



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Contact details:

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1. Purpose and aim

Ham United Group (HUG) is a Community Interest Company (CIC). Our purpose is to improve the environment and the quality of life for the people in Ham and Petersham. We do this by creating and delivering projects and activities that help make our community more sustainable.

We take the safeguarding of children and young people very seriously. Ham United Group is committed to ensuring we support children's rights and create and maintain the safest possible environment for children while engaged in any of our activities. The definition of a child as defined by the Children's Act 2004 is anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

This policy applies to anyone involved in Ham United Group - including directors, volunteers or anyone else working on behalf of HUG such as consultants. As an organisation, we are committed to ensuring that children all have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.

"Safeguarding" means taking steps to ensure that the vulnerable people that we interact with are safe from abuse. Abuse is defined as "a violation of an individual's human and civil right by any other person or person" Abuse can be physical, verbal, sexual, physical, discriminatory, emotional, neglectful or psychological and encompass many complex issues such as domestic violence, radicalisation, and gang related sexual exploitation. Please also see Appendix A. Abuse is unacceptable in all circumstances. If there is a concern about the risk of significant harm to the child then our overriding duty is to protect the child.

Safeguarding incidents are rare and ensuring that children and you are protected from unnecessary risks or allegations is mostly a matter of common sense. The best defence against abuse is the strength of the values incorporated in HUG's culture and the practical application of the mechanisms and procedures described in this document to protect children.

We want to provide children with a fantastic, empowering and inspiring, as well as a safe experience with Ham United Group. In order to help HUG do this everyone involved in the delivery of a HUG activity which involves children is required to:

- Complete basic checks prior to recruitment – references, DBS as required
- Read this policy, and sign it to say you have understood its contents and your responsibilities within it
- Complete level 1 children’s safeguarding awareness training provided online by The Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Partnership
- Adhere to the HUG code of conduct (see appendix D)
- Report concerns to the Nominated Safeguarding Person for HUG (Daija Angeli, info@hamunitedgroup.org.uk)

2. Background

The Children’s Act 1989 and 2004 defines a child as a person under the age of 18. This policy has been written using the legal and social care framework detailed in the following:

- London Child Protection Procedures (revised guidance 2017)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to interagency working together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, updated 2018
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004 (Section 11)

3. Our responsibilities

Ham United Group does not currently deliver any direct services for children. Children and young people involved in our activities such as family workshops, or gardening days must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

HUG recognizes its duty of care to both its beneficiaries and its volunteers. We have a responsibility to recruit safely, provide training and behave in ways that minimize the risk of harm to children that attend our activities. We also have a responsibility to report incidents that we witness or hear about. **All involved in delivering HUG functions in relation to safeguarding should follow the rule of 4Rs, Recognise/Respond/Refer/Record.**

Daija Angeli is the Nominated Safeguarding Person (NSP) at Ham United Group. Their responsibility is to ensure that this policy is up to date, and to act as the reporting point of contact for all concerns. Ultimately the HUG directors have legal responsibility for ensuring that child protection and safeguarding procedures are sufficient and appropriate for HUG operations, and the safeguarding officer is required to report concerns raised to them at the earliest opportunity.

All Directors and volunteers are aware of indicators of abuse as set out in Appendix A and Appendix B and know how to share their concerns appropriately. They will also complete the *Safeguarding Children - Level 1e-learning course* offered by the Kingston and Richmond Local

Safeguarding Children Partnership. Risk assessments are carried out for each of our activities; these include details on risks specific to children and ways to mitigate these risks.

4. Running activities with children present

- Ham United Group's events are open to everyone in the community. When advertising events, we always state that children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- We may organise events where children are present, such as young people's workshops, provided they are accompanied by adults who are responsible for their care.
- We may run activities with children at any institution or organisation (e.g. schools to the Scouts) where there are adults responsible for safeguarding under whose guidance and authority we will be operating.
- As an organisation we will review our activities regularly to see whether this policy is still relevant and to decide whether any of this work would require a basic or enhanced DBS check to carry them out.

