LCC - Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTION

Our Policy

As part of our safeguarding policy, we will:

- ✓ Prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and adults at risk
- ✓ Value, listen to and respect children and adults at risk
- ✓ Adopt safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- ✓ Ensure everyone understand 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 adults at risk
- ✓ 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
- ✓ 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
- ✓ ensure that confidential, detailed, and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- ✓ record and store information securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance [more information about this is available from the Information Commissioner's Office]
- ✓ prevent the employment or deployment of unsuitable individuals by recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- ✓ appoint a designated safeguarding officers for each centre we operate, and a regional safeguarding officer for the Lakeland Climbing Centres and London Climbing Centres
- ✓ develop and implement an effective online safety policy and related procedures
- ✓ share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and their parents via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
- ✓ make sure that children, young people, and their parents know where to go for help if they have a concern

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or in the following circumstances:

- ✓ changes in legislation and/or government guidance

- ✓ as required by the local safeguarding partnership, UK Sport, or the British Mountaineering Council
- ✓ as a result of any other significant change or event

Our Designated Safeguarding Officers (Regional)

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Section 1: Purpose and Scope

1.1 Under sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 and chapter 14 of Care and Support Statutory Guidance (Safeguarding), issued under the Care Act 2014, Lakeland Climbing Centre Limited (LCC) are required to cooperate with local authorities to promote the well-being of children and adults at risk in each local authority area.

1.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2018) states that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Working Together outlines the duties of all organisations that work with children.

1.3 The purpose of this policy and procedure is to:

- Set out LCC's commitment to safeguarding the children, young people and adults at risk using its services and desire to create a culture of listening to children, young people, and adults at risk
- Provide guidance to staff working with children and adults at risk on safe and responsible working practices, to protect them from their actions/intentions being misinterpreted
- Outline the procedure for staff to follow if they suspect that a child, young person, or adult may be at risk of harm or guide staff how to respond if a disclosure is made to them
- Outline the procedure for staff to follow if they have a concern about a member of the public's behaviour in terms of a child or adult being harmed or their welfare being threatened
- Provide staff and managers with the procedure to use if an allegation is made against/concern raised about a member of staff
- Provide clear whistleblowing procedures, which are suitably referenced in staff training, and help establish a culture that encourages and enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk to be addressed
- Set out clearly LCC's processes for sharing information (where appropriate following the advice in Information Sharing - Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers, July 2018), including in England and Wales with other professionals and with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCPs) and Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs)
- Outline the measures that LCC will take to ensure that its staff are competent and safe to work with children and adults with care/support needs, including policies on when to
- Obtain a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and appropriate supervision and support for staff, including the undertaking of safeguarding training
- Describe how staff should respond to allegations made by, or concerns raised about an adult at risk – in terms of establishing the facts, ascertaining the adult's views, listening to wishes

and gaining consent (where possible) and enabling the adult to be empowered and supported and to achieve resolution and recovery, whilst recognising the first priority should always be to ensure the safety and well-being of the adult

- Describe the responsibilities of staff and managers

1.4 This policy and procedure applies to all staff, regardless of whether this is in a paid or unpaid capacity. The term 'staff' will be used in the policy to cover employees, casual workers, volunteers, and any others working in LCC centres or for LCC

1.5 Whilst this policy and procedure is focused on safeguarding children under the age of 18, some of the guidance will also have relevance to working with adults at risk. Whilst there is cross-over in terms of the broad aims of child and adult safeguarding/protection and the core components which make up an appropriate organisational response, there are also important differences between the two.

1.6 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy as:

- 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.

1.7 Safeguarding adults 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 process must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear, or unrealistic about their personal circumstances. Adults have different rights and responsibilities to children, including the right to choose to take risks in their lives and make decisions that others may think are not in their best interests.

1.8 The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- Has care and support needs (whether the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect

- 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.

People can have a need for care and support for a variety of reasons – for example they may have a learning disability, a physical disability, a chronic health condition or have a mental health issue. Such conditions may bring with them additional vulnerabilities, however having care and support needs does not mean that people are automatically adults at risk and need safeguarding.

Safeguarding adults is underpinned by:

- The Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005

Types of abuse suffered by adults identified in the Care Act 2014 are:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological/Emotional/Mental
- Financial and material
- Neglect and act of omission
- Discriminatory
- Organisational
- Modern Day Slavery
- Domestic Violence
- Self Neglect – including hoarding

Other types of harm that adults may experience include:

- Cyber Bullying
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Mate Crime
- Radicalisation

Section 2: Principles

2.1 LCC is committed to providing an environment that is safe, supportive and promotes the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk needs as paramount, within a culture that allows them to feel confident about raising concerns about their own and others' safety and wellbeing.

