



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

1. Introduction

Citizen have clear organisational values and these reflected in all of our policies .

WE ARE BRAVE

We are willing to take on the tough stuff. We challenge ourselves. We don't give up.

WE ARE AMBITIOUS

We find solutions. We aren't afraid to try things out. We keep learning and improving.

WE ARE HONEST

We take responsibility. We are realistic. People trust us to do what we say we will do.

WE ARE CITIZENS

We are committed to our people and places. We believe everyone has something to give and encourage every person to be the best they can be.

In terms of the Safeguarding of Children Citizen aims to take all reasonable measures to provide safe accommodation and services for users of its services, which may include children with care and support needs. It is important therefore that we describe how we approach Safeguarding Children.

A child is any person below the age of 18.

Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, with staff across Citizen playing a key role in preventing, identifying and reporting neglect and abuse to protect children. We have a specialist Safeguarding training partner and developed a specific training plan. The training focuses on how to identify Safeguarding concerns and clearly defined procedures in place that explain what they should do in each circumstance All staff undertake mandatory Safeguarding training and this clearly define the duty each has to report any concerns for the well-being of children as detailed in the Safeguarding procedure.

POLICY

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Lead Officer: Director of Care and Support

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Citizen recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of those who are at risk. This requires us to:

- Have clear operational procedures for identifying and dealing with concerns about possible abuse, and ensure their implementation
- Maintain effective information sharing with statutory services and other agencies, involve children, parents and adults with care needs as appropriate
- Work in partnership with local safeguarding children boards
- Recruit safely to achieve safer services for our customers and employees, including a stringent checking process
- Ensure contractors working in our properties and partners managing schemes on our behalf have appropriate Policies and training in place
- Ensure that all staff are:
 - Trained in recognising the symptoms of abuse and neglect
 - Vigilant and be able to respond to safeguarding concerns
 - Familiar with the six principles underpinning safeguarding
- Have a clear Communications Plan in place to ensure the Policy is shared effectively

2. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff in contact with children, young people and their families, take all reasonable measures to minimise the risks of harm to the welfare of children; and where there are concerns, appropriate actions are taken to address these concerns.

The approach of this policy is based on and reflects the principles of both UK legislation and guidance and international agreements. Citizen will abide by existing regulatory requirements and legislation. In summary the Children Act (1989) emphasises that the welfare of the child is paramount and that a child wishes must be taken seriously. The Working Together to Safeguard Children a guide to inter agency working 2015 ,contains statutory and non-statutory guidance, introduced a national frameworks for policies and procedures and outlines the responsibilities of Local Children's Safeguarding Boards.

Citizen will act in accordance with the procedures of the relevant Local Safeguarding Children's Boards who are the lead agency responsible for Safeguarding. Each Board publish an escalation process where an initial referral has been rejected This is reflected in our processes.

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3. Policy purpose

All children, regardless of disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, faith or belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse. This is of paramount concern to us.

Children have a right to information which could make life better and/or safer for them and we therefore will provide information about how and with whom individuals can share their concerns, complaints and anxieties. We also, where possible, offer a choice in working together with and signposting to other agencies.

4. Scope

This policy extends to all operational areas and all staff.

5. Roles, responsibility and authority

Board is responsible for the overall Policy. It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Committee to ensure that this Policy is successfully implemented, and the procedures followed.

A Board Safeguarding representative has been appointed and they attend the Safeguarding Committee and provide feedback to the Board after each meeting.

Directors and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that all staff understand the importance of this Policy and the related procedures and comply with them. It is essential to the implementation of this Policy that staff know how to deal with emergencies and to express concerns to the appropriate person in the Organisation.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Chief Operating Officer and their Deputy the Director of Care and Support.

6. Policy management and delivery

All relevant staff will be appropriately trained in using our policy and procedures and will also be made aware and receive training on the procedures of their local safeguarding boards and how to access information. The level of training they receive will be considered in proportion to the role within the organisation, clients they work with and risk they are potentially dealing with.

Citizen will ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure that contractors who work in properties on behalf of Citizen and who meet children are aware of and have had training on this policy and the related procedure.

Everyone working on behalf of Citizen is expected to behave towards customers and staff in a way that demonstrates their commitment to this policy. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action or termination of contracts.

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7. Policy monitoring and review

We will:

- Undertake a Safeguarding self-assessment every 2 years on all aspects of Citizen using the section 11 framework
- Ensure that all staff will have mandatory training on our Safeguarding policy and procedure and we will monitor its implementation –
- Ensure that all partners and contractors evidence they have completed appropriate Safeguarding training and aware of our Safeguarding Policy and procedure
- Recognise the importance of mental health and ensure our designated mental health first aiders are clear on their Safeguarding responsibilities
- Report quarterly key performance information on areas of concern and trends in terms of Safeguarding.
- Ensure appropriate Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks are completed

Performance against the above measures will be monitored via our Safeguarding Committee.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier due to:

- significant changes to legislation or regulation
- deficiencies or failures in this policy, because of complaints or findings from any independent organisations
- changes in local government

8. Equality analysis

An equality analysis has been carried out and shows that this policy has or has the potential to have a positive impact on all individuals regardless of their protected characteristic as per the Equality Act 2010.

In framing this policy, our staff are committed to not discriminate adversely against any group and will respect the diversity of the communities we are working within.



9. VERSION CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENTS	APPROVED AT/BY	REVIEW
V 1.0	October 2021	Policy reviewed	Board	Nov 2024
[VERSION]	[DATE]	[AMEND MADE]	[NAME]	[DATE]

Appendix 1 Definitions

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