5. Photography, Mobile Phones & Social Media

All Directors and volunteers are required to adhere to the following:

- Never give out your personal contact details and do not "friend" or follow children you are working with on social media
- Photography and videoing of children and young people and sharing this content on social media is not allowed unless written consent of the parent or legal guardian is sought, and then only for charity related activity.
- Do not ask for children for their home addresses, contact information or make arrangements with the child outside of the setting
- Do not share information about the children you are working or volunteering with to external parties.

6. Recruitment, Induction and Supervision of Volunteers

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable individuals are prevented from having any involvement with HUG.

- HUG's commitment to safeguarding and child protection will be stated in all adverts for volunteers.
- We will ask prospective volunteers to disclose any past convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings as well as any pending cases. Volunteers will be asked if they have ever had any complaints of abuse against them.
- Prior to appointment, two references will be taken and proof of ID required.
- At induction, all new volunteers will be expected to read and sign this policy and be aware of their role/responsibility with regard to confidentiality and safeguarding issues and be aware of how to identify signs of potential abuse and how to report any concerns.

- Supervision and support of volunteers will include monitoring of safeguarding practice.

7. DBS checks

In some rare circumstances it may be appropriate for volunteers to have a basic or enhanced DBS check. This is usually only required where staff are regularly working with children or there is a chance that they could work unsupervised with these groups. This currently does not apply to our work.

In the event that HUG were to develop a project that worked directly with children unaccompanied by a guardian and met the threshold for regulated activity, a satisfactory enhanced DBS check, along with experience of working with relevant groups, would be a requirement of being able to take on the role.

8. Disclosures

If whilst working for HUG a child discloses to you some information that suggests they have been subject to some form of abuse (see Appendix A and B) OR you witness an act of abuse or behaviour towards a child that causes you concern,

DO:

- Do remain calm and friendly
- Do ask someone else to get an adult responsible for safeguarding at the event you are at
- Do treat any allegations seriously and act at all times towards the child as if you believe what they are saying
- Do tell the child they are right to tell you
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- Do tell the child what you are doing, when, and who you have to tell
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse. Report to the Nominated Safeguarding Person immediately and use the Safeguarding Report Form (Appendix C) to record as much detail of the incident as possible.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you can't keep, e.g. that you will keep secrets; it is your responsibility to pass on any concerning information that you hear to a safeguarding officer.
- Don't interrogate the child – it is not your job to carry out an investigation
- Don't cast doubt on what the child has told you, don't interrupt them or change the subject
- Don't say anything that makes the child feel responsible for the abuse

- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your Nominated Safeguarding Person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to contact for further advice.

The Duty to Refer

HUG is legally obliged to refer to the Local Area Designated Officer when a person who is volunteering or delivering activities that include children for HUG behaves in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child, possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children. This is known as the duty to refer and referrals should be made by the Nominated Safeguarding Person to Richmond and Kingston Single Point of Access.

9. If you witness or suspect abuse

If at any time whilst involved with HUG you suspect that someone is being abused you must immediately act to stop the abuse if appropriate and safe to do so and then you must report the abuse as described below.

ALWAYS phone 999 if the child is in immediate danger

It is not your responsibility to deal with suspected abuse but it is your responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate person. If you observe or hear a child talking about things which give cause for concern, then your first responsibility is to that child. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action, it is not safe to assume that someone else will act.

Reporting the abuse

- **If the child is in immediate danger or at significant risk of harm always phone 999**
- If you have a concern refer to the Nominated Safeguarding Person as soon as possible and record the incident on the safeguarding form at Appendix C. Do not delay – if necessary complete the form after you have made the initial contact with the Nominated Safeguarding Person.
- The Nominated Safeguarding Person will refer to the Richmond and Kingston Single Point of Access 0208 547 5008, https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/children_and_family_care/single_point_of_access/about_the_single_point_of_access
- If you wish to report your concern externally to HUG phone the NSPCC Helpline on [0808 800 5000](tel:08088005000) or by emailing help@nspcc.org.uk.

The most important message to remember is that if you suspect or become aware of a child being subject to any form of abuse then it is your responsibility to report it as a first step to helping to protect them. Do not assume that someone else will do it. Seek the advice of the Nominated Safeguarding Person if you have any questions.