2.2 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and LCC aim to consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child (a child-centred approach). LCC recognises that everyone who encounters a child has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information, and taking prompt action. LCC advises staff to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

2.3 The principles of Adult Safeguarding in England in The England (Care Act 2014) sets out the following principles:

- Empowerment - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
- Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- Proportionality – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- Protection – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- Partnership – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse
- Accountability – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

2.4 LCC will take all reasonable steps to ensure that staff working with children and adults at risk within the organisation are competent and safe to do so, through following stringent recruitment procedures, providing training and having clear procedures to follow when concerns are raised.

2.5 LCC will not accept unlawful or unsafe practices from staff in relation to children, young people and adults at risk and will respond to all allegations of abuse or poor practices promptly and effectively. Where necessary, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

2.6 LCC will not tolerate or ignore inappropriate behaviour from customers or visitors in our centres. We display posters entitled good practice/guidelines for customer behaviour throughout our centres and use these if it is necessary to speak to customers about inappropriate behaviour.

Section 3: Contextual Safeguarding and Child-on-child abuse

3.1 Contextual Safeguarding expands the objectives of child protection systems, recognising that young people are vulnerable to abuse in a range of social contexts.

3.2 As well as threats to the welfare of children from within their families, children may be vulnerable to abuse or exploitation from outside their families. These extra-familial threats might arise at school and other educational establishments, from within peer groups, or more widely from within the wider community and/or online.

3.3 These threats can take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple threats, including: exploitation by criminal gangs and organised crime groups such as county lines, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation, and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation. These threats, which are outside the control of their families, cannot necessarily be addressed by traditional social work interventions, which focus on individual children and families. Contextual Safeguarding aims to create safety in the places and communities in which young people spend their time.

3.4 Extremist groups use the internet to radicalise and recruit and to promote extremist materials. Any potential harmful effects to individuals identified as vulnerable to extremist ideologies or being drawn into terrorism should also be considered. See the UK government website: https://act.campaign.gov.uk/

3.5 Children can abuse other children. This child-on-child abuse and can take many forms. This can include, but is not limited to, bullying (including cyberbullying), sexual violence and sexual harassment, physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm; sexting, the sharing of nude or semi-nude images and initiating/hazing type violence and rituals. In cases of child-on-child abuse or alleged child-on-child abuse all children involved should be treated as being at potential risk, including the child allegedly responsible for the abuse. Whilst it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys perpetrators, all child-on-child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously.

3.6 Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any age and sex. It can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children. Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physically and verbally) and are never acceptable. It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

3.7 Sexual harassment is ‘unwanted conduct of a sexual nature’ and can occur online and offline and includes sexual comments/’jokes’/taunting, physical behaviour, and online sexual

harassment (non-consensual sharing of images/videos, bullying, unwanted comments/coercion/threats) and upskirting. 'Upskirting' is now a criminal offence and is defined as 'taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing with the intention of viewing body parts for sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation/distress/alarm'.

3.8 Where appropriate, when responding to allegations/concerns of child-on-child abuse LCC will consult the relevant safeguarding partner and any relevant practice guidance issued by it. LCC will also consult the new advice which has been issued by the Department for Education (Keeping children safe in education, 1st of September 2022), as appropriate, if relevant to any allegations/concerns raised in relation to child-on-child abuse.

3.9 As with all types of child and adult abuse, LCC look to take a preventative approach to child-on-child abuse.

Section 4: Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) are responsible for:

- Logging and reporting incidents, allegations, or concerns
- Briefing and communicating with senior management and following any incident through to its conclusion with a Regional Safeguarding Officer (RSO)
- Promoting this policy and procedure to staff, and when appropriate parents/carers, children, and adults at risk
- Creating an environment which is safe and supportive
- Working with the Human Resources Group Manager to ensure that all staff working on LCC premises are safe and competent to do so
- Ensuring that the staff they manage follow the Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- Understanding and following the procedures laid out in this policy for addressing any concerns reported to them in relation to children and adults at risk
- Working with Human Resources to book staff onto the relevant training for their roles
- Ensuring correct supervision is included in respect of safeguarding.

4.2 Staff (including employees, casual staff, agency workers and volunteers) are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding this policy and procedure
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children, young people and adults at risk involved in activities for which they are responsible
- Following the Safeguarding Code of Conduct

- Attending the correct level of training for their role and demonstrating understanding and competency
- Understanding the procedure to follow if issues are raised about the safety or welfare of children or adults at risk

Recognising signs/indicators of possible abuse
Responding appropriately (doing nothing is not an option)
Recording what they have seen, heard, or been told
Reporting all concerns to the relevant senior manager.

