Stepney City Farm Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

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Signed by:
Clare Hawkins
Chief Executive



Safeguarding Lead (Child Protection Officer): Clare Hawkins (Chief Executive)
clare@stepneycityfarm.org
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Kate Bygrave (Schools Programme Manager)
kate@stepneycityfarm.org

Stepney City Farm is committed to providing a safe and caring environment for children and young people. We believe that a child or young person should never experience harm or abuse of any kind and we are committed to work in a way that protects them and promotes their well being.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers, including the board of trustees, sessional workers, agency staff, students, or anyone else working at, or on behalf of, Stepney City Farm. It covers all areas of work with specific guidance for different scenarios in which children and young people engage with the Farm. All staff and volunteers are subject to appropriate vetting procedures and satisfactory Criminal Background Checks including an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)) or equivalent.

We recognise that:

- The welfare and protection of children and young people is paramount.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- Some children may experience particular vulnerabilities due to their age, abilities, or other characteristics that may place them at greater risk of harm or abuse.

The policy is designed to:

- Actively promote awareness, good practice and sound procedures for the safeguarding of children and young people.
- Protect children and young people who visit, volunteer or are otherwise involved with Stepney City Farm's projects and activities. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- Provide staff and volunteers with appropriate training and information about child protection and safeguarding, as well as a clear framework for action when abuse is suspected.

This policy exists to ensure that:

- Children and young people who visit, volunteer or are otherwise involved with Stepney City Farm's projects and activities are protected from harm or abuse, and that any concerns or allegations of abuse are responded to quickly and appropriately.
- Activities organised by the Farm are safe, and that working practices promote safety at all times.
- Appropriate support is offered to staff and volunteers to maintain this policy.

Recognising the signs of child abuse

A list of types of abuse and how to recognise them can be found in the Appendix.

What to do if you suspect a child is being abused

The procedure for what to do if you suspect that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse can be found in this document.

Allegations against staff or volunteers

If any member of Stepney City Farm Staff or any freelancer or volunteer working for Stepney City Farm has an allegation of abuse made against them, a referral will be made either to the police or to the relevant social services team by the safeguarding lead or deputy. If the allegation is made against the safeguarding lead or deputy a Trustee will take action as an independent person to make a referral. It is the task of Social Services to investigate the matter under The Children's Act 2004. Findings of misconduct will be dealt with under the Farm's Disciplinary procedure and may result in dismissal.

Reviewing this policy

We are committed to reviewing our policy and procedures annually, or when legislation changes. The policy will be reviewed by members of the Management Committee, with any changes reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Associated policies and procedures

This policy is related to Stepney City Farm's Recruitment Policy (see below), Adult at Risk

of Harm Safeguarding Policy, and Data Protection Policy.

This document is available to read on our website and paper copies are available to visitors of the Farm if they request one.

1. Outline of our obligations

All staff and volunteers have an obligation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable people in their care, including children and young people. The Safeguarding Leads have been trained and certified in safeguarding, and are responsible for communicating with children and young people, handling complaints, completing reports and referring any concerns or allegations of abuse to the local authority or the police as required.

Responsibilities of those on the Farm do not include investigating suspected abuse or questioning children when they have disclosed abuse: this is the role of the local authority or NSPCC, who have statutory powers and obligations under the Children's Act of 2004. Everybody should be clear about their responsibilities as clear roles help to provide a safe environment for all. **If you are unsure, please contact the Safeguarding Leads or a member of the management committee.**

a) Responsibilities of Stepney City Farm

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Adopting child protection guidelines through the procedures outlined in this policy and our code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks (including DBS checks) are made.
- Ensuring that employees and volunteers are aware of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and are adequately trained, managed and supported in their role.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- When appropriate, sharing information about concerns with the appropriate agencies.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through probationary periods, induction, supervision, support and training.

We commit to these practices because we want the Farm to be a safe environment in which children can learn, develop and feel secure. Children will be made aware of Farm staff they can approach if they are worried and will be listened to with compassion and without judgement.

b) Responsibilities of Farm employees and volunteers

- To make themselves familiar with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and all related procedures
- To declare any existing or subsequent convictions
- To act in accordance with best practice guidelines, as laid out in this policy

c) Support for those who report abuse

All those making a complaint or allegation or expressing concern, whether they be children, staff, service users, parents/carers or members of the general public should be reassured that they will be taken seriously. However, if they ask to speak to someone in confidence about a problem, no one should ever promise confidentiality, if what is disclosed or is likely to be disclosed relates to abuse being suffered by them or another. This should always be declared as a 'health warning' before meeting.

2. How Stepney City Farm engages with children and young people

Children engage with the Farm, our staff and volunteers in several different ways and contexts.

On Farm property:

- **As visitors to the Farm during normal opening hours,** usually accompanied by a parent/carer or other responsible adult.
- **As supervised volunteers at weekly volunteer sessions** for children aged 12-18 years.
- **As visitors to the Farm with school or other educational groups** supervised by teachers or other responsible adults connected with the group.
- **As participants at children's parties** held at the Farm and supervised by parents/carers or other responsible adults.
- **As visitors or volunteers to external projects located on Farm property,** such as rural arts and crafts initiatives running workshops and activities.

