



Pembroke House Safeguarding Policy

Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

1. Ethos	2
2. Definitions	3
3. Safeguarding Team	3
4. External Safeguarding Services	4
Diocesan Safeguarding Team:	4
Adults:	4
Children:	4
5. What to do if you have a safeguarding concern	5
5.6 Confidentiality, Consent and information sharing	7
5.7 Make a Record of the Incident	8
5.8 What Happens Next?	8
6. How to Identify Abuse	9
7. Planning and Delivering Activities for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk	11
8. Recruitment, Training and Supervision	12
9. Possible Abuse by a Member of Staff or Volunteer	13
10. When working in Partnership	14
11. Record keeping	15
12. Policy Review	15
13. Appendix 1 How to react if a child or vulnerable adult spontaneously talks about experiences which give cause for concern	
14. Appendix 2 Delivering Activities for Children and Young People	

1. Ethos

- 1.1 Pembroke House (PH) is committed to providing a welcoming and safe environment for everyone, in which people are supported to connect to and learn from each other. We recognise that building new relationships comes with risk, and we aim to make all PH projects and activities as safe an environment for building connections as possible. We are committed to creating a caring environment in which people feel confident about sharing any concerns they might have about their own safety or the well-being of others. Safeguarding is an important element of our overall approach to safety and well-being at PH.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to:
- Ensure that all those working at PH, paid and unpaid, understand the legal definition of safeguarding and how to identify a safeguarding concern
 - Explain how PH will carry out our statutory responsibility to create a safe environment for staff, volunteers and visitors to our programmes.
 - Provide staff and voluntary workers with procedures that they should adopt to create a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk or in the event that a child or young person or adult at risk may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
 - Prioritise the care and safety of alleged victims at all times, without undermining the respect for alleged perpetrators.
 - Show how to respond to a safeguarding concern, what authorities to contact and when and who is responsible for each step of the process
 - Explain how PH will handle and process safeguarding data
- 1.3 In carrying out this policy, PH aims to protect confidentiality as far as possible. However, we recognise that no one person has all the answers, and there will be times when we will need to discuss cases within our team and collaborate to figure out how to keep us all safe together.
- 1.4 All staff and volunteers should familiarise themselves with our policy and procedures for safeguarding children and adults at risk set out in this document, which explains:
- How to identify abuse.
 - What to do if you suspect or are a victim of abuse.
 - How to run activities safely.
 - Recruitment, training and supervision of staff and volunteers.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Safeguarding means **protecting the health, well-being and human rights of children and adults at risk by supporting them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect**. Safeguarding is one part of a set of practices and policies at PH and The Walworth Living Room (WLR) related to maximising safety and minimising risk.
- 2.2 Our practice of safeguarding has three key components:
- Preventing and stopping abuse from occurring in our programmes or as a consequence of participation in our programmes.
 - Working together with the wider safety net of organisations preventing and stopping abuse and neglect in the community
 - Responding well to safeguarding concerns or allegations
- 2.3 All **children and young people under the age of 18** are considered vulnerable.
- 2.4 An **adult is considered at risk** when they are aged 18 or over AND:
- Have care and support needs (regardless of whether they are receiving any help with meeting those needs) AND
 - Are experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect AND
 - Are unable to protect themselves because of care and support needs.
- ‘Care and support needs’ usually means:
- A physical disability, a learning disability or a sensory impairment.
 - Mental ill health (including dementia) or a personality disorder.
 - An addiction to alcohol or drugs.
- 2.5 We recognise that all adults have different levels of vulnerability and each of us may be regarded as vulnerable or at risk at some time in our lives.

