

Zen Housing Limited: Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

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Policy Owner:	Board
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1 | Introduction

- 1.1. Zen Housing Limited (“Zen”) has created a framework to ensure the approach to safeguarding children and young people is appropriate. Zen will ensure that all necessary steps are taken to protect children and young people from the risk of harm and abuse and promote their welfare.

2 | Scope

- 2.1. The safeguarding duty to children and young people applies to anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.
- 2.2. Child abuse can include, but is not limited to:
- Physical abuse
 - Domestic abuse including violence
 - Psychological or emotional abuse
 - Neglect
 - Sexual abuse
 - Spirit possession and witchcraft
 - Induced illness or fabrication
 - Forced marriage
 - Female genital mutilation
 - Infant oral mutilation
 - Trafficking
 - Bullying
 - E-abuse
 - Gang activity
 - County Lines exploitation
 - Violent extremism

- 2.3. This policy applies to all Zen employees, representatives, contractors and volunteers, including Board Members. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

3 | Definition

- 3.1. Safeguarding children is defined in 'Working together to safeguard children 2023' as:
- Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
 - Protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
 - Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - Promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network, through a kinship arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interest of the children
 - Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework
- 3.2. An integral part of children's and young people's safeguarding is child protection. Child protection is the specific activity which protects children who have been identified as suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

4 | Policy

- 4.1. The guiding principles to safeguarding children are based upon the key principle that safeguarding children and young people is everyone's responsibility.
- 4.2. Zen adopts the four R's of safeguarding to remind everyone of these responsibilities.
- Recognise – Everyone must be familiar with the signs and symptoms of child abuse.
 - Record – Any concerns or observations of abuse must be accurately recorded.
 - Report – Concerns or observations of abuse must be reported in accordance with the Zen's Safeguarding Procedures.
 - Refer – Where there is a concern of immediate risk to a child or young person, do not delay and call the Police and/ or Children's Social Services.
- 4.3. Zen recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and value the importance of seeking the voice of the child and responding to it appropriately.
- 4.4. Children have said that they need:
- Vigilance: to have adults notice when things are troubling them.

- Zen will ensure all staff have training in Safeguarding Children and Young People and promote the culture that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Understanding and action: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon.
 - Zen will have clear and accessible Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedures.
- Stability: to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them.
 - Zen will ensure all staff receive support, training, supervision, scrutiny and evaluation of their work involved in safeguarding children.
 - Zen will ensure well-kept and accurate records are kept of any
 - safeguarding activity and ensure accountability of agency involvement.
 - Information and engagement: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans.
 - Zen will work with the relevant Safeguarding Children's Board in order to protect children and young people from harm.
- Explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.
 - Zen will work to achieve effective information sharing and be honest about their responsibilities to report and share their concerns to ensure all children and young people are safe.
- Support: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family.
 - Zen will ensure that effective measures to safeguard children are not seen in isolation from the wider range of support and services available to meet the needs of children and their families.
- Advocacy: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views.
 - Zen will ensure there is effective joint working between agencies and practitioners that have different roles and expertise, knowing when to make referrals (with consent).
- Protection: to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.
 - Zen will align its services with wider Government and Local Authority guidance and initiatives.

5 | Regulatory code and legal framework

5.1. Zen will comply with all of the legal and regulatory expectations outlined in the following:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- Human Rights Act 1998
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

- Care Act 2014
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Regulator's Neighbourhood and Community Standard

6 | Responsibility

- 6.1. The Board is responsible for ensuring that this policy complies with legislative requirements.
- 6.2. All Board Members, staff and contractors are responsible for implementing this policy and working in line with its associated procedures.

7 | Training

- 7.1. All Zen employees, including Board members, will undertake training as required.

8 | Monitoring and Review

- 8.1. Compliance with this policy shall be monitored by the Board.
- 8.2. This policy shall be reviewed at least every 3 years or more frequently if required due to changes in legislation, regulation or good practice.

9 | Contact Person

- 9.1. The Operations Director Asset Management has responsibility for the effective delivery of this policy.

10 | Related policies

- 10.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
 - Antisocial Behaviour Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
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