Outside of Farm property:

- **On trips to other farms, projects or educational initiatives,** organised by the Farm and supervised by Farm staff and volunteers.
- At schools or other community organisations **visited by our staff and volunteers for educational purposes.**

This policy is designed to cover all types of contact with children. The Farm prioritises the welfare and protection from harm and abuse of children at all times and in all contexts.

a) Codes of conduct

All children and young people on site will be asked to adhere to the Code of Conduct (Appendix I) which is displayed in the Volunteer Room.

All adults (staff and volunteers) working with children will be asked to adhere to the Code of Conduct for adults (Appendix I).

b) Safeguarding child visitors

The Farm is open Tuesday to Sunday and is open access for people to enter between 10am – 4pm. Children who visit the Farm during these hours are usually accompanied by a parent/carer or other responsible adult.

- No unsupervised children under the age of 12 years will be allowed on site. If a child under 12 years enters the Farm unaccompanied, we will contact their parent/carer to collect their child. If this is not possible, we will contact the police.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers or other responsible adults bringing their child to the Farm to supervise them at all times.
- A member of Farm staff will be present on site at all times during opening hours.
- A site risk assessment taking into account the presence of the public including children on site will be regularly reviewed and updated.

c) Safeguarding work experience students

The Farm runs a work experience program where students aged 16-18 (and up to age 25 with SEND) can undertake long term one day a week placements 10am - 4pm.

- Parents/carers of those under 18 are required to sign a consent form and provide emergency contact details before a young person can join the project.
- During their induction, work experience students are made aware of the safeguarding policy and who they should contact if they have any concerns.
- Work experience students are asked to sign their induction sheet to show they agree to abide by the Health and Safety rules and Code of Conduct whilst they are on site.
- Young people will be supported to engage in activities that are appropriate for their age, experience and abilities. They will be shown how to carry out tasks safely until they are confident to work in pairs out on the Farm.
- A DBS-checked member of staff (Work Experience supervisor) will be present on site at all times. The work experience supervisor will be responsible for ensuring the safety of young people.
- A risk assessment for the work experience programme will be regularly reviewed and updated.

d) Safeguarding organised groups of young people

The farm offers group volunteering sessions for small groups of young people who are brought to the farm by the organisations who work with them.

- Organisations ensure that they have the consent and emergency contact details of those under 18.
- Farm staff give a health and safety briefing at the start of the project.
- The group agrees to a shared set of rules whilst they are on site.
- Young people will be supported to engage in activities that are appropriate for their age, experience and abilities.
- A DBS-checked member of staff (Session Leader) will be present on site at all times whilst Young Farmers are engaged in the project.
- The project coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the safety of young people.
- A risk assessment for the Youth Volunteering programme will be regularly reviewed and updated annually

e) Safeguarding young volunteers

The Farm runs Young Volunteers sessions every Sunday from 10am - 12.30pm and 1.30pm - 4pm, for young people aged 12-17 years.

- Parents/carers are required to sign a consent form and provide emergency contact details before a young person can join the project.
- During their induction, young people are made aware of the safeguarding policy and who they should contact if they have any concerns.
- Young Farmers are asked to sign their induction sheet to show they agree to abide by the Health and Safety rules and Code of Conduct whilst they are on site.
- Young people will be supported to engage in activities that are appropriate for their age, experience and abilities.
- A DBS-checked member of staff (Session Leader) will be present on site at all times whilst Young Farmers are engaged in the project. The project coordinator will be responsible for ensuring the safety of young people.
- A risk assessment for the Young Farmers programme will be regularly reviewed and updated.

f) Safeguarding children who visit on school trips

The Farm welcomes school and other educational groups on organised visits to learn about topics related to farming and animal welfare.

- The children and young people will be accompanied by a teacher(s) or other responsible adult(s) connected to the group.

- A DBS-checked member of staff or sessional worker will deliver any formal session booked. The teacher or responsible adult will be present at all times..
- A risk assessment for the Schools programme will be regularly reviewed and updated.

g) Safeguarding children participating in children's parties

The Farm organises and hosts children's parties in our Classroom and Gallery.

- Parents/carers or responsible adult(s) who have booked the parties are expected to be present and supervising the children at all times.
- A DBS-checked member of staff or sessional worker will be on call to assist and supervise as required throughout the event.
- A site risk assessment taking into account the presence of the public including children on site for organised private events will be regularly reviewed and updated.

h) Safeguarding children who visit external projects located on Farm property

The Farm hosts a number of third parties including organisations, projects, and sole traders who lease parts of the Farm property, and sometimes organise workshops or projects for children and young people.

