THE LIHOU
CHARITY LBG

Child Protection Policy, Procedures and Guidelines

Introduction

The Lihou Charitable Trust (LCT) wants children to enjoy their stay with us and feel encouraged to take an active part in promoting health, rest and education. Children and young people are entitled to be safe with us and may look up to staff as a role model. The LCT expects the behaviour of everyone who works with us, whether paid or not, to be absolutely above reproach in this respect. This policy and accompanying guidelines are intended to help us all to honour that.

While primarily intended to safeguard children and similarly vulnerable people, our child protection policy is also meant to protect staff - and others working with us - from false allegation and improper conduct in that regard. With both purposes in mind, the guidance given here is intended to help you understand how the policy is meant to be applied in practice.

It is vital that all hostel staff have access to this document and gain an appreciation of the complex and sensitive issues surrounding child protection so they can protect all our guests and themselves.

Accompanying this document are sample risk assessments. It is important that the information contained within each assessment is read by all staff and implemented by the LCT Warden.

Acknowledgements

This document was developed in consultation with the Management Committee of The Lihou Charitable Trust, The Guernsey Youth Service and Youth Justice Department and through drawing on guidelines produced by the Youth Hostel Association, the News Ombudsman 'Developing a Child Protection Policy', National Council for voluntary Youth Services 'Keeping it Safe' document.

Statement of Policy

The Lihou Charitable Trust (LCT) recognises that safeguarding children young people and similarly vulnerable people is the responsibility of everyone, not just group leaders and parents who use Lihou House. We will do our utmost to ensure that children are protected from harm while they visit the house and its facilities. We will do this by: -

1. Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of any child in contact with the LCT.
2. Not physically, emotionally or sexually abusing any child or young person in contact with the LCT.
3. Taking all reasonable steps to prevent any other staff member, volunteer, or member of the public from putting any child in a situation where there is unreasonable risk to their health and safety.
4. Putting the safety and welfare of children at the centre of our health and safety risk

assessment policy and procedures.
5. Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the house remains secure at night and to prevent unauthorised access at other times when the causeway is open and the island accessible to the public.
6. Ensuring that emergency access to a telephone is available at all times.
7. Ensuring that children are allocated sleeping accommodation that is separate from adults. Leader rooms located as close as possible to children's sleeping accommodation will be provided to facilitate effective supervision. Families will be allocated to family rooms upon request, subject to availability. The house will be used by one group at a time.
8. Ensuring that no child unaccompanied by an adult will be turned away from the house in circumstances which might jeopardise their safety. If necessary alternative safe accommodation will be provided.
9. Encourage teachers, youth leaders and parents to visit the house and island for themselves prior to a visit by their children.
10. Ensuring that a member of LCT staff is always available during a groups residential visit to the house either in person or at the very least by phone to help with emergencies.

LCT Personnel - LCT will:

1. Ensure that all available criminal record and related checks are made on staff, volunteers and contractors working in the house who have access to children.
2. Support members of LCT staff with child protection awareness training.
3. Ensure that LCT staff are clearly identifiable to children by way of introductions.
4. Ensure that LCT staff are trained in and capable of handling emergency situations.

The Definition of Harm

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. "Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy" may also constitute physical abuse, whereby a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health in a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's 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 involve 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 ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact. including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging

children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm, or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of a child's basic emotional needs.

Child Safety and Welfare Guidelines

These guidelines apply to: -

- Any situation involving children or young people; whether or not accompanied by adults. We also recognise that vulnerable people of any age benefit from similar safeguards, wherever the guidelines refer to children this broader meaning applies.
- All staff, volunteers and other people working with the YHA, including contractors and consultants. They also apply to people organising or taking part in events on behalf of LCT or on LCT property. Again, while the guidelines refer mostly to staff and volunteers, this should be taken to include these other groups.

