff who the accusation has been reported to getting as much information as possible.

- The police should be called on an emergency 999 number and the police informed that a child protection issue has occurred and that immediate assistance is required.
- Any information that the child gives should be noted down for later use when reporting to the police and for internal reports.
- If safe to do so, Sequoia Movement management may approach the accused and inform them of the allegation and advise them that the police have been called and that it would be in their best interest to remain at the facility and resolve the issue.
- The accused should not be held against their will by any member of staff or public and a 'citizen's arrest' is not advised. The accused should be asked to stay at the centre until the authorities have dealt with the situation; however if the accused insists on leaving then they must be allowed to do so.
- A description of the accused and direction of where the accused was heading should be given to the police upon arrival.
- The police will give you a Crime Reference number.
- Internal incident reports should reflect the same information as any police statements so it is important to ensure both reports are completed at the earliest opportunity.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- Once the incident has been completed and the investigation is being taken further by the police, all staff involved must attend a formal debriefing by the manager leading the shift to ensure that the incident remains confidential.

MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every three years, or in the following circumstances:

1. Changes in legislation and/or government guidance.
2. Changes as a result of any other significant change or event.

This policy was last reviewed on 23rd March 2023

By Sarah Taylor (Safeguarding Lead)

CONTACT DETAILS

For any questions or concerns relating to this document please contact our Safeguarding/Welfare Officer:

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