- It is the responsibility of the external organisation, project or sole trader organising the workshop, project or event to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people attending their activities whilst they are on site.
- Stepney City Farm expects the individuals supervising these activities to be appropriately DBS-checked by the external organisation, project or sole trader organising the activity.
- A site risk assessment taking into account the presence of the public including children on site attending third party organised activities will be regularly reviewed and updated.

i) Taking children away on trips / travel outside of the Farm

The Farm occasionally organises off-site activities to which Young Volunteers (for example) may be invited, such as to assist at farming shows or competitions.

- All trips away will have been authorised in writing by the child's parent/carer.
- Stepney City Farm will ensure that we have sufficient staff members to look after the children (which is currently rated at 1 adult to every 8 children over the age of 8 years), and that parents know where the group is going/when they will be back.
- Children will only travel alone with a designated adult (a staff member or volunteer who has been vetted by the Farm through the recruitment process, and undergone an enhanced DBS check with Barred List) and will have a known destination and check-in time with a third party.

- A mobile number will be provided to parents through which they can contact the designated adult at any time. A contact number for a parent or carer of each child will be held by the designated adult.
- Risk assessments will be carried out prior to trips away.

j) Staff/volunteers visiting schools or other organisations off-site

Members of staff or volunteers at the Farm occasionally visit schools or other external organisations, on behalf of the Farm, for educational purposes.

- Our staff/volunteers will abide by the safeguarding policies put in place by the school or external organisation.
- All staff/volunteers representing the Farm externally will have the appropriate DBS check.
- A risk assessment for the Schools programme will be regularly reviewed and updated.

3. Recruitment and supervision of staff and volunteers

a) Recruitment of employees and volunteers

Careful recruitment and selection of staff reduces the risk to children and young people. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 it is acceptable to ask for details of any unspent convictions for criminal offences. Candidates are also asked whether they have any adult cautions (simple or conditional) or spent convictions that are not protected as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) England and Wales) Order 2020 and if they have been disqualified from working with children under the Childcare Act 2006. Police checks alone are not effective in preventing abuse, so form only part of the Farm's recruitment process.

This Policy applies to anyone who is responsible for recruiting and inducting staff and volunteers at Stepney City Farm and all who participate in shortlisting / interviewing panels. Stepney City Farm is committed to promoting the welfare of children and young people and keeping them safe. We are also committed to equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively across all of our activities. We aim to have a workforce that represents a variety of backgrounds and cultures and can provide the relevant knowledge, abilities and skills for our organisation.

The Farm will follow an agreed, consistent recruitment process including:

- Advertising all posts through appropriate media and in a way that ensures that we attract high quality applicants from diverse backgrounds
- Providing an Application Pack with relevant information for anybody who expresses an interest in an advertised role

- Ensuring that all applicants, paid and voluntary, complete a standard application form, **carrying a requirement to declare any criminal convictions**
- Involving more than one person to shortlist applicants for interview
- Carrying out an in-depth interview with two people, face-to-face
- Incorporating the view of children, young people and families in to the recruitment process where possible and appropriate
- Taking up a minimum of two references from at least the two most recent employers and covering at least three years, two pieces of identification and original copies of any necessary qualifications from candidates
- If the applicant is currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, his or her current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences relating to children, including any in which the penalty is "time expired", (e.g. where a warning could no longer be considered in any new disciplinary hearing) and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection concerns, and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If the applicant is not currently working with children but has done so in the past, then contact will be made with that employer who will be asked about these issues;
- Carrying out Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks on all members of staff and trustees and any other necessary vetting procedures as appropriate
- Carrying out routine work review sessions to ensure that workers are suitable for their posts and to highlight concerns, record information, improve working practices and identify training or other support needs that staff may have

b) Induction and training

All staff and volunteers working with children and young people, and all trustees, will have an induction and access to training that will enable them to effectively put this policy into practice. This includes:

- Having a three month probation period for all new staff and volunteers with a review at the end before confirming anyone in to a post
- Familiarisation with all of Stepney City Farm's policies and procedures during induction
- Delivering further training, dependent on the nature of the role, e.g. risk assessment and management; keeping appropriate records; listening and communication skills; health and safety
- Ensuring that all staff and trustees are made aware, during their induction period, of this policy and what to do if they suspect abuse
- Safeguarding Leads and Deputies complete online training with our training suite IHASCO annually. This Safeguarding Children training course covers both levels 1 & 2 and also covers standard 11 of the Care Certificate.

c) Management and supervision

It is the line manager's responsibility to clarify with the worker or volunteer their roles and responsibilities regarding their relationships with children and young people with whom they may be in contact.

It is essential that staff and volunteers feel supported in their role. At the end of a session where staff or volunteers have been working directly with children and young people, they will be invited to debrief and offered the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns.

