

Keeping People Safe Policy

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Owner:	Neil Armstrong	Job Title:	Assistant Director – Care & Support
To be issued to:		Board of Management Ark Management All Staff	
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Version Control

Date	Owner	Version	Reason for Change
May 2023	Neil Armstrong	2.0	Cyclical Review
Apr 2020	Lyn Docherty	1.0	New policy to combine and replace policies detailed below

Summary of Changes

Section	Change
1.0	Updated Ark values
8.0	Change in Policy and Procedure titles
Various	SLT to OMT
Various	Updated to reflect AIMS

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1.0 Ark's Values

Ark's values are true to the core purpose of the organisation and the services we deliver. They determine our behaviours towards one another and what we should expect in our relationships with one another. Working within the following values will guide and help us deliver our vision and mission of Ark being an organisation where everyone is equal:

Trust

We have confidence in our people to deliver excellent services and trust in them to do so. We will develop trusting and honest relationships and our customers will feel assured that they can rely on us to deliver.

Respect

We treat everyone fairly and we listen. We are respectful of each person with whom we come into contact and expect our people to respond professionally and treat others as they would wish to be treated.

Understanding

We will operate with empathy and compassion and approach each situation with an open mind. We will question and challenge to ensure we achieve the right outcomes for customers and our people.

Equality

We believe everyone is equal and expect our people to create positive experiences where everyone feels valued and included.

Integrity

We will do the right thing and take responsibility for our actions. We will work together to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and practice.

2.0 Purpose

Ark Housing Association has a range of duties and responsibilities for keeping people safe from harm or abuse. This policy brings together a number of previous Ark policies relating to safeguarding our tenants, employees, people we support and the wider public.

It replaces:

- **CS02 Adult Support & Protection**
- **CS09 Child Protection**
- **CS12 Missing Persons**
- **CS24 Professional Boundaries**

Combining these as a safeguarding framework rather than maintaining separate policies aims to streamline and simplify our position on keeping people safe from harm and abuse. It supports Ark's recognition that we all have some responsibility for the safety and welfare of our customers and each other.

3.0 Policy Statement

Ark will promote people's rights while minimising risk of harm to themselves, others and the wider public.

Ark will uphold statutory obligations to ensure people's rights are respected and that they are protected from harm or abuse without undue limits to their freedom.

4.0 Scope

It is the responsibility of all Ark employees and its Board of Management to promote people's rights while keeping them safe from harm.

There may be duties that only apply to specific departments or job roles. These are detailed in the relevant procedure for that element of safeguarding.

5.0 Legal/Regulatory Framework

This policy and associated procedures are written with regard to the following:

- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Children (Scotland) Act 1995
- Social Work Scotland Act 1968
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Health (Tobacco, Nicotine, etc. and Care) (Scotland) Act 2016
- National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2014)
- Adult Support and Protection revised Code of Practice (Scottish Government, 2014)
- Codes of Practice for Social Services Employers and Employees (SSSC, 2016)
- Health and Social Care Standards (Scottish Government, 2017)

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 Board of Management

Ark's Board of Management is responsible for consideration and approval of this policy, and for ensuring that its decisions are taken in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, training and guidance.

6.2 Executive Team

Ark's Executive Team is responsible for ensuring that this policy is reviewed in accordance with Ark's schedule for review of policies, or sooner if required. The Executive Team is responsible for ensuring that its decisions, and that the decision of officers, are taken in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, training and guidance.

6.3 Operational Management Team

Ark's Operational Management Team is responsible for review of the policy, and for ensuring that its decisions, and that the decision of officers, are taken in accordance with relevant legislation, regulatory expectations, training and guidance.

6.4 Managers

All Ark Managers will be responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their area of responsibility. They must also ensure that their staff are made aware of this policy and participate in relevant training.

Ark Managers must ensure that allegations and suspicions of harm or abuse are responded to, through accurate reporting to relevant agencies.

Care & Support Managers/ Operations Managers must ensure that any individualised procedures required are in place, reviewed and followed and appropriate risk assessments are completed and actioned.

6.5 All Staff

All Ark staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and comply with its provisions as well as undertake any training implemented as a result. Registered workers who do not comply with this policy may be referred to a SSSC fitness-to-practise panel.

All staff must report allegations and suspicions of harm or abuse to their line manager and record this accurately, while upholding people's rights to privacy, dignity and choice.

All staff must practice in a way that minimises risks to themselves and others, including through maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

6.6 Third Parties

All agency staff, volunteers and students undertaking Care & Support duties are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and comply with its provisions. Students who do not comply with this policy may be referred to their institution, and SSSC fitness-to-practise panel if relevant.

Ark will ensure that the Public Sector Equality Duty is complied with when 3rd parties, such as contractors, are carrying out functions on behalf of Ark.

7.0 Keeping People Safe

7.1 Our employees

Procedures related to this policy will follow recognised best practice within the housing and care sectors.

Ark employees have a right to be safe from harm or abuse at work. We recognise that the nature of our work means that employees may have to respond to challenging situations. See: **HS12 Lone Working** and **CS06 Reducing Restrictive Practice**.

As an employer, we will ensure that staff are trained to manage and de-escalate challenging situations where required.

We will minimise the risk of harm to employees through robust assessment, health and safety protocols and training appropriate to job role.

The only appropriate relationship between an employee and customer is a professional one focused on the assessed, legitimate needs of the customer.

Care & Support staff will be recruited in line with safer recruitment processes and will register with the SSSC. See **HR01 Recruitment & Selection**.

7.2 Protecting people from harm or abuse

All employees will be clear on what to do if they fail to make planned contact with a supported person or tenant, and at what point that person may be reported as missing.

Care & Support Managers must be familiar with any contractual agreement with their Health and Social Care Partnership about failed contact with a supported person. Good Life Support Plan / R&V (Risk & Vulnerability) documentation will contain the procedure for that individual.

All employees and board members will report any allegation or suspicion of the harm or abuse of an adult raised in the course of their work with Ark by following **G57a Adult Support and Protection**.

We also have a responsibility to help keep children safe from harm or abuse. All employees and board members will report any allegation or suspicion of the harm or abuse of a child raised in the course of their work with Ark by following **G57b Child Protection**.

We will always share information appropriately with other agencies in order to keep children and at-risk adults safe; for example the police and social work department. This overrides any agreement of confidentiality between us and an individual.

We will support people to access independent advocacy.

All employees will report immediately any breach of professional boundaries by themselves, other employees, contractors, agency staff, students or any other person undertaking work for Ark; see **G57c Professional Boundaries**.

8.0 Related Policies & Procedures

- G57a Adult Support & Protection procedure
- G57b Child Protection procedure
- CS02 Care Planning
- CS06 Reducing Restrictive Practice
- HS03 Risk Assessment
- HS12 Lone Working guidance
- HS12 Lone Working Risk Assessment
- HM44 Lone Working procedure
- HR01 Recruitment & Selection

9.0 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Please see relevant Equality Impact Assessment.

10.0 Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)

Please see Care & Support Data Protection Impact Assessment.

11.0 Stakeholder Consultation

- Ark Operations Management Team
- Ark Regional Managers
- Child Protection short-life working group
- Ark Working Group

12.0 Monitoring and Review

12.1 Monitoring

Ark's Executive and Operational Management Team will monitor implementation of this policy on an ongoing basis and ensure that relevant decisions within Ark are taken in line with the obligations and expectations set out in this policy.

12.2 Review

This policy will be reviewed within 3 years from the date of approval by our Board of Management, in accordance with Ark's policy review framework.