General duties of all LCT staff and volunteers in regard to the safety and welfare of children, young people and similarly vulnerable people: -

- To take all reasonable steps to protect children and vulnerable persons from hazards.
- To take appropriate action if an accident occurs.
- To strictly observe the code of behaviour.
- To take all reasonable steps to prevent abuse of children in contact with the LCT.
- To report any incident or suspicions of abuse.

LCT staff cannot be experts in recognising signs of child abuse. They must, however, use their experience and common sense if the behaviour or physical state of an individual child gives a cause for concern. Discuss any doubts with the group leader/head teacher or the LCT management committee. If necessary contact a child protection advice Line

Code of Behaviour

All people working with the LCT must always observe the following requirements where children, young people or similarly vulnerable people are concerned.

You should always: -

- Uphold the spirit and specific provisions of the 'Child Protection Policy' and these guidelines.
- Do your best to behave in an open and friendly manner, but avoid being over-familiar in word or action.
- Avoid situations in which you are alone with children or similarly vulnerable people. If necessary, move to a place where you can both be seen by colleagues or other adults.
- If a child is hurt or distressed, do your best to comfort and reassure them without

compromising their dignity or doing anything to discredit your own behaviour.
- Avoid any physical contact or behaviour that could be unwelcome or misconstrued.
- Where you have to rely on your own judgement, always treat the child's welfare as paramount.

You have a strict duty never to subject any child to any form of harm or abuse. Failure to honour this will be treated as gross misconduct. This means that it is unacceptable for example: -

- To distress a child by shouting at them or calling them derogatory names.
- To slap a child.
- To hold a child in such a way that it causes pain, or shake them.
- To physically restrain a child except to protect them from harming themselves or others.
- To take part in inappropriate horseplay or rough games.
- To allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any kind.
- To do things of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves or an accompanying adult/guardian/parent can do for them; this includes going to the toilet with a child unless an adult is present.
- To allow or engage in sexually suggestive behaviour within a child's sight or hearing, or make suggestive comments to or within earshot of a child.
- To give or show to a child anything which could be construed as being pornographic.
- To seek or agree to meet children anywhere beyond normal customer areas of the house or off property without the full prior knowledge and agreement of their parents or guardians.

These guidelines are intended to help protect all LCT staff from risk of false accusation and the warden must ensure that all members of staff are aware of, and follow these guidelines:

What to do in Particular Circumstances

Protecting children from hazards or rash behaviour

We recognise that it is impossible to ensure that no child ever comes to harm on LCT property. What we collectively and you as an individual must do is take all reasonable steps to protect children from likely risks arising from the nature or condition of particular sites or events. This means allowing for such factors such as the following:-

- Children are usually smaller than adults. So for example, something set at reasonable height for an adult may be dangerous for a child or above sight line.
- Children are less strong that adults which may affect the design of doors or gates.
- Children are primed to explore and play games. This means that we have got to do our best to anticipate adventurous behaviour and assess the risks involved.

You have a duty to prevent young people from coming to harm through their rash actions

- You need to judge carefully how to intervene.
- Often the best course is to guide them into a safe course of action, rather than telling them to stop what they're doing. It is better to give positive rather than negative instructions e.g. "come here, we need to go and find your leader/parent!" (Any problems with children's behaviour that is not dangerous should be referred to the group leader first and foremost as

we are asking them to have responsibility for the group. Any situation where a child is unaccompanied and misbehaving means that the leader is not doing a good job being responsible for them).
- Avoid being officious or challenging. You need to exert your authority, not 'prove it'.
- If, despite your best efforts, a child persists in jeopardising their own or others safety, get help if you can. speak to group leaders or parents/guardians or consider asking them to leave the house/island.
- If they are in serious danger and you cannot persuade them away from it, you should treat this as an emergency and contact the emergency services.

You must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that no other member of staff, volunteer or member of the public compromises the health and safety of any child in contact with the LCT. This means:

- Intervening directly to prevent this, or reporting the situation to someone with more authority to intervene.