4.3 Regional Safeguarding Officers (RSO) are responsible for:

- Taking overall responsibility for LCC's practices and procedures relating to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues amongst managers and staff and amongst parents/carers and children and young people and adults at risk using LCC facilities, including publicising and promoting this policy and procedure
- Regularly reviewing this policy and procedure and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct to ensure that they continue to meet statutory and organisational requirements
- Liaising with, working with, seeking advice from, and making referrals to the Local Authority Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), safeguarding partners, Safeguarding Adults Boards, police, local authority Designated Officers (LADOs), Children's social care/services, as is necessary in relation to the safeguarding of children, young people, or adults at risk
- Advising managers and staff on the appropriate course of action to take when a concern about safeguarding is raised, including with regards to information sharing (referring to the principles set out by the HM Government in July 2018 of 'necessary and proportionate, relevant, adequate, timely, secure, record')
- Ensuring safeguarding training is made available to managers and staff, and monitoring attendance
- Ensuring safeguarding training is up to date and reflects best practice

SECTION TWO - SAFER WORKING PRACTICES

Section 5: Duty of Care

5.1 All staff working with children, young people, and adults at risk on The Lakeland Climbing Centre Ltd (LCC) premises have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. This is defined as taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of any child,

young person or adult at risk engaged in an activity for which they are responsible. All staff working with children, young people and adults at risk are considered to owe them this duty of care, both morally and legally, and failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.

5.2 The duty of care encompasses the way that staff exercises authority, manage risk, and conduct themselves with the children, young people, and adults at risk they work with. Children, young people, and adults at risk have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be protected from physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect. The staff working with them need to demonstrate integrity, maturity, and good judgement at all times.

5.3 Organisations also have a duty of care towards staff, and part of the purpose of this policy and procedure, and the Safeguarding Code of Conduct, is to ensure that staff are protected from misinterpretation of their actions/intentions.

5.4 To help facilitate this, wherever possible staff should avoid working on a one to one basis with children, young people, and adults at risk in an environment away from other adults as this may leave the member of staff in a vulnerable position. Where one to one working is required, this should be in an open environment, where other people are able to witness the activities.

Section 6: Safeguarding Code of Conduct

6.1 Refer to LCC Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Section 7: Breaches

7.1 Refer to the section on safeguarding in the training, development and promotion section and the section entitled gross misconduct in the staff handbook.

SECTION THREE – PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO/RAISING CONCERNS

Section 8: Procedure for responding to/raising concerns about a child's welfare

8.1 If a member of staff witnesses anything which gives them cause for concern about the welfare of a child or recognises signs or symptoms that a child might be being harmed, then they should follow the procedure outlined below (unless they believe the alleged perpetrator

to be another member of staff, in which case the procedure under section 11 should be followed).

Harm to a child may include:

- Physical abuse – hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child
- Emotional abuse – persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development
- Sexual abuse – forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities (which may include physical activities or non-contact activities such as looking at sexual material)
- 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
- Exploitation – human trafficking, forced labour and modern slavery, which includes sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, forced prostitution and the exploitation of children for the production of child abuse images and videos. This type of child abuse is listed a separate entity in Northern Ireland but is covered by the other 4 types in England, Wales, and Scotland
- So-called 'honour-based' violence (HBV) – incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family/community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and practices such as breast ironing/flattening
- Signs/indicators may include:
- Physical indicators – repeated injuries, bruises, burns, marks from implements etc. (maybe inconsistent stories/excuses about injuries)
- Behavioural indicators – unexplained changes in behaviour (becoming withdrawn or aggressive), distrust of adults, changes in performance or attendance, reluctance to remove clothing

8.2 Whilst any child may benefit from early help, HM Government suggests organisations are particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled and has specific additional needs
- Has special educational needs (whether or not they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan)
- Is a young carer
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups

- Is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, or exploitation
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- Is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- Has returned home to their family from care
- Is a privately fostered child.

8.3 The member of staff should:

- Report their concerns immediately to the most senior manager on duty, who must complete an incident report form and may seek advice from a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) if necessary
- Write a statement recording their concerns in a clear factual way, providing as much detail as possible about the child, the alleged perpetrator (if known) and the incidents/signs leading them to raise the concern (complete an incident report form).
- Ask open, not leading, questions with regards to incidents/injuries, keep an open mind and not make assumptions or offer explanations when gathering facts or information about an allegation, incident, or injury. Information gathering is distinct from a ‘formal’ investigation
- Avoid discussing the matter further with the child or parents/carers if this would potentially put the child at further risk of harm or attempting to investigate the matter themselves until further advice has been taken (to ensure this doesn’t conflict or interfere with a police investigation)
- Maintain strict confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with anyone other than the senior manager, DSO or anyone legitimately investigating/involved in the case
- Not contact the police or Children’s Social Care/Services themselves.

8.4 If a child discloses to a member of staff that someone in another setting is causing them harm, the member of staff should follow the above procedure, but in addition should:

- Reassure the child that they are right to tell someone
- Listen to the child, but keep questions to a minimum to avoid leading or intimidating them
- Inform the child about the need to share the information with other adults who can help them
- Make a written factual record of the discussion/disclosure as soon as possible
- Follow 8.3 above.

