

# ***Safeguarding Procedures & Policy***

## **Policy Statement**

The programmes delivered by Lil' Leo CIC (Lil' Leo) are dedicated to fostering a safe, inclusive, and positive environment, where an open and listening culture encourages individuals to express concerns freely, without fear of repercussions. This commitment ensures that everyone feels valued, respected, and supported in sharing their thoughts and experiences.

LIL' LEO recognizes that safeguarding is a collective responsibility shared by all members of our community. We are firmly committed to preventing abuse and neglect by actively protecting the welfare and well-being of every participating adult including any participating therapy pet(s) involved in our activities and programs

LIL' LEO acknowledges that health, well-being, abilities, disabilities, and the need for care and support significantly influence an individual's resilience. We also understand that some individuals face barriers, such as difficulties in communication, which can hinder their ability to raise concerns or seek assistance. Furthermore, we recognize that these factors can fluctuate at different stages of life.

LIL' LEO also recognises that there is a legal framework within which we need to work to safeguard all the participants which are either children, adults and therapy pet(s) who have needs for care and support and for protecting those who are unable to take action to protect themselves and will act in accordance with the relevant safeguarding legislation and with local statutory safeguarding procedures.

Actions taken by LIL' LEO will be consistent with the principles of children, adult and therapy pet(s) safeguarding ensuring that any action taken is prompt, proportionate and that it includes and respects the voice of the adult concerned.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the commitment of LIL' LEO to safeguard all participants including pets, children and adults and to ensure that everyone involved in LIL' LEO is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of any participant within the programme.

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## **Scope**

This safeguarding policy and associated procedures apply to all participants involved in LIL' LEO including Collaborating Partners, Schools, Employees, Volunteers, Members, Carers, Children and to all concerns about the safety of participants whilst taking part in the activities related to LIL' LEO.

We expect our partner organisations, including for example, affiliated bodies, suppliers and sponsors to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in this Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures. LIL' LEO will only be responsible for reporting incidents during the programme and since the collaborating partner organisations will be bringing in the participants; the safeguarding procedures of the organisations will take over after any report has been filed.

## **Commitments**

To implement this policy, LIL' LEO will ensure that:

- Everyone involved with LIL' LEO is aware of the safeguarding procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of the participant.
- Any concern that a participant is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- The well-being of those at risk of harm will be put first and the participants actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Those views and wishes will be respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to (see the Safeguarding Procedures).
- Any advised actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with Data Protection Policy and Procedures governed by UK Law
- LIL' LEO will act in accordance with best practice advice, for example, from Local Governing Bodies wherever applicable.
- LIL' LEO will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard a participant.
- All organisation partners, staff, and volunteers understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults and have completed and are up to date

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with safeguarding adult training and learning opportunities appropriate for their role.

- LIL' LEO uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers and staff to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation.
- LIL' LEO shares information about anyone found to be a risk to participants with the participating organisation.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed on an annual basis.
- LIL' LEO policy towards child protection and safeguarding is to ensure that no pet encounter with any child up to the age of 18 inclusive, made by any employee or volunteer of LIL' LEO, or by any animal registered with a Charity like Pets As Therapy for the delivery of the service, shall result in harm: medical, physical, mental or psychological, to that child
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Procedures are reviewed no less than on a two-yearly basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as required by the Local Safeguarding Board and/or Local Governing Bodies and or because of any other significant change or event.

## **Implementation**

All personnel & volunteers should adhere to the following principles and action:

- Always work in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets)
- Make the experience of the activities fun and enjoyable: promote fairness, confront and deal with bullying
- Treat all young people equally and with respect and dignity
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance with participants
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with young people. Where any form of manual/physical support is required it should be provided openly and with the consent of the young person. Physical contact can be appropriate so long as it is neither intrusive nor disturbing and the young person's consent has been given
- Involve parents/cares wherever possible, encourage parents to take responsibility for their own child.
- Request written parental consent for any media related asks

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- Ensure that there is atleast 1 volunteer for every four participants.
- Always give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism
- Keep a written record of any injury that occurs, along with details of any treatment given
- Ensure that the therapy pet is registered with a known charity and has the requisite insurances in place. The pet handler should always display their tehrapy badge.
- The pet should be updated with their vaccinations.

### **Recording Information**

- To ensure that information is as helpful as possible, a detailed record should always be made at the time of the disclosure/concern. In recording you should confine yourself to the facts and distinguish what is your personal knowledge and what others have told you. Do not include your own opinions.

Information should include the following:

- the participants's name, age and date of birth
- the participant's home address and telephone number
- whether or not the person making the report is expressing their concern or someone else's
- the nature of the allegation, including dates, times and any other relevant information
- a description of any visible bruising or injury, location, size etc. Also any indirect signs, such as behavioural changes
- details of witnesses to the incidents
- the participant's account, if it can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising/injuries occurred
- have the parents been contacted in case of a young person? If so what has been said?
- has anyone else been consulted? If so record details
- has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record detail

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## **Reporting the Concern**

- Any such concern will be promptly reported to the member of the Organisation which is responsible for the participant.

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. This includes the following people:

- The parents of the child
- The person making the allegation
- Social Services/police
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child)

Seek social services advice on who should approach the alleged abuser.

All information should be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws.

## **Training**

In addition to pre-selection checks, the safeguarding process includes training after recruitment to help staff and volunteers to:

- Analyse their own practice against what is deemed good practice, and to ensure their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations
- Recognise their responsibilities and report any concerns about suspected poor practice and/or abuse
- Respond to concerns expressed by a child
- Work safely and effectively with children

LIL' LEO requires:

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- All staff and volunteers who have access to children to undergo a DBS check
- All staff and volunteers to undertake relevant child protection training or undertake a form of home study, to ensure their practice is exemplary and to facilitate the development of positive culture towards good practice and child protection
- All staff and volunteers to receive advisory information outlining good/bad practice and informing them what to do if they have concerns about the behaviour of an adult towards a young person

### **Declaration**

On behalf of LIL' LEO I, the undersigned, will oversee the implementation of the Safeguarding policy and take all necessary steps to ensure it is adhered to and will be the nominated Welfare Office

**Signed:**

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One of the signatories should be the nominated Welfare Officer

**Name:**

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**Position within LIL' LEO**

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**Date:**

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