What to do if an accident happens

- Depending on your judgement of the situation, if possible go to the scene immediately and/or summon First Aid assistance and/or contact emergency services.
- The normal accident recording and reporting procedures applies.

First Aid

- Treatment should only be given by a trained First Aider or Appointed Person.
- Provided this does not in itself put the child at risk, always try to administer First Aid within sight and sound of other adults.
- Always tell the child what you are doing if conscious.
- Unless it is irrelevant, ask the child if they use any medication e.g. for asthma. diabetes, epilepsy or have any allergies. Some children have allergic reactions to stings. Unless it is a first occurrence, a parent or teacher should know of any such conditions.
- For minor injuries, it is alright to use cotton wool pad or sticking plaster, but you may not offer any medication, including antiseptics or pills. If in any doubts about helping someone to use their own medication, phone the emergency services.
- Any treatment should be as little as necessary without threatening the child's well being.

If a child comes to you for comfort

You should refer them directly to their carer/parent/guardian. It is not acceptable to put your arm around them or offer any physical comfort.

If a child needs a doctor or hospital, call the emergency services

It is nearly always best to stay on site with them and wait for the ambulance. You should only take the risk of bringing in the child yourself if the emergency services ask you to because of exceptional circumstances.

What if there is concern about child or group of children staying in the house?

The following general guidance should be followed if you have a concern about a child or group of children staying at the house.

So long as you are mindful of the child's welfare you are entitled to intervene by:

- Asking or telling the perpetrator to stop.
- Explaining that such behaviour is not acceptable on LCT property
- Restraining a child from abusing another - (if you think it is necessary to restrain a child from doing something, first try nonphysical approaches - e.g. by talking to them. Physical restraint should be the minimum necessary for their safety).
- Saying you will report the incident - as a matter of fact, not a threat.
- Summoning help.
- Notifying the NSPCC or the police.
- Asking the perpetrator to leave the property.
- While you may have to be firm, it can only help if you are calm and un-antagonistic. Bear in mind that you are probably dealing with an upset or angry adult as well as a distressed child.
- Never use threatening or physical force as this could inflame the situation and result in further violence.
- Discreetly contact the Group Leader, or the parent if present, should there be concern about inappropriate attention by an individual toward a child or young person. If concern continues contact the police and your management committee immediately. If required, contact the police who will refer the matter to Social Services.

If concern relates to an identifiable individual staying in the house then the following steps must be taken:-

- Ask the suspected person/s to leave the house.
- Inform your management committee.
- Record child abuse, or suspected child abuse incident on an accident/incident Report Form.

If you suspect a colleague or receive an allegation of child abuse

Should you ever discover or suspect that a child has been physically, emotionally or sexually abused by someone associated with the LCT it is your duty to report this in the first instance to the management committee or where appropriate, "Child Protection Advice Line".

If a disclosure or allegation is being made to you

- Listen to what the child has to say with an open mind.
- Do no not ask probing or leading questions designed to get child to reveal more.
- Check your understanding of the situation, without being investigative.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present as well as what was said.
- Never promise the child that what they have told you can be kept secret.
- Explain that you have a responsibility to report what the child has said to someone else.
- Record all subsequent events up to the time of the substantive interview.
- Wherever possible attempt to record what the child said verbatim.

If an allegation of abuse is made against you

- You should advise the management committee even if you think it is trivial. If an allegation is received against you, you will be informed.
- You are entitled to the moral and practical support of your management committee if an unwarranted allegation of misconduct is made against you.
- Any allegation will be scrupulously investigated, with regard for confidentiality.
- If your behaviour contravenes the policy and guidelines, this will be treated as gross misconduct.
- If you have concerns about how an allegation against yourself or anyone else is being dealt with, you should inform a colleague at the most senior level you think appropriate.
- As long as your behaviour is strictly in line with the LCT policies and guidelines, it is envisaged that any allegation of misconduct is unjustified.