3. Safeguarding Team

You should contact a member of the safeguarding team if you have safeguarding concern about yourself or others:

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Tara Mack (tara.mack@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07485304770)

Nina Feldman (nina.feldman@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07485304788)

Walworth Living Room Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Jade Wood (jade.wood@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07485304772)

Pembroke Academy of Music Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Samatha Barnhart (samantha.barnhart@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07485304787)

Neighbourhoods Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

Richard Galpin (richard.galpin@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07818098135)

Executive Director

Mike Wilson (mike.wilson@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07927819857)

Trustee Safeguarding Lead

Lorraine Gelsthorpe (lrg10@cam.ac.uk)

Warden of Pembroke House & Vicar of St Christopher's Church

Mother Ellen Eames (mother.ellen@pembrokehouse.org.uk, 07419 121950)

4. External Safeguarding Services

Diocesan Safeguarding Team:

For advice on all cases, when needed: safeguarding@southwark.anglican.org

Mon to Fri 9am – 5pm: **0207 939 9441** Out of hours: **020 3874 6743**

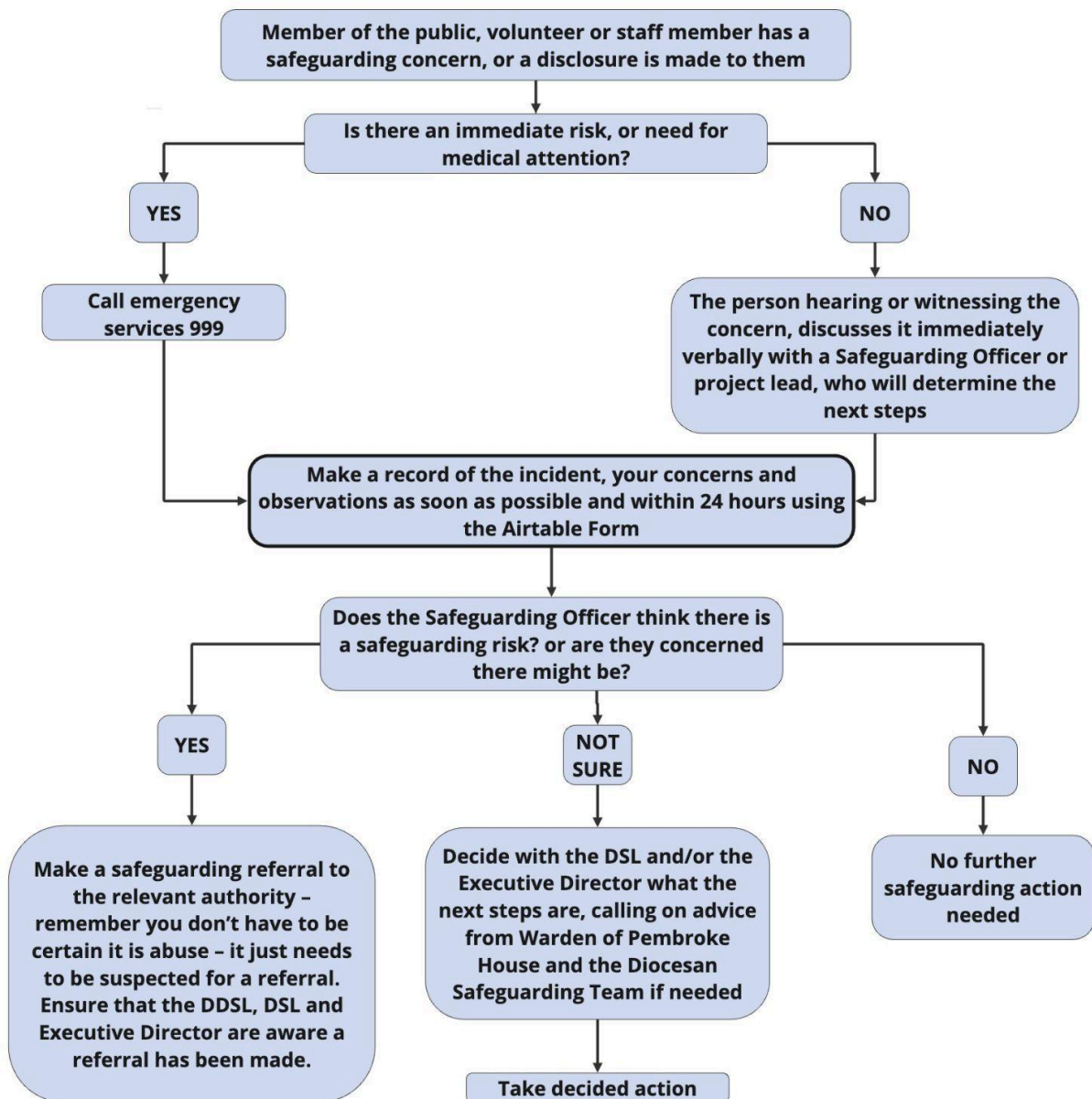
Adults:

- For older people and adults with a physical disability, including older people with a mental illness or impairment (if aged over 65):
OPPDContactteam@southwark.gov.uk
020 7525 3324
- For adults with a mental illness or impairment (aged 18-65):
MHContact@southwark.gov.uk (MH = mental health)
020 7525 0088
- For adults with a learning disability or living with autism:
LearningDisabilitiesDuty@southwark.gov.uk
020 7525 2333

Children:

- MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub):
0207 525 1921/1049

5. What to do if you have a safeguarding concern



Always make sure you take the person's full name, address, contact details including email.

Always discuss what you are going to do with the child, YP or vulnerable adult before making a referral, unless doing so will increase the risk.

Try to get the details of the perpetrator - name, DOB, address, contact details wherever possible.

If in doubt, make a safeguarding referral. If you're not sure, discuss it anonymously with Diocesan Safeguarding Team or the relevant statutory safeguarding team first.

Never promise you can keep something a secret.

- 5.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Our priority must be the welfare of the person at risk, and it is not safe to assume that someone else will take action. If you have concerns, you must report them immediately to a Safeguarding Officer (DSL or DDSL). Do not attempt to investigate or resolve suspected abuse - this will be done by the relevant local authority.
- 5.2 In some cases, incidents may arise in your presence or you may have concerns based on your own observations. In others, a person or a third party may tell you something about events or concerns when you were not present or you may receive an email or come across information elsewhere, eg online. The process to follow is the same, whether it is your concern, based on your observations, or a concern or disclosure reported to you by the person or a third party.
- 5.3 This concern should not be discussed with anyone else outside of the organisation's Safeguarding Team, to protect the confidentiality of all parties.
- 5.4 In cases where you cannot reach a safeguarding officer, and you require urgent advice, you should contact the Diocese of Southwark Safeguarding team or the services in section 4 above.
- 5.5 The Safeguarding Officer is responsible for determining whether the incident meets the criteria for a safeguarding concern. - ie:
- An adult has established or suspected vulnerabilities and
 - There is a concern, connected with their vulnerability, of neglect or abuse
 - There is a concern about the vulnerability, neglect or abuse of a child
- Ideally this should be done with other members of the Safeguarding team, with support from the Diocese of Southwark if necessary.

Staff must make a referral if:

- Someone discloses they have experienced abuse or neglect
- Someone discloses that they have witnessed abuse or neglect
- You witness abuse or neglect

Situations which may require a referral:

- Someone makes a comment or behaves in a way that suggests the possibility of abuse or neglect
- Signs of abuse outlined in Section 6 below are seen

To make a determination staff may seek advice from the Diocese or make an anonymous call to the MASH team.

If the incident is determined to be a safeguarding case the local authority safeguarding team must be notified in a timely way.

Any reason for delaying notification should be recorded in the Airtable Form.

Where there appears to be a risk within the next 24 hours, the Safeguarding Officer will ensure that the appropriate external agency is alerted within 24 hours.

A DSL and the Executive Director should be cc'd to safeguarding alerts sent to the local authority.

If the local authority fails to respond to the alert within 48 hours, resend, forwarding the previous message and attachment, and follow up with a phone call, potentially escalating to team managers (MH contact team – 020 7525 2751 who will also know the relevant physical and learning disability leads).