Regular support from managers is available through work review and planning sessions, which take place each month for full time staff and at least every six weeks for part time staff.

d) Recruitment and induction process

1. Plan your recruitment process
2. Advertise the vacancy
3. Review all applicants for the role
4. Create a shortlist of suitable applicants
5. Agree the interview questions and tests
6. Invite your chosen candidates to be interviewed
7. Conduct interviews and verify every candidate's identity and necessary qualifications, scrutinise any gaps in the application form / CV
8. Choose your preferred candidate, or see further candidates as appropriate
9. Make a provisional job offer, **depending on references and vetting processes being completed satisfactorily**
10. Consider any confidential information that the candidate has submitted along with his / her application, and discuss this with the candidate
11. Complete the take up of references and checks, including any checks into disciplinary offences / child protection concerns
12. Are all the issues arising from the references, checks and self-disclosed information resolved?
    YES - confirm the offer on a trial period of six months
    NO - withdraw the job offer
13. Agree a start date
14. Plan the induction
15. New staff member starts. Follow through the induction programme
16. Review the progress of the trial period after a maximum of three months
17. After six months, are you satisfied with their progress?
    YES - confirm new staff member into post
    NOT COMPLETELY - extend the trial period for a maximum of three further months and agree a further support package
    NO - end the contract at this point
18. After nine months, are you still unsatisfied with the new recruit's progress?
    YES - end the contract at this point

NO - confirm new staff member into post

4. Good Practice

a) Record keeping

There should be a written record of any concerns raised by children, staff, volunteers, members of the public or anyone else engaged with the Farm.

All records or possible abuse kept by paid workers about children and young people should be completed using the Child and Vulnerable Person's Report form (see Appendix). Staff and volunteers will be made familiar with this during induction, whilst guidelines for completing the form will be kept alongside it in the Child Protection Report folder.

This confidential information will be kept in a locked drawer, accessible only by the Safeguarding Leads. This information will be retained for a length of time in line with our current Data Protection policy.

b) Lone working

Wherever possible paid staff and volunteers should avoid lone working with children and young people. If unavoidable, one-to-one contact should take place in an environment where other staff or volunteers are present or within sight.

c) Sick or injured children

Parents or carers will be contacted immediately if a child becomes ill or is injured on the Farm or in the care of the Farm.

The child/young person will be escorted to medical care or to the hospital by a member of the Farm staff (the person in charge) and remain with them until the parent/carer arrives.

d) Use of images of children

Stepney City Farm will always ask for written permission from parents, carers and/or teachers of children before using their pictures in any publicity and will obtain a signed release form from parents where necessary (*e.g.* for external filming).

Application forms and registration forms for projects involving children will always include a request for permission for images to be used for Farm publicity (on the website, in Farm publications *etc.*). Parents/carers will be contacted for permission before publishing any pictures elsewhere, *e.g.* in the press.

At one-off events when photographs are being taken, a sign will be placed somewhere visible explaining that someone is taking photographs and a release form will be available for written permission from parents/carers.

e) Safety online

Our Safeguarding Leads are responsible for the safety of children in the care of the Farm accessing material online.

- Children are not allowed to use the computers or internet at the Farm without permission or good reason to do so.
- Occasionally young people may use the Farm computers to access the internet to research animals or other specific tasks relating to the Farm, in which case they will be supervised at all times and made aware of rules governing their use of the internet.
- Mobile phones are only allowed during breaks.

f) Contacting children

Only the Safeguarding Leads can contact young people directly via email, telephone or text messaging - using the Farm landline or Fram mobile phone only. Any communication in these forms to or from Young Volunteers will go through them in order to protect their personal information and reduce the risk of harm. In line with the NSPCC's advice the Farm will seek specific permission from parents / carers of young people aged under 16 years of age before sending any emails to Young Volunteers.

5. Incident procedure

If abuse either takes place or is alleged, or a disclosure of abuse is made, then the Incident Procedure must be followed. An incident may constitute:

- Disclosure - of alleged abuse: an event in which a child, young person or adult at risk of harm confides information about abuse or neglect.
- Witnessing of abuse, including inappropriate physical contact or other abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, or organised abuse)
- Suspicion of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, organised abuse, or self-harm)

For more detailed guidance on signs of abuse, please refer to Appendix II.

What to do in the event of a Disclosure:

- Remain calm, and reassure the child. Show acceptance and do not push for more information than is volunteered.

- Make notes about the disclosure conversation as soon as possible. Record exactly what the child said and when he or she said it and what was happening immediately beforehand. Note the time, date and place of the conversation and the name of any other person present. Note any evidence of abuse, e.g. bruises, bleeding, unusual behaviour (draw a diagram to show the position of bruises or marks they show you, include the size, shape and colour) If the initial note is handwritten, keep it if it is subsequently typed up.
- Inform the designated Child Protection lead, or if off site, the designated Child Protection lead at that site, immediately.
- If the information has been reported to the designated Child Protection lead where the conversation took place, then it should also be reported to the Farm's designated Child Protection lead as soon as possible.

For more detailed guidance on what to say in the event of a disclosure, please refer to Appendix III.