Should an allegation of abuse be made against any LCT staff member

The staff member will be suspended pending immediate police and internal investigation. Any allegation will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

It should be noted that an urgent review of the suspension will be undertaken by the management committee to ensure a speedy resolve

The Lihou Charitable Trust operate a Whistle-blowing policy

The LCT fosters a culture of openness and honesty

Employees and Volunteers are able to speak out on issues relating to serious malpractice without fear of being penalised.

Procedures should ensure

- The interest of guests of the house are paramount.
- All employees have a duty to draw management's attention to matters which they may consider are damaging user interests.
- The working environment should encourage and support staff to freely contribute their views on all aspects of operations.
- Under no circumstances should an employee or volunteer who raises concerns in good faith within the procedure be penalised or discriminated against.

All staff should have the right to consult guide or seek guidance from their trade union or other representative at any stage in the procedure

House Admission Policy

Accommodating Groups

The relationship between House staff and Group Leaders is critical to maintaining the safety and security of children and young people. The warden should reinforce with Group Leaders, that the responsibility for the supervision of children as part of a group rests with them. Where young people are hostelling within a group context they can be allocated to single-sex rooms even though individuals within the group may be under and over 18.

Group Leaders request to share a room

When group leaders request to share a room with children, this must be in writing from their school/organisation. It is the policy of the LCT to refuse such requests without the appropriate written evidence from group leaders.

Risk Assessments

These documents are intended to provide groups with details of our health and safety management arrangements. These are available to all house users and it is recommended that group leaders/parents/teachers make themselves familiar with them. We strongly recommend that in particular. School group leaders visit the Hostel prior to their stay.

Accommodation for Other Children

The LCT does not ‘mix’ groups. The house is single user and as such deference is made to the organisation making the booking and their own guidelines. However it is the policy of the LCT that children should be roomed separately according to gender. The definition of 'children' with respect to age is any person below the age of 18 years of age. Bookings from unaccompanied children will not be accepted. There are no concession for recognised youth organisations such as, Scouts. Guides, etc. If the make-up of a group cannot be accommodated with the existing room layout then the group cannot be accommodated in that form.

Screening of staff and volunteers

LCT have a statutory duty to screen existing and new employees and volunteers who are identified as being in a position to have access to children.

Catering, cleaning and security staff employed by contractors who have similar access to children as LCT employees also have to be considered for screening before commencement of work in the house if groups are to be present. The warden will be responsible for keeping this aspect of the procedures under review.

Training

The training of staff, especially the warden and any direct assistants is an essential part of the Child Protection Policy. Training courses will be developed to cover awareness, procedures and emergency situations. Child Protection training will need to be updated periodically as specified or indicated by the management committee.

Camping Barn/Refuge

It is recognised that the remote supervision of the Camping Barn/refuge by the warden may provide some additional risk to children. The responsibilities of Camping Barn/Refuge operations for child protection is subject to the detail contained within this document and must be adhered to.

Public Relations

Our credibility as a responsible accommodation provider will continue to depend on the trust placed in us by public. Therefore it is important that it is understood by all persons that the LCT takes its

responsibility for the welfare of children, young people and other such vulnerable persons very seriously.

Further Help

The warden and management committee must review the operation of the house to ensure that this guidance is complied with in full. For example: -

- House admission. especially unaccompanied.
- Emergency situations and Crisis Line.
- Allocation of dormitories.
- Entering dormitories at night.
- Recruitment Procedures.
- Where problems are identified the warden must consult with his management committee.

Child Protection help lines and advice

Health and Social Services Guernsey

01481725241

Guernsey Police

01481 725111

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. (NSCPP)

0808 800 5000. Text phone: 0800 0560 0566

ChildLine UK

0800 1117

The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

08451204552

Confidentially

We recognise that it is important for us all to feel confident that any information about alleged or actual child abuse will only be disclosed where it is in the best interest of the child to do so. Furthermore, we have a responsibility to protect the identity of anyone reporting suspected or actual abuse. No such disclosure will be made without careful consultation and prior approval at LCT Trustee level.