5.6 Confidentiality, Consent and information sharing

- 5.6.1 Confidentiality is very important. Do not speak to the alleged abusers or the child/adult as risk's carers or relatives if they are the alleged abuser. This could put the child or adult at risk and others more at risk or cloud a statutory investigation. Seek advice from your line manager, Safeguarding Officer or other appropriate senior or, if they are not available, from the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or Social Services on what can be shared.
- 5.6.2 Wherever possible, so that they can make informed choices, people should be made aware before disclosure the limits of our confidentiality. I.e, if there is a risk of harm to the person we are supporting, or to someone else, we are likely to have to share the concern with someone else.
- 5.6.3 If someone discloses abuse, or suspected abuse, every effort should be made to engage them in the reporting of the abuse to the local authority, and they should be asked what outcome they would like from the start, so that their views and wishes are at the heart of all next steps.
- 5.6.4 In the event that the person refuses to give consent to share the information, the Safeguarding Officer can override this decision, if they consider that there is a risk of harm to the person or someone else. If you are not sure, you can always phone the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor or local authority safeguarding duty line and ask the question anonymously – eg 'I've had this issue reported, the person has not given consent to share information, do you recommend that we override consent or respect it in this instance?'

- 5.6.5 Information shared must be relevant, timely, accurate, proportionate, should use objective not emotive/subjective language, and shared with the minimum number of people required to assess and reduce the risk.

5.7 Make a Record of the Incident

- 5.7.1 Make a record of your concerns and observations, including anything the child/vulnerable adult has said, the date, time and who was involved, as soon as possible. Please [use this Airtable form](#) to do so. Once the form is submitted, the data will be stored in the Safeguarding Airtable and only be accessible to the safeguarding team.

You should make every effort to produce a written record on the same day, even if you do not have all the information. Making the record must not be delayed by more than 24 hours after the incident/concern. Be objective: record facts and observations, do not record your own views or conclusions.

- 5.7.2 Alert the DSL or other appropriate senior member of staff that the form has been completed, and ensure that the DSL has received it, for example by checking with a telephone call. If you send your report on email and receive an out of office auto-reply, send it to their line manager, cc'ing your own line manager.
- 5.7.3 Even if it is decided that the incident was not a safeguarding concern, it should be logged in the same way [using the Airtable form](#).

5.8 What Happens Next?

- 5.8.1 The Safeguarding Officer should update the airtable form with any further information or follow up actions.
- 5.8.2 Through monthly reviews, the DSL will check that all action points have been carried out. In addition, they will reflect on the incident to determine:
- Whether it has been handled sensitively, in a timely way, and appropriately
 - What can be learnt from particular incidents
 - Whether risks could be reduced to prevent a similar incident arising again
- 5.8.4 The senior safeguarding team will review all cases on a quarterly basis.
- 5.8.5 Every six months the WLR team will have a session on safeguarding practice and process, looking at fictional case studies based on past incidents.

6. How to Identify Abuse

- 6.1 You should be alert for the following signs of possible abuse. Don't forget, however, that there can also be perfectly normal explanations for many of these behaviours. You might be concerned, for example, if there was a marked change in behaviour or a number of unexplained signs.

6.2 **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

For example: hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning or suffocating.

Look out for: unexplained injuries, reluctance to discuss injuries, arms and legs covered in hot weather, fear of returning home, aggression towards others, challenging behaviours or avoidance.

6.3 **EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE**

For example: making a person feel worthless, unloved or inadequate.

Look out for: over-reaction to mistakes, repeated phone calls, unexplained disappearances, being in the company of people who appear controlling, neurotic behaviours (thumb sucking, hair twisting etc.), self-mutilation, crying, withdrawal, aggression, persistent stomach ache, unexplained behaviours.

6.4 **NEGLECT**

For example: if someone is being cared for, failure by the carers to provide adequate food, money, shelter, clothing or medical care. If someone is self neglecting as a result of the above care needs, this may meet the criteria for a safeguarding alert if it threatens the person's well-being or safety.

Look out for: constant hunger, weight loss, poor personal hygiene, poor state of clothing, untreated medical problems, withdrawal, aggressive or unexplained changes to behaviour.

6.5 **SEXUAL ABUSE OR EXPLOITATION**

For example: forcing a person to take part in sexual activities (with or without consent), looking at or producing pornographic material or encouraging sexually inappropriate behaviour.

Look out for In Adults: indications of sex work, multiple phones, frequent phone calls, multiple companions who the person appears to struggle to say no to; inadequate clothing, drug use, introversion, behaviour changes.

Look out for in Children: over familiarity with adults or provocative behaviour, introversion, sleeplessness, nightmares, sudden behaviour changes.