8.5 The DSO contacted will decide on the necessary course of action, taking advice from the relevant Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or Safeguarding Board. This may include referral to the police or Children's Social Care/Services. The parents/carers will normally be informed of the action being taken, unless it is decided in discussion with the MASH team/Police that this is not in the best interests of the child. The DSO involved will also monitor progress in the case and will provide updates to relevant senior managers (including the relevant Centre Manager, Regional Manager and HR Manager) and, if appropriate, feedback to the staff member who raised the concerns. A record of all cases raised will be maintained.

See LCC Safeguarding Incident Reporting Flowchart – Part 1

Section 9: Procedure for responding to/raising concerns about an adult's welfare

9.1 Staff and volunteers are not expected to be an expert in recognition of a safeguarding concern; however, all adults working, volunteering and participating have a duty of care to be vigilant and respond appropriately to suspicions of poor practice, abuse or bullying. They should also respond to any indication of abuse that may be occurring outside of the organisation setting.

This does not mean that it is your responsibility to decide if a situation is poor practice, abuse or bullying, but it is your responsibility to report your concerns to the or Designated Safeguarding Officer.

9.2 If a member of staff witnesses anything which gives them cause for concern about the welfare of an adult, recognises signs or symptoms an adult might be at risk or an adult discloses that they are being or are in danger of being harmed, then they should follow the procedure outlined below (unless they believe the alleged perpetrator to be another member of staff, in which case the procedure under 11.0 should be followed).

Risks to an adult may include (see Social Care Institute for Excellence update April 2018):

- Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate physical sanction
- 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 to

- 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 – 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 age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation
- 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
- Radicalisation and recruitment into terrorist organisations – adults with care/support needs are often targeted by such organisations. Organisations have a role to play in trying to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

  Signs/indicators that someone has been or is on the way to becoming radicalised are numerous and wide ranging. They could include:
  Emotional signs/indicators – being short-tempered, angry, exhibiting a new-found arrogance, being withdrawn, depression
  Verbal signs/indicators – being fixated on a subject, being closed to new ideas/conversations, using new language/ words, asking inappropriate questions, using 'scripted' speech

Physical signs/indicators – new tattoos, changes in routines, having a new circle of friends, particular use of the internet, being absent from home/school/college/sports training.

The following 6 principles should inform the ways staff work with adults with regards to safeguarding:

1. Empowerment – being supportive and encouraging adults to make their own decisions and give informed consent
2. Prevention – staff taking action before harm occurs
3. Proportionality – staff making the least intrusive response to the risk presented
4. Protection – staff giving support and representation for those in greatest need
5. Partnership – staff finding local solutions through services working with their communities
6. Accountability – staff delivering accountability and transparency in safeguarding.

9.2 The member of staff should:

- Seek the consent of the adult at risk concerned to share the information
- Not disclose information about the identity of the adult to anyone else if the adult at risk does not give his/her consent
- Report their concerns without disclosing information about the identity of the adult immediately to the most senior manager on duty, who can seek advice from a DSO if necessary
- Communicate with the adult in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- Recognise that adults may make decisions about their lives that involve an element of risk-taking
- Ensure the maximum amount of independence, privacy and dignity for the adult is at the heart of everything they do
- Be aware there are circumstances where information can be shared without consent such as when the adult does not have the capacity to consent, it is in their best interest and/or the public interest because it may affect other people, or a serious crime has been committed
- Work with the DSO and manager to make a decision about whether information should be shared if the adult at risk has not given their consent for information to be shared
- Ask open, not leading, questions with regards to incidents/injuries, keep an open mind and not make assumptions or offer explanations when gathering facts or information about an allegation, incident, or injury. Information gathering is distinct from a ‘formal’ investigation
- Avoid attempting to investigate the matter themselves until further advice has been taken (to ensure this doesn’t conflict or interfere with a Police investigation)

- If information is to be shared, write a statement recording their concerns in a clear factual way and providing as much detail as possible about, the alleged perpetrator (if known) and the incidents/signs leading them to raise the concern, or the details of the disclosure made
- Maintain strict confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with anyone other than the senior manager, DSO or anyone legitimately investigating/involved in the case
- Not contact the Police or the Adult Social Care/Services themselves.

9.3 The manager will submit a report about the concern/disclosure. Depending on whether the adult involved has given consent for information to be shared, is considered to have the capacity to make decisions or whether it is considered to be in the public interest/the adult's best interest to share the information, the report will either be anonymous or contain data that allows the individual to be identified.

9.4 The DSO involved will decide on the necessary course of action, taking advice from the relevant Adult Social Care team or Health and Social Care Trust, and may have a conversation about the correct course of action with the local authority safeguarding adults' team without disclosing the identity of the person in the first instance. This may include a referral to the Police or Adult Social Care/Services. The DSO will also monitor progress in the case and provide updates to the senior management team and, if appropriate, feedback to the staff member who raised the concerns. A record of all concerns raised will be maintained.