What to do if you witness abuse or have a suspicion that abuse may have taken place

- Report it to the designated Child Protection lead, or the Chair of Trustees, in their absence. If the child, young person, or adult at risk of harm is with a teacher or group leader known to them then they should also be consulted, as it is possible that they are already aware of the abuse, and have already reported it.
- Extreme care should be taken as misreading signs of abuse can result in significant harm or trauma to the child and their family; however you do have a responsibility to be alert and aware of the signs detailed during training/briefing, and outlined in the Appendices to this policy.

Making a Referral

- Concerns should be discussed with the parent or carer and, where possible their agreement should be sought before making referrals to Social Services unless this places a child at increased risk of significant harm. For example, in cases where the allegation of abuse is of a sexual nature, which must involve a referral directly to the relevant Social Services department or Police Child Protection Team.
- Where there is no clear evidence or allegation but suspicion exists that abuse may have occurred, a preliminary consultation with the designated child protection employee should take place without delay. Where the level of risk remains unclear, consultation should be sought from Social Services as to whether a referral is appropriate.
- **Under no circumstances should any member of staff, including the designated Child Protection lead, be tempted to try to investigate further the claims** – this

could lead to contamination of the evidence and could jeopardise any Police investigation and criminal prosecution activity.

- On receiving a report of an Incident, the designated Child Protection lead, or in their absence the Chief Executive, should contact the Social Services Area Office in which the child, young person, or adult at risk of harm resides to make a referral.
- The initial referral should be made by telephone as soon as possible after the event / disclosure. This should be followed up in writing with a letter to the social service department within 2 days. A copy of the letter should be kept in the Child Protection confidential file.
- When making the referral the type of referral being made should if possible be made clear to social services.
- At the end of any discussion about a child, the referrer and Social Services should be clear about who will be taking what action or that no further action will be taken. The decision will be recorded by Social Services and the professional referrer.
- Social Services will decide on the next course of action within 24 hours, and inform the designated Child Protection lead of how the case will proceed and what if any further action may take place. If possible and where appropriate this information should be passed on to the child, young person or adult at risk at of harm concerned.
- All referrals made should be acknowledged in writing by social services within 3 working days. If this is not the case a follow up telephone call should be made by the child protection coordinator to see what has happened with the referral.
- A written log of all referrals needs to be kept by the Farm, including a note of all telephone conversations and copies of all letters sent and received to and from social services. This should be kept locked in a confidential space for a period in line with current Data protection regulations.
- You should not discuss your suspicions or allegations with anyone other than those named in the above points.

Confidentiality

In all cases the protection of the child is the most important consideration. In the case of suspected abuse, it is important to ensure as much confidentiality as possible. Allegations should not be openly discussed with others; this can be harmful for the person who made the allegation as well as for the person against whom the allegation was made. Any written reports must be passed to the Child protection lead at the first opportunity while ensuring that they are kept in a secure place at all times.

APPENDIX I

Code of Conduct for Adults working with Children and Young People

This section outlines the behaviour expected of farm staff, volunteers, sessional workers, trustees, peer leaders and staff from other organisations who engage with children and young people through projects and activities at Stepney City Farm.

Community gardens and city farms are, by nature, friendly and relaxed places. This may make it difficult for people to always know how to act appropriately. This code has been developed to provide advice which will not only help to protect children, but will also help identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse being made against individuals.

The good practice code will also help to protect Stepney City Farm by reducing the possibility of anyone using their role within the organisation to gain access to children in order to abuse them.

When working at Stepney City Farm, all staff and volunteers are considered to be acting in a position of trust. It is therefore important that staff, volunteers and peer leaders are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and must act in an appropriate manner at all times and follow the code of conduct. Please consider how you will behave in advance, and follow the steps set out below.

All incidents of bullying, shouting, verbal abuse and/or discrimination, any disclosures made, and any observations made that may indicate abuse or self harm, should be reported to the Safeguarding Leads, a record should be made in the Welfare Concerns spreadsheet and appropriate action taken.

<u>Code of Conduct for Adults working with Children and Young People</u>

When working with children and young people it is important to note:

- **Touch** should be kept to a minimum without being unfriendly. Necessary touch should be carried out with clarity of intention and sensitivity so as to avoid confusion or embarrassment.
- Volunteers and staff should **avoid being on their own in an isolated or closed environment** with a child or young person.
- **Restraint:** in extreme cases, staff may have to physically restrain a child to prevent him/her causing injury to him/herself, to others or property. This may only be done by members of staff who are trained in restraint techniques.
- There is a Farm Code of Conduct that all children and young people participating in Farm Activities have agreed to adhere to. Familiarise yourself with this and if you find that a child or young person is not following it, please speak to the Safeguarding Leads.

- Minimise the chances of spending time alone with children and vulnerable people, and where required tell other workers or adults that you are doing so in advance.
- Where close contact is required (*e.g.* learning to use tools safely), ensure that it takes place in a group.
- Avoid physical activity which is, or may be thought to be, sexually stimulating.
- Do not offer lifts to children or vulnerable people.
- Any computer-based activity should be agreed in advance and closely supervised. The Farm will not tolerate access to pornographic or other inappropriate websites on site.
- Listen to and respect children at all times.
- Make sure the language you use is appropriate to the group of people you are working with.
- Avoid favouritism, treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice.
- Actively involve children and young people in planning activities wherever possible.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all concerns or allegations of abuse to the Safeguarding Leads immediately.