6.6 **FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE**

For example: forcing a person to work, or take part in illegal activities for the financial benefit of others, taking over a person's bank card, refusing to allow them to have their own bank account, insisting benefit money is paid into someone else's account, forced begging.

Look out for in Adults: people hanging around a vulnerable person particularly at certain times, such as payday, the individual being frightened or going missing, begging or sex working, asking for food or money.

Look out for in Children: unusual or unexpected cash or valuables being carried by children, unusual interest in money, fear or anxiety about money.

6.7 **DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE**

For example: insulting, threatening or excluding a person because of their race, religion or background.

Look out for from the person receiving abuse: expressions of distress, being withdrawn and isolated, expressions of anger, frustration, fear or anxiety, finding it difficult to be open with people representing the originators of the abuse, signs of substandard service being offered to a person from minority backgrounds, repeated exclusion from rights afforded to others such as health or education.

Look out for from abusers: lack of respect shown to others of different backgrounds, over-identification of aggressiveness in people of the aggressed backgrounds; punitive approach towards people of the abused background; , repeated exclusion from rights afforded to others such as services, health or education.

6.8 **CUCKOOING**

For example, taking over a vulnerable person's accommodation for the purposes of drug use, drug sale and other criminal behaviours such as pimping and prostitution.

Look out for: person reporting feeling unsafe at home or having lots of friends live with them, unexplained bruising, appearing frightened or more emotional than usual; behaviour changes, lengthy disappearances, uptake of drugs use.

6.9 **TRAFFICKING AND MODERN SLAVERY**

Modern slavery includes labour exploitation, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude and criminal exploitation.

Human trafficking is defined as arranging or facilitating the travel of another person with a view to exploitation and includes travel within a country, not just across international borders. For example if a woman is moved from one flat to another for the purposes of sex work, through coercion and/or threats or violence, this meets the definition of trafficking.

Look out for: person disclosing sex working; poor self care; uptake in drug use; lengthy disappearances or appearances in different parts of the country; involvement in criminal activities, lots of intrusive phone calls, frequent losses of phones.

6.10 **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

Any of the forms of abuse above, that take place in a domestic setting.

Domestic abuse between adults, where there are no children in the household, is only treated as a safeguarding concern when the adult victim has an identified vulnerability/care and support need. If children are present in the household and may be witnessing the abuse, even if it is not directed at them, it should be treated as a safeguarding concern. See [Domestic Abuse Policy](#).

7. Planning and Delivering Activities for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

- 7.1 For all activities that are mainly designed for and include as their main participants, children, young people or adults who may be at risk there will be a minimum of two members of staff present who have undergone an enhanced DBS Check as part of their safe recruitment.
- 7.2 Carry out a risk assessment before any new activities and discuss any safeguarding risks with the DSL. Any off-site visits will also need a separate risk assessment.
- 7.3 Staff should not spend time alone with children/adults at risk away from others. Always arrange space in such a way that staff members have a line of sight and hearing with a colleague, for example if a child needs to be shown the way to the toilet, the accompanying adult should remain within sight of another adult.
- 7.4 Staff and volunteers are expected to keep appropriate boundaries with community members and show respect to people in the space. Further guidance on staff behaviour can be found in the Pembroke House Code of Conduct.
- 7.5 Make sure you keep a register of names, addresses and emergency contacts for all participants.
- 7.5 **In The Walworth Living Room**

The WLR will operate as a public space. Information explaining the purpose and values of the space will be available to all visitors. This will include advice that the WLR is a public space and you are responsible for yourself and any children at all times. Where possible, this should be reinforced by a verbal introduction (eg by a host).

There will be posters displayed explaining who a visitor can speak to if they have a worry about the safety of someone in the Living Room. During the times of operation, 2 safely recruited team members will be based in the WLR, who may be approached if any concerns arise, and will have general oversight of the space, so that if concerns do arise, these may be addressed.

If concerns begin to arise regarding the behaviour or vulnerability of a member of the community, and there is an immediate risk, the staff member should speak to the person in the moment, or if the matter is not urgent but a question or concern (for example, someone appears to be building a relationship with a resident who you consider vulnerable), pick it up in the debrief following the session. If the individual is unsure as to whether the risk is urgent or not, they should seek advice from their senior.