See LCC Safeguarding Incident Reporting Flowchart – Part 3

Section 10: Procedure for responding to/raising concerns about a member of the public's behaviour

10.1 Any member of staff witnessing behaviour from a member of the public that causes them to have concerns about the welfare and safety of a child or adult at risk, should follow the procedure outlined below:

Concerning behaviour may include:

- Attempting to photograph or video a child or adult without permission
- Loitering and watching children or adults without cause, particularly when they are in a state of undress (such as in a swimming pool or changing rooms)
- Approaching and talking to children or adults in a way that makes them appear uncomfortable

- Any kind of physical contact with a child or adult who does not know them
- Causing significant harm to a child or adult.

10.2 The member of staff should:

- Report their concerns immediately to the most senior manager on duty
- Continue to monitor the suspect while they are in the building to ensure that no children or adults are at risk whilst the manager is deciding on the correct course of action
- Record a full description of the individual (sex, age, skin tone, hair, height, build, dress, and distinguishing features) with their membership number and vehicle registration if available
- If applicable, try to distract the suspect from leaving the building in a non-confrontational way (having due regard for their own personal safety) if the Police have been called
- Maintain strict confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with anyone other than the senior manager, DSO or any other staff legitimately involved.

10.3 The duty manager should:

- Inform the DSO or centre manager
- Consider (in collaboration with their DSO/centre a manger) if the behaviour is low level enough, that a conversation with the adult to make them aware that their behaviour might be considered a safeguarding risk, could stop the behaviour immediately.
- Decide, in consultation with the DSO and Centre Manager, whether it is necessary to call the Police (but dial 999 immediately if an assault has been committed or there is imminent danger)
- If appropriate, inform the parents/carers of the child/children of the concerns raised and actions taken
- Complete a report of the incident as soon as practically possible (and preferably within 24hrs of the incident occurring/concerns being raised)
- Maintain strict confidentiality and avoid discussing the matter with anyone other than the member of staff who raised the concern, the parents/carers, the DSO, and the Police.

10.4 The DSO should:

- Help decide whether it is necessary to call the Police
- Inform the relevant senior managers (including the Centre Manager, Regional Manager and HR Manager)

- Monitor progress in the case and provide feedback to the relevant senior managers, the staff member who raised the concern and the child(ren)'s parents/carers, especially if the Police are called
- Ensure a full record of the case is maintained.

See LCC Safeguarding Incident Reporting Flowchart – Part 4

Section 11: Procedure for responding to allegations made against/concerns raised about a member of staff/volunteer

11.1 If an allegation is made or concern is raised in relation to a child, young person or adult at risk and the behaviour/conduct of a member of staff, by a parent, child, member of the public or other member of staff, the matter must be taken very seriously and dealt with promptly and appropriately, using the following procedure:

Learning of allegations/concerns

11.2 Managers or staff may encounter allegations made/concerns raised about a member of staff from a number of different sources and their approach may need to differ slightly depending on how the matter comes to light.

11.3 In all cases, as much information should be gathered as possible from the complainant to allow the matter to be considered, investigated, or escalated effectively. This should be done sensitively and confidentially, away from other parents, children, or members of the public. Notes should be made of all information gathered.

11.4 If a member of staff does not feel equipped to obtain the necessary information, they should ask the complainant if they can wait while they go and get a manager or more senior staff member. In any case, they should inform the complainant that a manager is likely to contact them to obtain further information as part of an investigation or information gathering exercise.

11.5 If a child or adult at risk is physically hurt, appropriate medical attention should be sought immediately.

Allegations/concerns from a parent/carer

11.6 If a parent/carer makes the allegation/raises the concern, the staff member will need to ask them for:

- Full details of the incident/concerns, including details of the alleged perpetrator
- Information about whether they witnessed the events or were told about them (and, if the latter, who told them)
- Details of any reaction by the child or adult at risk

- Their (i.e., the parent/carer's) and the child's or adult's at risk full contact details.

Allegations/concerns from a child

11.7 Particular care needs to be taken when listening to disclosure of allegation/concern from a child to ensure that they are dealt with age appropriately, sensitively and the child does not feel intimidated. Ideally, discussions should take place with another member of staff present as a witness. A single member of staff should not talk to the child in a closed room. The member(s) of staff should:

- Reassure the child that they are right to tell someone and that they are not in trouble
- Listen to the child, but keep questions to a minimum to avoid leading or intimidating them
- Inform the child about the need to share the information with other adults who can help them and if possible, gain the child's consent for this information sharing
- Make a written factual record of the discussion as soon as possible
- Report the allegation/concern immediately to the most senior manager on duty, who will then contact the DSO in order that they can take advice and initiate appropriate action.

Allegations/concerns from a member of the public

11.8 If a member of the public makes the allegation/raises the concern, the staff member will need to ask them for:

- Full details of the allegation/concern, including details of the child or adult at risk involved and who the allegation is made against, or concern raised about
- Confirmation of whether they witnessed the events or were told about them (and, if the latter, who told them)
- If the member of public does not know the names of the people involved, then sufficient details, dates, times, descriptions etc. should be taken to allow the individuals involved to be identified
- If the member of public does know the names of staff involved, check how they know them and what previous interaction they have had with them
- Their (i.e., the member of the public's) full contact details
- Report the allegation/concern immediately to the most senior manager on duty. The manager will then contact the DSO in order that they can take advice and initiate appropriate action.

