

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

POLICY



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

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POLICY STATEMENT

The Policy Statement sets out Hanover's values and principles in this policy area, as agreed by Board.

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Additional Hanover Documentation relating to Safeguarding Children Policy

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PROCEDURE

Sets out the actions that should be taken when abuse is confirmed, suspected or alleged

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN MONITORING FORM

Form used to report concerns about a child to Hanover's monitoring team. This is an internal procedure and does not trigger a referral to Children's Social Services.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

This sets out:

- what will happen after a referral to Children's Social Services or the Police
- Guidance on MAPPA – Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements when ex-offenders are housed on Hanover estates

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to advise staff of the Safeguarding Children Policy which formalises and builds on the corporate values and principles of the organisation.

POLICY

Hanover believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind.

Hanover is committed to ensuring that, insofar as it is in our power to do so, children visiting or resident on our schemes are safe and protected from all forms of abuse; and that any concerns about children's wellbeing and safety are referred to the relevant services.

AIMS

- To provide protection for children and young people who visit or are resident at Hanover schemes.
- To provide clear guidance to staff and volunteers on the procedures that they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.
- To recruit staff and volunteers safely ensuring that all necessary checks are made.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We are committed to respecting diversity in all aspects of our work and we will not tolerate any form of discrimination.

Our policy applies to all persons employed or volunteering within the organisation. We recognise our responsibility to work with other agencies to promote the safety of children and to have clear guidelines and procedures.

COMMITMENT AND REVIEW

The Group Board looks to the support & professionalism of staff at all levels in making this policy truly effective. The effectiveness of this general statement of intent & other specific policies & procedures in use, will be regularly reviewed & revised as & when necessary.

Approved by the Board of Hanover Housing Association (the Group Board) on 12th May 2010

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Moore".

Bruce Moore, Chief Executive & Board Member

POLICY OVERVIEW

CONTEXT

Although Hanover is a provider of older peoples housing and support, from time to time there will be situations where staff may need to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and safety of children. All Registered Social Landlords are expected to work with local Authorities to enable them to fulfil their duties to vulnerable people and to those covered by Supporting People policy. Under the revised SP QAF (Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework), all Registered Social Landlords are expected to have a Safeguarding Children Policy. Our Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Children explain these responsibilities but are proportionate to the expected frequency of such concerns and the main focus of our work.

Hanover staff may come into contact with children and young people at risk in the following situations

- **Where our residents are themselves parents of dependent children who live with them** – this is very rare in Hanover retirement estates but not unknown. This is more likely to be in general needs accommodation.
- **Where children might be staying with residents** –either for holidays, short stays or possibly longer e.g. grandparents are looking after children owing to family difficulties. Children might stay in the resident's own home or with parents/care givers in guest accommodation
- **Where residents may be acting as daytime 'childminders' for grandchildren or great grandchildren**
- **Where children are visiting individual residents or attending scheme events** – as relatives or friends of an individual resident or as part of an estate visit e.g. children from local school as volunteers/ befrienders / as part of intergenerational projects etc.
- **Where resident Estate Managers have their own dependent children living with them**
- **When children, unconnected with the estate, come onto Hanover property,** e.g. using the grounds as a short cut, calling at a resident's property or meeting up with other individuals who have no connection with Hanover.

- Other possible contexts:
 - Issues may arise about child protection when Hanover is made aware, through interagency processes (e.g. **MAPPA** – Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) that a resident has been identified as a risk to children
 - Hanover at Home staff could occasionally encounter children living in or visiting service users own home and have concerns about situation they see

Any Hanover staff member whose work may bring them into contact with children and young people in the above contexts has a responsibility to report concerns about their safety and well being to the relevant agencies.

Although child protection concerns will not arise often in Hanover's estates and services, staff are expected to be vigilant to the possibility of abuse and to seek the advice of their line manager if necessary.

Staff might be involved in child protection issues in several ways:

- They may themselves be aware of concerns about a child or young person who has a connection with Hanover in one of the ways listed above
- They may be told of such concerns by a third party, e.g. a resident may be concerned about a grandchild or another child that they know about.
- A child or young person connected with a Hanover estate / service might disclose concerns about their own safety to our staff.
- Following a referral to social services/ police, staff could be asked to provide information in respect of an individual suspected of abuse and to contribute to any investigation or assessment. This may involve attending a child protection conference

WHAT CONSTITUTES CHILD ABUSE?

*'All parents upset their children sometimes. Saying `no' and managing difficult behaviour is an essential part of parenting. Tired or stressed parents can lose control and can do or say something they regret, and may even hurt the child. If this happens often enough, it can **seriously** harm the child. That is why **abuse** is defined in law. The Children Act 1989 states that abuse should be considered to have happened when someone's actions have caused a child to suffer **significant harm** to their health or development.'*

Royal College of Psychiatrists (Jan 2010)

1. Child abuse occurs when children or young people under the age of 18 are hurt physically, emotionally or in some other way. Children can be abused in any section of society. Abuse occurs within all cultural, ethnic and religious communities. Children may be abused by family or friends, by professionals who are in a caring role or by strangers.
2. There are four main areas of abuse:
 - **Physical abuse** includes hitting, kicking and punching and in serious cases may even lead to death
 - **Emotional abuse** includes degrading punishments, threats and withholding love and affection, which can undermine a child or young person's confidence. All abuse involves some element of emotional mistreatment
 - **Neglect** occurs when basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care are not met
 - **Sexual abuse** includes all forms of sexual activity where children and young people are sexually exploited. This includes all forms of inappropriate touching, rape and/or oral sex. It also includes inappropriate touching or involvement with activities with which the child feels uncomfortable or which could be damaging such as watching pornographic materials

Staff will be expected to act as 'good citizens' first and foremost, and in accordance with the expectations the Government has set out in its overall strategy 'Every Child Matters'. The Government expects a wide range of bodies to safeguard children including Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) –this is referred to in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' –the following link is included for reference but the focus in this guidance is mainly on general needs RSLs who will have far more contact with child protection issues – (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00060/>).

We do not expect or encourage our staff to have any ongoing role in respect of Child Protection, unless this is in the context of an interagency arrangement, such as MAPPA. Our approach is focussed on alerting other agencies where issues arise.

Hanover staff are subject to CRB checks, and from 2009 must also be registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) as part of the new Vetting and Barring scheme, principally in order to safeguard adults, but this will also offer protection to children who access our properties in any of the above situations.

LEAD CHILD SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

Hanover's Lead Child Safeguarding Officer is:

Tom Brown, Head of Operations – Tom.Brown@hanover.org.uk

Tel: 01274 717417 mob 07714 973119

The Lead Child Safeguarding Officer will receive copies of all safeguarding children monitoring forms and will contact the informant approximately one month after the report to establish what action was taken and how the situation has progressed since. This is an opportunity to discuss the case and comment on any issues that have arisen. The information recorded will:

- provide a source of information which can be used to shape future development of policy/procedure, and training
- Be a point of reference for any requests from SP authorities about the extent of Child Safeguarding concerns known to Hanover

Safeguarding Children Policy

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Version Control

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