Anyone wanting to run activities in the WLR will be advised that they are welcome to do so, but if the activities run more than four times, they will need to be safely recruited and trained as a WLR volunteer.

8. Recruitment, Training and Supervision

- 8.1 All staff contractors and volunteers recruited to work for PH will be safely recruited - this includes providing 2 references obtained from referees provided at application and undergoing a DBS Check if required for the role.

If they have not undergone the Safer Recruitment process, they must be supervised at all times by another member of staff who has undergone the process. They may also be asked to provide additional references, relevant to the work.

- 8.2 Where there is a need for further safeguarding considerations in a specific project where staff, contractors or volunteers work with children or young people, the Project Lead concerned will make necessary provisions with the DSL in line with Appendix 2 below.

- 8.3 Any concerns resulting from a DBS check will be referred to the relevant line manager and the DSL. This information will be passed onto the Diocese of Southwark Safeguarding team for review and a risk assessment will be carried out under their guidance.

- 8.4 All new staff and volunteers will read and understand this policy as part of their induction process and before they are in a position to deliver services to members of the community, so that they are able to identify the signs of abuse and confident about the steps to take and to whom to report any concerns.
- 8.5 All new staff and volunteers will attend safeguarding training and regular refresher courses. These will be both online, run by Southwark Council and in person run by the Pembroke House team.
- 8.6 Where volunteers are present in activities each will have an agreed standard of governance and oversight. As well as the Safer Recruitment process above this will also include:
- Collecting contact and Next of Kin details
 - Undergoing building and project induction and Safeguarding Training,
 - A designated person to report to
 - Regular support meetings or opportunities to feed back questions and concerns, or be given feedback to develop
- 8.7 Additional safeguarding consultancy and advice is provided by the Warden of Pembroke House, who is the Vicar of St Christopher's Church and leads on safeguarding in the church.
- 8.8 The designated member of the Board of Directors (Trustees) for Safeguarding will:
- Hold the senior management team and the Warden to account on all matters relating to safeguarding
 - Ensuring timely reviews of significant cases and the safeguarding process
 - Check the quality of staff training and the relevance of policies and procedures
 - Provide advice on occasional safeguarding cases
 - Represent the organisation in case reviews at a senior level where needed.

9. Possible Abuse by a Member of Staff or Volunteer

- 9.1 Where a member of staff, volunteer, or a trustee is suspected of abusing others, the person with the concern should inform the DSL or their line manager immediately (on the out of hours number if necessary).
- 9.2 The DSL may then meet with the alleged victim if they are comfortable to speak to them, to establish if there are grounds for an allegation.

Another member of the Leadership Team, the Warden, or a Trustee must be present at the meeting and the alleged victim should have the opportunity to bring someone for support.

- 9.3 If there is a concern that abuse has taken place, is at risk of taking place, or is taking place, a safeguarding referral should be made immediately to MASH or Adult Social Services at Southwark.
- 9.4 In cases where such grounds are established, the DSL will report the concerns to adult safeguarding authorities through the routes named above, and to ensure that the same authorities are given all assistance to pursue any investigation.
- 9.5 PH will seek to support the member/s of staff or volunteer/s, or where appropriate, to ensure that alternative support is in place throughout the process. PH will appoint a Support Person for both the alleged victim/survivor and the respondent.

In the victim/survivor's case it is likely they:

- will listen to and represent their pastoral needs
- identify any therapeutic or other needs and offer choices as to how these may be best met
- record any meetings or contact they have with the victim/survivor
- share relevant information with the DSL

In the respondent's case it is likely they will:

- keep the person up to date with the progress of their case
- help with access to advice and additional support
- make and keep a written record of any meetings or contact with the respondent and share relevant information with the DSL

- 9.6 When allegations are proven, suspension and/or disciplinary procedures may be implemented according to our disciplinary procedures and in line with legislation: The Care Act 2014.

