**Safeguarding Policy**

**1. Introduction**

* 1. This policy outlines our commitment to ensuring the safety, well-being, and dignity of children and vulnerable adults that visit the Park.
	2. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors who may have contact with children and vulnerable adults during their work. "Children" refers to individuals under the age of 18, and "vulnerable adults" refers to individuals over the age of 18 who may be at risk due to age, disability, mental or physical health, or dependency.

1.2 The Company is committed to working within agreed policies and procedures and in partnership with other agencies to ensure that the risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adults are minimised. This policy applies to all employees and workers who may be working with or come into contact with children (i.e. those aged under 18) or vulnerable adults, as defined by the Care Act 2014.

1. **Responsibilities**
	1. All staff are responsible for:
2. Familiarizing themselves with and adhering to this policy.
3. Acting immediately upon any concerns or suspicions of abuse or neglect.
4. Maintaining professional boundaries and avoiding situations that could be misinterpreted.

**3. Guidelines for Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults**

* 1. Code of Conduct
1. Treat all individuals with respect and dignity.
2. Avoid any behavior that could be perceived as bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
3. Ensure transparency in interactions, avoiding situations where you are alone with a child or vulnerable adult whenever possible.
4. Seek consent before any form of contact and provide choices whenever possible.

**4. Appropriate Contact**

* **Physical Contact**: Physical contact should be limited to situations where it is necessary for the individual's safety, support, or comfort, and it should be appropriate and non-intrusive. Avoid physical contact that could be misinterpreted as unnecessary or intimate.
* **Verbal Interaction**: Use language that is respectful and avoids personal, inappropriate, or suggestive comments.
* **Personal Boundaries**: Maintain appropriate boundaries at all times, ensuring that contact is professional and related to the care or support being provided.

**Intimate Care Guidelines**

4.1 Intimate care should be provided with sensitivity, maintaining the individual's dignity, privacy, and autonomy. Staff members responsible for intimate care must:

a. Obtain consent from the individual or, where appropriate, their guardian or carer.

b. Explain each step of the care process to the individual, ensuring they feel comfortable and respected.

c. Where possible, allow individuals to manage their own intimate care needs and offer assistance only as needed.

d. Always provide intimate care in a private setting to protect the individual’s dignity, but maintain an environment where staff are visible or can be easily monitored by others when appropriate.

**5. Managing Disclosures of Abuse**

* 1. If a child or vulnerable adult discloses information that indicates abuse:
1. **Listen carefully** without expressing shock or disbelief, and remain calm.
2. **Reassure** the individual that they were right to disclose this information.
3. **Document** the details of the disclosure immediately and accurately, using the individual’s own words where possible.
4. **Report** the disclosure to the DSL as soon as possible. Do not promise confidentiality, as this may not be possible depending on the severity of the disclosure.

**6. Reporting and Responding to Concerns**

6.1 Any staff member who suspects abuse or neglect must report their concerns to the Park Director immediately.

6.2 The Park Director will evaluate the concerns, document it, and determine the appropriate course of action.

6.3 All concerns reported to the Park Director will be treated confidentially and only shared with relevant authorities as necessary.

**7. Training**

7.1 All staff members will receive regular training on safeguarding policies, including how to recognize signs of abuse, appropriate contact, and the proper handling of disclosures and concerns.

**8. Monitoring and Review**

8.1 This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation changes to ensure its effectiveness and adherence to best practices.