Allegations/concerns from another member of staff

11.9 If a member of staff wishes to make an allegation of harm to a child, young person or adult at risk or raise a concern of poor practice by another member of staff, they should:

- Report their allegation/concern verbally to the most senior manager on site

- Write a statement giving the date and time of the incident, a full account of the circumstances, details of who else was there and any other information which might help with an investigation
- Be prepared to attend an investigatory meeting and be a witness at a disciplinary hearing if there is found to be a case to answer.

Reporting the allegation/concern

11.10 Any member of staff being told about an allegation/concern must notify the most senior manager on duty at the premises immediately.

11.11 The senior manager must report all allegations/concerns to the DSO at the earliest opportunity.

11.12 The DSO and other senior managers will require as much information as possible to enable them to decide on the correct course of action. This will include (where available):

- The child/adult's name, home address (including postcode), telephone number and date of birth
- The name and details of the person making the allegation/raising the concern and those of the person they raised them with
- The name and details of the alleged perpetrator (if known)
- Dates and times of incidents, any special factors or other relevant information if known
- The child/adult's account, if available, of what happened
- Confirmation of whether the parents/other agencies have been contacted
- Details of any witnesses (if known).

Confidentiality must be observed throughout this process

Taking appropriate action

11.13 The DSO and HR Manager will use the information provided by the complainant and senior manager to identify the correct course of action, taking advice from the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), who should always be notified (within one working day) of any allegations which meet threshold criteria and relate to a member of staff:

- Behaving in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committing a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaving towards children in a way that indicates they may be unsuitable to work with children.

11.14 Action by the DSO and HR Manager may include referral to/informing:

- The Police for a Police investigation of a possible criminal offence to be initiated
- Children's Social Care/Services for an assessment to see if the child is in need of protection or other services
- OFSTED (if involving a registered provision)
- Adult Social Care/Services for an assessment to see if the adult is in need of additional support/services
- The relevant sport National Governing Body Welfare Officer or Safeguarding Manager
- The local authority Designated Officer
- Relevant senior managers

11.15 Having taken advice, the DSO and HR Manager will discuss and agree with the relevant senior managers how the alleged perpetrator will be informed of the allegation/concern.

11.16 The DSO and HR Manager will also need to consider what support may need to be provided for the parties involved in the process, including children and their parents/guardians, adults with care/support needs and the alleged perpetrator.

11.17 Unless the Police, Children's Social Care/Services or Adult Social Care/Services investigation is taking place and LCC has been asked to wait for this to be completed, an appropriate manager will be identified to undertake an investigation into the allegation/concern. This investigation will include obtaining any additional information necessary from the complainant, children, parents/guardians, and adults at risk, interviewing witnesses and holding an investigatory meeting with the alleged perpetrator to obtain their version of events.

11.18 Even where the matter is relatively minor, or believed to be unfounded, and is likely to result in informal or no actions being taken, some level of investigation should be undertaken to reassure all parties that the matter is being taken seriously and there is nothing more untoward behind the allegations/concerns.

11.19 The Investigating Officer should aim to complete their investigation in a timely fashion and the process should be considered a high priority.

11.20 Where a matter, if proven (substantiated), would constitute serious or gross misconduct, the member of staff may be suspended in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure outlined in the LCC Staff Handbook.

11.21 If, (following the investigation) it is felt that there is a disciplinary case to answer, then a disciplinary hearing will be set up in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. The disciplinary hearing should aim to take place as soon as is practicable.

11.22 If, following a disciplinary hearing, a staff member is dismissed or LCC ceases to use the services of someone who is not a direct employee, then the DSO will consult the local authority Designated Officer and/or local authority MASH team to determine whether a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is required. This is likely to be appropriate if the individual is deemed unsuitable for further work with children or adults at risk.

11.23 If, following investigation, the view is taken that there is not a formal disciplinary case to answer, other informal action may be considered appropriate. This may include:

- An informal warning being given
- Increased management or supervision
- The setting of more stringent boundaries for the staff member to work within
- Training or other input to help the individual understand how their behaviour might have been misinterpreted or how to improve their practice.

11.24 If the allegation/concern is found to be malicious or unfounded, further consideration will need to be given to any support the member of staff to enable them to come to terms with the incident and resume effective working. This may include support from their manager, the staff team, occupational health, or available counselling services.

11.25 If the allegation/concern relates to a DSO a member of the senior management team and HR Manager should be consulted. If the allegation/concern relates to a senior member of the management team it should be reported directly to the Managing Director.

