

## *WCT Safeguarding Children Policy*

### **Introduction**

All children have a right to be protected from harm and abuse; they have a right to feel safe and secure. It is our responsibility to transport SEND children from home to school safely. Children with disabilities, special needs, or language delay may be more likely to communicate concerns with behaviours than words.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Surrey County Council (SCC) Code of Conduct, principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and in line with statutory guidance: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018.

In accordance with statutory guidance, all staff have a role in preventing harm and abuse and an equal responsibility to act immediately on any suspicion or disclosure that may indicate a child is at risk of harm.

WCT Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Office Manager.

### **The Purpose**

This policy provides Staff and Volunteers with the framework they need to keep children safe and secure whilst on our transport.

WCT operates a safer recruitment procedure that includes statutory checks on staff suitability to work with children.

### **Safeguarding concerns;**

Key points to follow, as per SCC guidance.

1. Always stop and listen to someone that wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.
2. Write brief notes immediately after speaking to a child, making sure to include the date, time, place and your signature on the notes.
3. Never promise to keep it confidential or a secret. Reassure the child you will tell only those that need to know.
4. Do not ask leading questions.
5. Do not give the child the impression that you do not believe them. Whether you believe them or not isn't the issue, you must report their concern.
6. Drivers/PA must immediately report any concerns to the TCC. Do not tell anyone else.

7. Never try to investigate or talk to others regarding claims of abuse; this is the job of trained Staff.
8. Never think abuse is impossible or that an accusation against someone you know well, and trust is bound to be wrong.

All Staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children. The Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations are not a barrier to sharing information where a failure to do so would place a child at risk of harm. There is a lawful basis for child protection concerns to be shared with agencies who have a statutory duty for child protection.

All Staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets that might compromise their safety or wellbeing. However, Staff must be aware that child protection and safeguarding matters are personal to children and families, and in this respect, they are confidential. The DSL will only disclose information about a child to other members of Staff on a need-to-know basis.

**Types of Abuse**, divided into five umbrella categories which are:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Bullying & Cyberbullying

Drivers and PAs must confidently report any incidents or concerns to the TCC team, 0208 541 7667 if it is of an urgent matter, please contact MASH team on 01483 517898. Alternatively contact the Transport Manager or DSL, who can assist in contacting the TCC on your behalf.

If a staff member has reported an incident verbally, they must follow it up in writing ASAP.

If the TCC is not available, the DSL will report the incident/concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

### **Child Protection Awareness**

“All adults who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. As a driver or PA, you are likely to come across some kind of child protection problems in the future”. (*SCC Driver & PA’s Guidance notes*)

***“Never think that abuse is impossible.”***

Policy name: Safeguarding Children

Dated: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021