You must not:

- Patronise or mistreat children and young people.
- Allow allegations to go unreported.
- Develop inappropriate relationships such as contact with children and young people that is not a part of the work of the project and agreed with the manager or leader. **Sexual relationships between any adult member of staff or volunteers and a child or young person using the project services represent a serious breach of trust and are not permissible in any circumstances.**
- Let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, address, email) or contact you on social media sites.
- Contact a child of under 18 years of age, by phone, by email, or social media, even if they initiated the communication. **All communication with under 18s should go through the designated Safeguarding Leads.**
- Use sarcasm or insensitive comments to children and young people.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- **Make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality.**
- Issues of equality and individual needs will be addressed and supported in line with Stepney City Farm's Equality and Diversity Report.

Code of Conduct for Children and Young People

This policy has been developed in order to make clear the behaviour that is required of children and young people when attending and using the facilities of Stepney City Farm. *This code of conduct is shaped by the views of children and young people.*

PURPOSE: To ensure that all children and young people are safe, respected and to reduce the risk of harm.

BASIC PRINCIPLES: This code of behaviour for children and young people is intended to:

- Identify acceptable behaviour for children and young people
- Promote self-respect and self-control
- Raise children and young people's' self-esteem and self confidence
- Encourage individual responsibility for behaviour and outline the consequences of poor behaviour
- Encourage children and young people to recognise and respect the rights of others
- Encourage cooperation at all times in all situations
- Promote the values of honesty, fairness and respect
- Anticipate and resolve any conflict that may arise
- Ensure that children and young people are aware of the point at which sanctions will be put in place

The Code of Behaviour below is displayed in areas around the farm, visible to young people visiting and participating in activities.

Code of Conduct

This code has been created in collaboration with Young Farmers to help everyone stay safe and get along. We want you to feel welcome, confident and supported while volunteering at the farm. We expect everyone to follow the code regardless of age or role on the farm.

You should:

- **Listen to and respect each other**
- **Treat animals at the farm with respect and help to ensure their welfare**
- **Follow the Health and Safety rules - wash hands regularly and ASK before entering ANY enclosure**
- **Try your best - have a go at new things and complete tasks to the best of your ability**
- **Be supportive, kind and helpful to each other**
- **Ask for help if there's a problem, if you're stuck or not sure about something**

- **Be honest, tidy and responsible**
- **Leave mobile phones in your bags and only use them during break times.**
- **Only volunteer during your session - please arrive and leave on time**
- **Tell us if you have any concerns or worries about yourself or another person. You can:**
  - **Speak to the Session Leader in person, by text to the Young Farmers mobile on 07706 846 401 (9.30am-4.30pm on Sundays), or email all Session Leaders on youth@stepneycityfarm.org**
  - **Contact our Child Protection Officer Clare Hawkins (in person in the farm office, over the phone on 020 7790 8204 Monday-Friday, or by emailing clare@stepneycityfarm.org)**
  - **Email our Youth Programme Manager Martin Osman (martin@stepneycityfarm.org)**

You should not:

- **Behave in a way that is dangerous to you or others at the Farm**
- **Harm or scare animals at the Farm**
- **Disrespect, bully or abuse others at the Farm or online**
- **Intimidate others at the farm or online. We will not tolerate oppressive behaviour related to racial identity, gender identity, sexuality, disability or neurodivergence.**

What happens if you don't follow the code of conduct?

Minor or first time incident - We will remind you about this code and ask you to change your behaviour.

Formal warning - If your behaviour has not changed or is more serious, we will make a note of what happened and inform your parents or carers if appropriate. We will support you to make a plan for how to improve your behaviour in the future. You may be asked to sit out of an activity or sessions for a time.

Final warning - If our support isn't helping you to change your behaviour, we might need to give you a final warning. This will also be recorded and we'll inform your parents or carers. We might need to talk with you and your parents or carers about other services that might be more able to give you the support you need.

We want children and young people to be safe at all times at the farm. Is there anything not included in the list above that would make you feel more safe?

APPENDIX II

Defining and recognizing abuse

Defining Abuse
Abuse can take many forms. Some of the definitions, as interpreted by NSPCC, are as follows:

Physical Abuse
This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a dependent whom they are looking after.

Emotional Abuse
This is the persistent ill treatment of a person such as to cause severe and adverse effects on their emotional development and state. It may involve conveying to a person that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate or only valued in the context of another person's needs. It may involve frequently causing a person to feel frightened or in danger, or their exploitation or corruption. This can take place in person, or through use of mobile technology or social media.