Monitoring Progress and Record Keeping

11.26 The DSO and HR Manager should regularly monitor progress with the case and ensure the necessary liaison takes place between any external bodies involved (such as the Police or local authority Designated Officer) and those carrying out the internal processes.

11.27 Written feedback on progress with the case (whether internal or external) should first be discussed with the HR Manager/Regional Safeguarding Officer before being submitted to the:

- Parents/guardians and child/young person
- Adult at risk
- Complainant (if not one of the above)
- Member of staff that the allegation has been made against/concern raised about
- Regional Managers and Managing Director.

This feedback may include (as relevant):

- The referral of the matter to the local authority MASH team and/or Designated Officer
- Any decision to refer to the Police or Children's Social Care/Services or Adult Social Care/Services
- The timescales for the internal investigation
- The suspension of the member of staff
- Any decision to proceed to a disciplinary hearing and the outcome of that hearing.

11.28 For each case, the DSO and HR Manager will keep a clear and comprehensive written record of the:

- Nature of the allegation made/concern raised
- Actions taken (including referrals to other agencies)
- Outcomes and findings of the internal investigation/disciplinary process
- Outcomes of any external investigations.

11.29 A copy of this record will be provided to the staff member and a copy which has been authorised and signed by the HR Manager will be kept on the individual's personal file until the accused has reached normal pension age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation/concern if that is longer (regardless of whether the person leaves the organisation). This is to enable LCC to give an accurate response to requests for references and to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if concerns arise again at a future date.

11.30 All information about the case will be stored securely and treated with the utmost confidentiality.

See LCC Safeguarding Incident Reporting Flowchart – Part 5

Section 12: Reporting of safeguarding procedures being used during MTE courses.

12.1 As a Mountain Training England (MTE) provider, LCC must report to MTE whenever our own safeguarding reporting procedures are invoked.

12.2 The information to be shared can be brief and does not usually need to include confidential information.

12.3 Information to share includes a brief description of the nature of the concern, the action taken in response, and the outcome. When a safeguarding incident has been reported to the MTE, there is a check box on the LCC safeguarding incident report form to check to indicate that this has been done.

12.4 The MTE states that in some cases it may be appropriate to share identifiable information when consent has been given for this purpose. The example is when the sharing of such information will facilitate better support for that person who continues to be involved in Mountain Training courses.

12.5 The form to report to MTE of a safeguarding incident can be found at the bottom of their webpage, https://www.mountain-training.org/england/safeguarding

Section 13: Whistleblowing

13.1 If any member of staff or others working on LCC premises (including freelancers or contractors) have concerns about poor working practices in relation to children or adults at risk or believe that the welfare of children or adults at risk is not being taken seriously, they should discuss these in the first instance with their manager or the most senior manager on duty.

13.2 Concerns about the welfare of individual children or adults at risk should normally be raised under this policy and procedure. However, if a member of staff is concerned about a wider organisational issue or has raised concerns under the above procedures and feels that the matter had not been taken sufficiently seriously, then they can take the matter further using the Whistleblowing Policy in the staff handbook. This policy supports staff and others to raise concerns made in good faith without fear of repercussion.

13.3 Employees who are worried about the way their, or another, organisation is dealing with child safeguarding/protection issues and who don't feel able to escalate these issues internally can contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line. It can be reached for free on 0800 028 0285 and can be contacted anonymously. The Association of British Climbing

Walls can also be contacted on safeguarding@abcwalls.co.uk and the British Mountaineering council can be contacted on safegaurding@thebmc.co.uk.

Section 14: Complaints

14.1 Where a parent/carer or member of the public has concerns about poor working practices or has raised an issue that they feel has not been taken sufficiently seriously, they can take the matter further under the Customer Comments and Complaints Procedure.

SECTION FOUR – ORGANISATIONAL MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN/ADULTS AT RISK

Section 15: LCC Safeguarding Responsibilities

15.1 The HR Manager, alongside the Designated Safeguarding Officers and Regional Managers are the Safeguarding Leads for the organisation and have the key responsibility for safeguarding in the organisation. Staff with these responsibilities have undertaken appropriate training to enable them to:

- Set up the appropriate organisational procedures, systems, and practices to ensure LCC's responsibilities for safeguarding are fully met
- Advise managers and staff on safeguarding issues and the appropriate course of action to take when a concern about a child or an adult at risk is raised
- Liaise with other agencies (such as the local authority MASH team and/or Designated Officer, Police, Children's Social Care/Services, Adult Social Care/Services, and Health and Social Care Trust) as is necessary in relation to safeguarding matters.

15.2 A list of DSOs and Safeguarding Trainers can be obtained from the HR Manager and is available on the IMS Documents section of the intranet.

Section 16: Recruitment Procedures

16.1 LCC recognises that the nature of the services it provides may attract a small minority of people with harmful or unlawful intentions towards children or adults at risk and is committed to ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent such people from working on its premises and/or for the organisation.

