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Supporting and accommodating young people

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safeguarding & child protection policy & procedure

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# PURPOSE

This policy is just one of the documents Price Care have in place to ensure safeguarding is at the heart of our activities’

This policy is intended to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive Price Cares services.

Price Care as an organisation believe that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and are committed to the protection of children and young people and this policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safe guarding.

# SCOPE

This policy statement applies to anyone working on behalf of Price Care, including senior managers, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students.

Price Care implement stringent recruitment procedures in line with safer recruitment practices (see safer recruitment policy & procedures) with the aim of ensuring that no one who is unsuitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults is employed in our workforce. It is the duty of all people employed or associated with the organisation to abide by this policy.

# LEGAL FRAMEWORK

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England.

# INTRODUCTION

Price Care provides accommodation, care, and support services to vulnerable and looked after children aged 16-18. We are committed to preventing the abuse of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults in our care. We will ensure that our organisation, its activities, staffing, policies, and procedures are aimed at providing an environment where all our service users feel secure and happy.

Price Care considers Safeguarding to be at the very top of our list of priorities and we will report to and as necessary, engage the support and expertise of relevant external agencies.

Safeguarding legislation and government guidance say that safeguarding means:

* Ensuring that children are growing up in an environment consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Taking positive and preventative action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcome

This policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually as part of the organisations safeguarding review. However, we will update the policy as necessary in line with any changes to legislation/good practice guidelines etc.

WE AT PRICE CARE BELIEVE THAT

* Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind.
* We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them.

WE AT PRICE CARE RECOGNISE

* The welfare of the child is paramount and should underpin all child protection work.
* All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse and to expect that adults in positions of authority will do everything possible to foster and protect those rights.
* Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
* Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.
* All children and young people have the right to grow up in a caring and safe environment.
* All individuals representing Price Care have a responsibility to promote non- abusive relationships and create anti abusive environments.
* All individuals representing Price Care have a responsibility to inform parents, carers and/professionals of its duty to follow up any safeguarding concerns and report suspected cases of abuse when disclosed or observed.
* The importance of valuing diversity, respect for different cultures, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, religions, ages, genders, and sexual preferences.

PRICE CARE AIM TO KEEP OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFE BY:

* Valuing, listening to and respecting them
* Appointing a nominated child protection/safeguarding lead.
* Developing child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures which reflect best practice
* Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately
* Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise. (See anti bullying Policy).
* Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy and related procedures
* Sharing information about child protection and safeguarding best practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions
* Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made (Safe recruitment Policy)
* Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures
* Implementing a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
* Raising awareness of safeguarding issues, equipping young people and vulnerable adults with the skills needed to keep them safe through training and awareness raising
* Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
* Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
* Valuing their independence by allowing service users opportunities to act and think without reference to another person, including a willingness to incur a degree of calculated risk.
* Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff, and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
* Recording and storing information professionally and securely (see Data Protection and confidentiality Policy)

# DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION LEAD

Price Care’s Designated Child Protection Lead is James Robertson.

The roles and responsibilities for this role are:

• To be a point of reference, contact and support for other staff in cases of suspicion or disclosure

• To undertake training in inter-agency working

• To ensure all staff employed by the organisation have received relevant safeguarding training

• To attend child protection conference where appropriate

• To keep accurate secure written records of referrals and concerns

• To keep up to date with relevant information and development in child protection

# SAFE GUARDING PARTNERS

The local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

* **The Local Authority**
* **The Clinical Commissioning Group** for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.
* **The Chief Officer of Police** for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.

Working together with other relevant agencies, they must co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of work to protect and promote the welfare of children, including making arrangements to identify and support children at risk of harm.

LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (LADO)

* The DCPL will immediately inform the LADO if an allegation of abuse is made against any member of staff or volunteer.
* Price Care will seek advice from the LADO without delay, should an employee be accused or suspected of abusing a child or young person. The organisation will make appropriate arrangements to ensure the safety of the child, young person or vulnerable adult whilst providing a duty of care to staff.