Sexual Abuse
This involves forcing or enticing a vulnerable person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative sex or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving vulnerable people in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect
This is the persistent failure to meet a dependent's basic physical and or psychological needs. It may involve a parent or carer failing to protect a dependent 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, their basic emotional needs.

Organised Abuse
Organised or multiple abuse may be defined as abuse involving one or more abuser and a number of related or non-related abused children and young people. The abusers concerned may be acting in concert to abuse children, sometimes acting in isolation, or may be using an institutional framework or position of authority to recruit children for abuse. Organised and multiple abuse occur both as part of a network of abuse across a family or community, and within institutions such as residential homes or schools.

Bullying

Bullying is a form of abuse and in some cases has led to serious physical injury, mental torture, death or suicide. People of all ages can be affected in many different ways. If bullying is happening it is probably affecting many people. Some people might be directly involved, whilst others may be scared it might happen to them, or be told not to be friends with certain other people. This behaviour must be stopped for the sake of the victims and the bullies. Childline and Kidscape have extensive experience of dealing with bullying and appropriate strategies and support.

Recognising Abuse

Recognising abuse is one of the first steps in protecting vulnerable people. However, it's important to remember that changes in behaviour or signs you may have noted do not necessarily mean that someone is being abused - there may be another reason, such as problems at home. On the other hand, there may not be any signs; you may just feel something is wrong.

Child abuse can take place in a number of different settings, of which the following are examples:

- It is likely to occur most commonly where the young person knows the individual/s and is trusted. This can be a parent, carer, babysitter, sibling, relative, or friend of the child or of the family.
- The abuser is sometimes someone in authority such as a teacher, youth leader, children's worker or church worker/leader.
- The abuser is sometimes a paedophile or other person who sets out to join organisations to obtain access to children.

Signs of Abuse

Physical signs:

- any injuries, bruises, bites, burns, fractures, etc, which are not consistent with the explanation given for them
- injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls, rough games, etc
- injuries which appear to have been caused by a weapon e.g. cuts, welts, etc
- injuries which have not received medical attention
- instances where children are kept away from the group inappropriately or without explanation
- self-mutilation or self-harm e.g. Cutting, slashing, drug abuse

Emotional signs

- Changes or regression in mood and behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clinging. Also depression/aggression
- nervousness/inappropriate fear of particular adults e.g. frozen watchfulness
- sudden changes in behaviour e.g. under-achievement or lack of concentration

- inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults e.g. excessive dependence
- attention-seeking behaviour
- persistent tiredness
- wetting or soiling of bed or clothes by an older child

Neglect signs

- regular poor hygiene
- persistent tiredness
- inadequate clothing
- excessive appetite
- failure to thrive e.g. poor weight gain
- consistently being left alone and unsupervised

Sexual signs

- any direct disclosure made by a child concerning sexual abuse
- child with excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behavior, or who regularly engages in age inappropriate sexual play
- preoccupation with sexual activity through words, play or drawing
- child who is sexually provocative or seductive with adults
- inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home
- severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotations Other emotional signs (see above) may be indicative of sexual or some other form of abuse

Features of organisations at risk of potential abuse of children (identified by the NSPCC):

- Minimal supervision of children / children left to their own devices / poor coordination and lack of consistency in supervision / minimal staff support / lack of resources;
- Inadequate guidelines or procedures for dealing with concerns about children;
- Lack of specialist skills or knowledge about child protection;
- Discouragement of parental involvement;
- Gaps between policy and practice.

APPENDIX III

What to say in the event of a disclosure

General Points

- Keep calm – do not appear shocked or disgusted
- Accept what the child says without passing judgement (however unlikely the disclosure may sound)
- Look directly at the child
- Be honest
- Let them know you will need to tell someone else, don't promise confidentiality
- Be aware the child may have been threatened and fear reprisals for having spoken to you
- Never push for information or question the child as this can undermine any subsequent criminal investigation. If at any point a child decides not to continue, accept that and let them know that you are ready to listen should they wish to continue at any time.

Helpful things to say or show

- Show acceptance of what the child says
- "I take what you are saying very seriously"
- "I am pleased that you have told me. Thank you for telling me"
- If appropriate, "it isn't your fault and you are not to blame at all"
- "I am sorry that happened to you"
- "I will help you"

Things not to say

- "Why didn't you say something before?"
- "I really can't believe it"
- "Are you sure this has happened?"
- "Why?" "Where?" "When?" "Who?" "What?" "How?"
- Don't make false promises to the child – like confidentiality – be honest now, any lies will be further abuse and betrayal
- Never make statements such as 'I am shocked!' or 'don't tell anyone else'.

Concluding the conversation

- Reassure the child that they were right to tell you
- Let the child know what you are going to do next and tell them that you will let them know what is happening at each stage.