Lost child procedure for Ham United Group events

If a child goes missing during an event that is organised by Ham United Group, the person responsible for the event will apply the following procedure:

- Ensure that all other children continue to be supervised appropriately while a search for the child concerned is carried out (if appropriate – usually our events involve parents so there would be very few/no occasions when we would be responsible for the care of children)
- Organise the remaining available staff and responsible adults to conduct a search of the surrounding area allocating each individual to a specific area; request all those searching report back within a short time, dependent on the size of the area being searched
- If the child cannot be found after a good search of the immediate surroundings, update the child's parents and reassure them that everything is being done to locate the child
- Make a note of the circumstances in which the child has gone missing and where he/she was last seen and prepare a detailed physical description of the child, to include their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing he/she was wearing, as this will be required by the police
- Report the concern to the police if the search is unsuccessful and no later than 20 minutes after the initial missing person report if the search is ongoing
- Follow police guidance if further action is recommended and maintain close contact with the police
- Report the incident to the nominated safeguarding person
- Ensure that you inform all adults involved including the parents, searchers and police if at any stage the child is located.

Appendix A – Definitions of Abuse

Child Abuse is generally divided into four categories

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

2. 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 making a child feel or believe that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

3. 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, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

4. Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or 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, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Appendix B – Possible signs of Abuse

Physical signs of abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds
- Injuries which have not received medical attention
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains
- Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse
- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home

Physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child puts on weight in other circumstances: e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care
- Sudden speech disorders
- Persistent tiredness
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse:

- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults
- Being unable to play
- Attention seeking behaviour
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people
- Having nightmares
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance or drug abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money or expensive gifts
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence)
- Acting in an inappropriate sexually explicit way with adults.

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Appendix C - Safeguarding Reporting Form

Please complete this form as soon as possible after any safeguarding incident, make the Nominated Safeguarding Person aware of the incident as soon as possible and then send them this form.

Name of the individual(s) that safeguarding concern is about

Their D.O.B/ age (if known)

Where did the incident happen

Their contact details (if known)

Describe the incident or your concern

Describe what action if any has been taken to stop any risk and/or address the risk of further harm

Detail who the incident or concern was reported to and how, including their contact details if known

Your details

Name:

Contact details:

Date and time reported:

Appendix D - Code of Conduct

All Ham United Group representatives and volunteers are required to operate within the boundaries of their role and should adhere to the following guidelines for appropriate behaviour:

Always

- Treat all people that you encounter with respect regardless of their gender, age, religion, ethnic background, disability or sexual orientation
- Always be aware that someone might misinterpret our actions no matter how well intentioned
- Keep an open environment with any activities that we organise, avoiding private or unobserved situations with attendees – this includes in an online setting
- Ensure that for any events that you are running, including those online, you are creating a safe environment for attendees. For online events this could mean password protect zoom meetings, don't publicise the link to the general public, only send it onto registered ticket holders etc. For in-person events this could mean careful consideration of which venues are most appropriate for each group, and ensuring that the right level of directors, volunteers and partners are present, giving particular consideration to the needs of a group.
- Set examples of appropriate behaviour and ensure that you challenge any inappropriate behaviour to prevent the abuse of members of a group that you work with through bullying, cruelty or any other forms of humiliation if you witness it
- Keep professional boundaries and remember that you are in a position of authority and power to the people that you work with
- Use appropriate language with children and young people and challenge any inappropriate language used by a young person or child or adults working with young people
- Always respect a young person's right to privacy

Never

- Never be alone with a child. A child taking part in a HUG activity needs to be accompanied by their parent or responsible adult at all times.
- Never do things of a personal nature for a child. Any such requests should be referred to their accompanying parent or responsible adult.
- Never exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues or make suggestive remarks or gestures about or to a child, even for fun
- Never engage with any young person in an online setting such as on social media - this includes rejecting any friend requests that might be sent
- Never share your personal mobile, or ask for a child's contact details. Never photograph a child. Never befriend a child on social media.
- Never engage in, and don't allow others to engage in, inappropriate behaviour or contact (this includes physical, verbal, sexual, rough games including horseplay), or deliberately

put yourself or others in compromising situations. Consider whether your actions might breach someone's trust or confidence in you, make them feel uncomfortable, cause harm or be misinterpreted. If in doubt, don't do it.