# CATEGORIES OF CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse can take various forms. For the purposes of Price Care staff we have categorised the following:

* Physical abuse
* Sexual abuse
* Emotional/Psychological abuse
* Neglect by others
* Institutional abuse
* Self-neglect
* Financial abuse

physical abuse

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

sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact including assault by penetration or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing and touching outside of clothing. This also consists of involving children to look at or engage in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in a sexual inappropriate way or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.

emotional/psychological abuse

Involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or young person such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to children 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 the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child in participating in normal social interaction. It may also 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 involved in all types of maltreatment of a child though it may occur alone.

neglect by other

The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs is 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. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

• Providing adequate food, clothing, and shelter

• Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger

• Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

• Unresponsiveness to a child’s basic emotional needs

institutional abuse

Institutional abuse occurs when the lifestyles of children and young people are sacrificed in favour of the rituals, routines and/or restrictive practices of the home or care setting. Institutional abuse is the repeatedly poor care of children and young people or a group of children and young people by those working in the care establishment. Children and young people living within an institution for example a children’s home or a residential special school are potentially vulnerable to institutional abuse

self-neglect

Where a child or young person constantly fails to respond to their own needs, and which has a detrimental effect on their health and well-being. Where the inability of a person to understand the consequences of his or her actions or inaction and where this inability leads to or may lead to harm.

financial abuse

Financial abuse occurs when an individual’s resources are being inappropriately used to the advantage of another person

# INDICATIONS OF ABUSE

The following is a list of signs and symptoms that may be consistent with abuse; some children can exhibit one or more of these signs for other reasons. If there are concerns about a child displaying any of these indicators the concern should be shared with the DCPL and/or a senior manager.

physical indicators of abuse

* Unexpected bruises/welts/lacerations/abrasions: On face, lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks, thighs in various stages of healing
* Clustering forming regular patterns
* Reflecting shape of article used, e.g. belt, buckle, electrical flex on several different surface areas regularly appearing after an absence from placement, weekend, or holiday
* Bite marks or fingernail marks.

unexplained burns

* Cigar or cigarette burns especially on soles, buttocks, palms or back
* Immersion’ burns, where hands, feet or body have been forcibly immersed in very hot water
* Patterns like electrical burner iron etc.
* Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, or torso.

unexplained fractures

* To skull, nose, facial structure
* in various stages of healing
* Multiple of spiral fractures

behavioural indicators

* Flinching when approached or touched
* Reluctance to change clothes
* Wary of adult contact
* Difficult to comfort
* Apprehension when other children cry Crying
* Irritability
* Frightened of parents
* Rebelliousness in adolescence
* Reported injury caused by parents
* Behavioral extremes- aggressiveness, withdrawal, impulsiveness
* Regression or child-like behavior
* Apathy
* Depression
* Poor peer relationships
* Panic in response to pain

# STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

when to act

There are primarily four circumstances that one may encounter to which must be responded to prevent the possibility of harm or further harm to a young person.

* Any direct observation of abuse, or any third-party allegation
* Admission of or someone seeking help because they have harmed or may harm a child or young person
* Upon a child’s own disclosure
* Any emotional, behavioural, or physical signs of abuse

# REPORTING PROCEDURE

Where a staff member or volunteer suspects a child or young person is being neglected, physically, emotionally, or sexually abused the staff member should follow the process below:

Any concerns should be reported verbally to your Service Manager and/or the DCPL. The individual is then required to complete a detailed personal record of what you have seen, heard or been informed of regarding the incident or allegation using an incident report form which are immediately available upon request from your line manager or the HR Department.

It should be noted that that the taking and retaining of records is important at all stages during this process. When compiling notes, the individual should do so in the knowledge that at some stage they may be used as evidence in a criminal prosecution. Therefore, they should be made at the time of the event or as soon afterwards as possible. All records / notes will be retained by the DCPL.

Any individual making a complaint or allegation whether they are staff, volunteers, carers, or members of the public should be reassured that:

* Their comments will usually be treated confidentially but their concerns may be shared if they or others are at significant risk
* They will be taken seriously
* They will be given support and protection if necessary
* They will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner

It should be noted: Employees who speak out (whistle blow) against their employers and/or managers in such circumstances are protected by law from being discriminated against because of the disclosure.

involving others outside the organisation

* Police: If at any time the situation involves something which is against the law, or a staff member witnesses is in danger then the Police must be contacted at the earliest opportunity. The DCPL will initiate this contact. In such circumstances you should be aware that the Police will need to gather evidence.
* Family/carers of abused person: It would be usual to inform such individuals of the circumstances unless by doing so you increase the risk to the child or young person, or you risk contaminating evidence. Please liaise with the DCPL before any such action is taken.
* Professionals: The DCPL is responsible for liaising with professionals in the disclosure of any suspicious or allegations of abuse.

self-reporting

Price Care actively supports a culture of self-reporting in circumstances where staff feel that they themselves have been directly involved in a situation of concern to them. If you are involved in this, then it should be reported to either the DCPL or to senior management.

# RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

Price Care are committed to recruiting applicants, who place high priority on and share the same level of commitment to safeguarding. As a result, Price Care apply robust recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that the individuals selected are right for the job and appropriately screened prior to appointment.

For a more detailed information on recruitment of staff regarding safeguarding please refer to the Safer Recruitment policy**.**