10. When working in Partnership

- 10.1 When PH works in partnership with another organisation to deliver an activity for children or adults at risk the partner will need to work within Pembroke House's Safeguarding Policy, and comply with practices detailed in the partnership agreement.
- 10.2 When renting space from Pembroke House and carrying out activities with children or adults at risk hirers will need to work within Pembroke House's Safeguarding Policy, and comply with practices detailed in the rental agreement.

- 10.3 All major safeguarding concerns that take place in any of our buildings, whoever the activity is run by, should be reported to a DSL within 24 hours.

11. Record keeping

- 11.1 PH will maintain records relating to safeguarding concerns to:
- ensure that what happened and when it happened is recorded
 - provide a history of events so that patterns can be identified
 - record and justify the action(s) of advisers and Pembroke House staff
 - promote the exercise of accountability
 - provide a basis of evidence for future safeguarding activity or investigations
 - allow for continuity when there is a change of personnel.

- 11.2 All records will be kept on the Safeguarding Airtable base, which is only accessible to members of the safeguarding team on their work computers.

This will be downloaded as a CVS file each year and stored in a secure google drive that is only accessible to the safeguarding team on their work computers.

We will keep a record of who has accessed these files and when.

- 11.3 We will keep safeguarding records for 75 years.
- 11.4 There may be times when we need to share records with someone else. When we do this they will be password protected or encrypted.
- 11.5 After this time paper records will be destroyed by a member of staff by shredding them. Electronic records will be thoroughly deleted from our system.

12. Policy Review

- 12.1 PH will ensure that safeguarding issues receive continuous attention and will regularly review the way we operate to support this principle.
- 12.2 The PH Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every 2 years with the Leadership Team and Board, and when there are any changes in legislation.
- 12.3 This policy was last updated by Tara Mack, Nina Feldman, Mike Wilson, and Ellen Eames with support from Felicity Reed in February 2025

Appendix 1

How to react if a child or vulnerable adult spontaneously talks about experiences which give cause for concern

- 1 Don't panic – respond calmly
- 2 Have a conversation with the child/vulnerable adult in a setting that respects their privacy, for example, not in front of others in the group/project concerned, while safeguarding you and them.
- 3 Explain that you may not be able to keep a secret and may share with others what is said. A nice phrase to use is 'make sure we're taking the right action by consulting with the people who are more expert than me.'
- 4 Listen carefully and with your full attention.
- 5 Don't ask leading questions, put words in their mouth, rephrase what has been said or probe for more information than is offered.
- 6 Don't stop them recalling events.
- 7 Take their worries seriously without judging.
- 8 Accept what you have been told without expressing disbelief or shock or challenging it.
- 9 Reassure them and tell them they were right to tell you.
- 10 Ask them how they would like to move forward with what they have shared with you. Taking this into account, explain what you will do next without making promises you can't keep.
- 11 Take notes as soon as possible after the conversation (not during) and use the child/vulnerable adult's own words where possible. Please [use this form](#) to do so.
- 12 Make efforts to show the person you are taking their views and concerns into account, and where possible to help give a positive experience of help seeking or concern raising. 'You've done the right thing in bringing this, and luckily we have experts around who can help us think about how to support you to make things safer.'
- 13 Raise any operational issues you have identified with your line manager or a Safeguarding Officer (for example, you may have spotted a gap in safety practices).

Appendix 2

Delivering Activities for Children and Young People

1. Staff Conduct

- 1.1 Be an excellent role model. This includes not smoking, drinking alcohol or swearing in the company of children.
- 1.2 Wear clothes that are appropriate to the activity involved: for example, if you are dancing or playing games or sports, ensure that your clothes do not reveal sensitive body parts or undergarments when performing movements.
- 1.3 Avoid discrimination, labelling and unnecessary competition or comparison.
- 1.4 Sympathetic attention, encouragement and appropriate physical contact are needed by children and adults. Some physical contact with children, particularly younger children, can be wholly appropriate. As a general rule, the use of touch between adults in positions of responsibility and those with whom they are working or volunteering should be initiated by the person themselves, and kept to the minimum.