APPENDIX IV

Sources of information and advice

National support organisations for vulnerable people are:

Helplines

Brook Advisory Centre Helpline	0800 0185 023
Kidscape	08451 205 204
Children's Legal Centre Helpline	01206 873 873
ChildLine (Freephone)	0800 1111
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	0808 800 5000
Parentline Plus	0808 800 2222
Samaritans National Helpline	08457 909 090
Internet Watch Foundation Hotline	08456 00 88 44

Brook Advisory Centre Office
Brook centres offer young people under 25 counselling for sexual, emotional and family problems, contraception advice and pregnancy testing. Helpline: 0800 0185 023 Tel: 0207 284 6040 Email: admin@brookcentres.org.uk www.brook.org.uk

ChildLine
Confidential counselling for any child with problems. Provides books, information and posters.
Helpline: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

Children's Legal Centre
Legal advice and information about issues that affect young people and their rights. Produce guides, handbooks and information sheets. Tel: 01206 872 466 Email: clc@essex.ac.uk www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Disclosure and Barring Service
The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) have merged to become the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-barring-service-check/overview

Help the Aged
Tel: 020 7278 1114 Email: info@helptheaged.org.uk www.helptheaged.org.uk
207-221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ

Kidscape
Campaign for personal safety of children and young people. Deals with bullying, getting lost, stranger danger and threats of abuse from known adults. Helpline: 08451 205 204 Tel: 0207 730 3300 www.kidscape.org.uk

Mind

UK mental health charity Mind Info Line 0845 766 0163 www.mind.org.uk

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline is a free 24 hour service that provides counselling, information and advice to children and anyone concerned about a child at risk from abuse.
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

NSPCC Asian Child Protection Helpline 11am to 7pm Mon – Fri

Asian/English	0800 096 7719	Bengali	0800 096 7714
Gujarati	0800 096 7719	Hindi	0800 096 7716
Punjabi	0800 096 7717	Urdu	0800 096 7718

PACE
PACE provides counselling for gay men and lesbians for issues including HIV. Tel: 020 7700 1323 www.pacehealth.org.uk

Samaritans
Confidential emotional support 24 hours a day on 08457 90 90 90

Saneline
UK mental health charity on Helpline 0845 767 8000 www.sane.org.uk

Youth Access Office
Produce a national directory listing advice and counselling agencies for young people. Tel: 0208 772 9900 Email: admin@youthaccess.org.uk www.youthaccess.org.uk

Parentline - Opus (Organisations for Parents under Stress)
Network of groups providing support for parents, including confidential anonymous local helplines and self help groups on 01268 757 077

Parentline Plus
A UK registered charity, offering support to anyone parenting a child, their parents, step-parents, grandparents and foster parents. Helpline: 0808 800 2222 Tel: 0207 284 5500 www.parentlineplus.org.uk

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
BTCV produce a variety of information and training on safety with tools, conservation, etc. Groups who affiliate can access insurance cover and reduced fees for training. Tel: 01302 572 244 Email: information@btcv.org.uk www.btcv.org

Health and Safety Executive
HSE provide information sheets (many free of charge) including Avoiding ill health at open farms. HSE infoline: 0845 345 0055 Publication order line: 01787 881 165 www.hse.gov.uk

Child Accident Prevention Trust
CAPT produce a number of publications aimed at reducing the risk of serious accidents involving children. Tel: 020 7608 3828 Email: safe@capt.org.uk www.capt.org.uk

Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents
RoSPA produce health and safety information for use with children and young people. Tel: 0121 248 2000 Email: help@rospa.com www.rospa.org.uk

APPENDIX V

Children and vulnerable person's report

This report should be completed by a Safeguarding Lead/Child Protection Officer in cases of suspected abuse, even if no further action is taken. Please do so as soon as possible after an incident, and within 24 hours at the latest. This report is confidential. Please keep it in a secure place and for a duration in line with the current data Protection policy. The completed report should be countersigned by a member of the management committee.

Date and place of incident
_____

Name of person
_____

Age of person _____ Gender
_____

School attended (where applicable)
_____

Names and ages of siblings (where applicable)
_____

Person's level of contact with Stepney City Farm
_____

_____
____

Name of parent/carer
_____

Address
_____
____

_____ Telephone number
_____

Name of worker involved
_____

What took place

Source of information (eg was the disclosure direct or indirect)
_____

_____
_____

Verbatim account of disclosure

_____
_____

_____
_____

_____
_____

_____
_____

Any observed behavioural concerns
_____

_____

Action taken

Has the Director/Chair of the Board been contacted?
YES/NO

Has Social Services been contacted? **YES / NO** Date & time of contact_____

Name of Duty Social Worker
_____

Comments

_____
___

Have parents/carers been contacted? **YES/NO** Date & time of contact

_____

Name of parent/carer

_____

Comments

_____
_____

Has anyone else been contacted (: Police, Doctor, etc)?
YES/NO

If yes please provide details, including names, times, dates and contact telephone numbers

_____
_____

_____
_____

Advice given

_____
_____

_____
_____

_____
_____

Summing up

_____

_____
_____

Report completed by _____ Stepney City Farm

Signed _____	**Time & date**
Countersigned _____	**Time & date**