16.2 All staff working with children, young people or adults at risk must be recruited following LCC's recruitment and selection procedures. These require potential candidates to:

- Complete an application form, providing information about their qualifications and full career history
- Complete a form to declare all past and/or current criminal convictions and/or investigations, and consent to a DBS check being undertaken
- Undertake an interview, during which any gaps in employment history or unusual employment history patterns should be accounted for
- Provide 2 professional references
- Provide evidence of identity (such as passport or driving licence) with a photograph
- Provide evidence of having obtained the relevant qualifications
- Meet all person specifications for posts working with children or adults at risk including the qualifications and competencies necessary to work with and safeguard children, young people and adults at risk.
- Be informed at the outset that LCC has a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Safeguarding Code of Conduct that it stringently applies
- Have references and qualifications checked thoroughly for posts working with children or adults at risk
- Have or comply to have a basic or enhanced DBS (including children's barred list) check for anyone appointed to relevant posts. LCC aims to recomplete either a basic or enhanced DBS check every three years for any staff delivering instruction/coaching sessions.

Section 17: Safeguarding Training

17.1 All staff (including freelancers, agency workers and volunteers) will be informed of the need to adhere to the provisions of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Safeguarding Code of Conduct as part of their induction when they commence work.

17.2 In addition:

- All staff who work regularly with children, young people and adults at risk are required to complete an introductory Safeguarding and protecting children course. If the staff member has never attended a safeguarding training course before, the first course they attend should be an in person three hour course. Subsequent refresher training may be an online course. Records must be kept demonstrating attendance and completion of these courses.
- Coaching staff are encouraged to attend UK Coaching safeguarding training courses. Where possible at least one coach at each session should have attended safeguarding training

- Where possible managers involved in the recruitment of staff should be familiar with LCC's Recruitment and Selection policies and procedures to ensure that they understand safer recruitment practices
- Staff with particular responsibilities for safeguarding (including the HR Manager and regional mangers as needed) will attend Designated Safeguarding Officer training course every three years.

17.3 Safeguarding training for staff will include information on:

- The purpose and need for safeguarding and child protection
- Preventative and precautionary measures
- Recognising signs and indicators of abuse and neglect
- Responding - personal responsibilities for safeguarding
- Recording and reporting - procedures to follow in response to concerns.

Section 18: Record Keeping

18.1 LCC recognises that it is essential that confidential, accurate and comprehensive written records are maintained wherever concerns are raised about the conduct of anyone working with or coming into contact with children, young people, and adults at risk. The HR Manager and Designated Safeguarding Officers (one per site) are responsible for maintaining these records.

18.2 Records of any concerns raised about the welfare of children or adults at risk in relation to the conduct of staff, parents/carers, members of the public or adults in other settings will also be maintained by the HR Manager and DSO's, along with any safeguarding related issues raised under the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure or Customer Comments and Complaints Procedure.

18.3 All written records relating to safeguarding will be securely stored in accordance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 and LCC's own Privacy Policy and treated with the utmost confidentiality, only being shared with those who have a legitimate right to obtain information about the specific case.

18.4 Safeguarding reports, providing (anonymised) information on any new cases raised and referrals made will be provided to the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis. A Safeguarding Report, containing summary information about the number and type of cases

raised during the year and any other relevant strategic information, will be provided to the LCC Directors annually.

18.5 Under section 11 of the Children Act any safeguarding records required by the local authority will be made available to them.

Section 19: Organisations that deliver services in LCC facilities

19.1 Organisations that deliver services to children, young people, and adults at risk in LCC facilities will be required to sign a declaration confirming that they have safeguarding policies and procedures in place that comply with the requirements of Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Care Act 2014. LCC reserves the right to request copies of these policies and procedures at any time.

19.2 Bookings should be dealt with in accordance with the LCC Booking Terms and Conditions, Safety Rules, and Group Supervision Policies.

19.3 If any member of staff is concerned about the safety or welfare of any children, young people or adults at risk engaged in an activity run by an external group, they must follow the procedure laid out in Section Three and inform the most senior manager on duty immediately.

Section 20: Associated Internal Documents

LCC Safeguarding Statement
LCC Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
LCC Staff Handbook
LCC Social Media and Photography Policy
LCC Safeguarding Reporting Flowcharts
LCC Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Section 21: Further Information and Documents

The Children Act 2004
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)
Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (2018)
Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014 (Chapter 14 especially)

The Care Act (updated July 2018)
Making Safeguarding Personal (Guide: 2014)
Contextual Safeguarding: An overview of the operational, strategic and conceptual framework (2017)
Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children in Schools and Colleges (2018)
Information Sharing - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (2018)
Mental Capacity Act (2005)
Mental Capacity Amendment Act (2019) – including the Liberty Protection Safeguards
Age UK Factsheet (February 2018)
Types and indicators of adult abuse updated, Social Care Institute for Excellence (April 2018)
Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015)
Children and Social Work Act (2017)
Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with children Farrer & Co (2020)
The Human Rights Act 1998
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act (2018)