In addition to this, always follow the guidelines below:

- ask permission before you touch someone
 - allow the other person to determine the degree of touch except in exceptional circumstances (for example, when they need medical attention)
 - avoid any physical contact that is or could be construed as sexual, abusive or offensive
 - keep everything public. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors
 - touch should be in response to a person's needs and not related to the worker's needs.
 - touch should be age-appropriate, welcome and generally initiated by the child, not the worker.
- 1.5 Keep verbal interactions relevant to the activity in question.
 - 1.6 Respond warmly if a child needs comforting, but make sure that physical contact in this case is kept to an appropriate level, is in response to their need, with their permission, and happens only when other adults are around.
 - 1.7 Never force a child to consume food or drink.
 - 1.8 Never do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do for themselves. If you have to do things of a personal nature for a child, make

sure you obtain and record the full consent of the parents and permission from a Safeguarding Officer. If an emergency requires this type of help, parents and the Project Lead should be fully informed as soon as possible.

- 1.9 Never engage in rough physical games or sexually provocative games.
- 1.10 Never make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child, even in fun. If a child makes an inappropriate comment, do not ignore it or pretend you have not heard it. Be compassionate and clear, label it inappropriate, and make it clear that you will not engage in the conversation. Where possible, speak to the young person afterwards to understand the provenance of the comment, check their understanding, and whether there are any support needs.

2. Discipline

- 2.1 Never inflict physical punishment of any kind, nor shouting, verbal abuse or emotional blackmail or insults. Never ridicule or humiliate a child.
- 2.2 A child may be temporarily excluded from an activity if they are using unacceptable behaviour. This must always be explained in language the child understands and followed up with a discussion with parents/guardians.
- 2.3 Restraint must be a last resort and only used to prevent a child harming themselves or others or doing significant damage to property.
- 2.4 It is never acceptable for a volunteer or a member of staff to suffer physical, verbal or emotional abuse. If this happens, first clearly and assertively explain that it must stop immediately. If this proves ineffective, and the exclusion of a child or group of children does not solve the problem either, then the activity must be brought to an end and the children returned to their parents/guardians where appropriate.
- 2.5 If faced by aggressive behaviour that gets out of control, avoid physical engagement. Call the child's parents/carers immediately and ask them to come and pick up the child. As a last resort, if the child is above the age of 10 and you believe there is a serious risk of harm to anyone involved, call the Police. Deploy de-escalation techniques while you wait. Some techniques are listed below, but the list is not exhaustive:
 - Stay calm: relax your body, keep hands visible in front of body, open, and relaxed, minimise gesturing, pacing, fidgeting.
 - Allow space (2 arms' length) between you and the child and stand at an angle to them not directly facing them.
 - Manage your own response: adopt a calm facial expression, modulate your tone of voice to reflect empathy or no emotional response.
 - Clearly set limits verbally and repeat them if necessary.

- Do not argue, validate feelings (this is not the same as agreeing).
- Ask if the child needs water, a moment alone, to sit down, etc.
- Ask questions, provide choices, encourage cooperation.

3. Children and Young People in the WLR

- 3.1 Unless they are attending a child specific activity, if a child under the age of 12 is left unattended at the WLR this is a safeguarding concern. The child should be spoken to by a member of staff and responsible parent or carer identified, and a MASH referral should be made.
- 3.2 As a rule of thumb, a child or young person between the age of 12 and 18, should attend any WLR-run, mixed-age (ie adult and child) activities with a parent or carer, or responsible adult.

If they attend alone, they should be welcomed to attend however be approached after the session and permission then sought from the parent or carer, with full information about the nature of the activity and participants.

The young person and carer should be informed about the diverse nature of participants and encouraged to be cautious about making connections outside the session or to notify a carer or the group leader if connection is made outside the group. If concerns arise a MASH referral should be made.

There may be exceptions to this: if an exception is considered, this should be carefully discussed by the staff team, should not involve children under the age of 12, the parent or carer should be notified and risks discussed prior to ongoing involvement with the, YP and Parent/carer.

The YP/parent/carer should agree to discuss with the WLR staff should anyone approach them to meet outside the session or if anything makes them uncomfortable within the session. The situation should be monitored and if concerns arise this should be discussed with the YP and parents/carers, and a safeguarding concern raised if required. If the YP is Looked After or under Child Protection, this should be discussed with the Social Worker prior to agreement.