

Grainger Trust Limited ('GT') Safeguarding Policy – Children

February 2025

1. Introduction & Statement of Intent

The purpose of this policy is to highlight that safeguarding children who are at risk of neglect and abuse is the responsibility of everyone at Grainger Trust ("GT"). This policy highlights our obligations in the management and reporting of children's safeguarding, and it applies to all employees, Board members, as well as contractors or managing agents who provide services to or on behalf of GT.

In this policy references to children include anyone under the age of 18 years old – see **Definitions** below.

As part of our day to day activities there will be contact with children and GT, as a Regulated Provider of Social Housing is required by law, by the Regulator of Social Housing, and by the Consumer Standards to have a clear policy and approach to safeguarding children, and to working in conjunction with local partnership agencies in relation to such children.

2. Working with Local Authorities

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for the safeguarding and for promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the Children's Act 1989 as amended in 2004 which make this clear, including specific duties in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, regardless of where they are found, under sections 17 and 47 of the Children Act 1989.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to run Local Safeguarding Children's Boards. They are the lead agencies with responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding of children and for conducting case management and reviews. The local team has expertise in handling cases of abuse, providing support and counselling to victims and assisting the police with any criminal investigations.

They also have a number of statutory duties under various legislation including:

- Children Act 2004
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2015 ("WTSC23").

3. Definitions

In this policy the following definitions apply. These are compatible with the WTSC23.

a. *Child safeguarding* refers to:

- i. Protecting children from maltreatment.
- ii. Preventing impairment of children's health and development.
- iii. Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- iv. Taking actions to enable all children to have the best outcomes

b. *Children/Child* refers to anyone who has is under the age of 18 and it includes unborn children.

- c. *Parent* includes carers and/or guardians. It refers to the adult who is legally entitled to take decisions on behalf of the child.
- d. *Abuse and neglect* is defined widely to include any form of neglect or abuse which could be caused by single or repeated acts or omissions by any other person(s), or in the case of self-neglect, the victim themselves. The circumstances of each individual case will be considered as to not limit what constitutes abuse or neglect.

The definition in WTSC23 is useful:

A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Guidance on the types of abuse and neglect is detailed in the GT Safeguarding procedure, and GT will treat as a safeguarding concern any situation where a child is suspected to be involved in or affected by any of the following.

- physical abuse.
- sexual abuse.
- emotional or psychological abuse; and
- neglect and acts of omission which result in neglect.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

GT will ensure that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone who works for us and works on our behalf and that individuals who encounter children and families are alert to their needs and of any signs of child abuse, including any risks abusers or potential abusers may pose to children. GT will expect that all its staff (and the staff and contractors who work on behalf of GT to:

- a. Ensure appropriate employees are aware of this policy and relevant procedures.
- b. Ensure appropriate employees are aware of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- c. Alert the appropriate agency where there is a child safeguarding issue through.
 - i. effective referrals,
 - ii. Keep records of safeguarding concerns and appropriately supervise staff.
 - iii. Share information with other organisations in line with the Data Protection Act and UK GDPR using agreed protocols.
- d. Recruit staff appropriately.
- e. Set out clear professional boundaries when working with or coming into contact with children; and
- f. Raise awareness of safeguarding with customers

Whilst safeguarding responsibilities sit with all staff, the responsibility structure at GT is as follows:

- a. The GT Board has responsibility for the scrutiny and oversight of child safeguarding matters, including ensuring that GT policies, procedures and infrastructure are fit for purpose and are being followed. The GT Board will receive reports on and review

incidents and ensure lessons are learnt.

- b. All managers are responsible for ensuring that child safeguarding matters are reported, and that child safeguarding is effectively managed within their area of responsibility.
- c. Where there is a case involving death or serious harm of a service user or vulnerable resident, a Serious Case Review will be conducted to identify whether there were any failings on our part, and if so, establish what lessons could be learnt and any actions to rectify any failures. In these instances, the Board shall be informed and kept updated with regards to the outcomes of any reviews that take place.
- d. The Head of GT will report to the Board on an annual basis to highlight the general activities and highlight any concerns as and when appropriate.

5. Our approach

The operational delivery is the responsibility of the GT operations team, this includes:

- a. Ensure child safeguarding procedures are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate and to ensure that other procedures have regard to child safeguarding as appropriate.
- b. Ensure that relevant staff record and report child safeguarding cases in accordance with GT policies and procedures.
- c. Ensure that staff are appropriately supervised.
- d. Ensure that child safeguarding is regularly discussed at team meetings and in one-to-one meetings.
- e. Provide updates to the Head of GT to ensure child safeguarding is considered and reported through to GT Board.
- f. Attend external multi agency meetings representing GT; and
- g. Promote child safeguarding within the organisation.

All GT colleagues have a duty to record and report child safeguarding concerns in accordance with GT's policies, procedures, and guidance. All concerns relating to child safeguarding must be recorded in writing.

6. Training

All GT colleagues and those working on behalf of GT will receive training to ensure they have a clear understanding of child safeguarding and enable them to fulfil the requirements of GT's child safeguarding policy procedures.

Training will be appropriate to individual roles and the requirements of these roles in relation to child safeguarding. Training will be refreshed at least every two years or earlier if there are significant changes to legislation or good practice which result in a requirement to change our policy or procedures.

GT Board members, volunteers, and contractors as appropriate will be included in training and the GT Board will receive regular reporting on the completion of training.

7. Multi Agency Approach

GT recognises its role in child safeguarding as one that supports the functions of statutory agencies, including local authorities and the Police. GT will ensure that records are kept of appropriate referral agencies. These records will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are up to date. GT will attend multi agency meetings to review child safeguarding cases including the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub ('MASH').

8. Contractors

Contractors delivering services to or on behalf of GT will be required to report concerns about child safeguarding to GT and this will be included in the terms of their engagement by GT. All contracts to deliver services to GT properties or other activities where there is contact with GT customers will contain clauses that oblige the contractor to adhere to this policy.

9. Information Sharing

GT will share information with other agencies appropriately and in accordance with the Data Protection Act and the UK GDPR.

Information sharing agreements will be put in place and regularly reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose and legislatively compliant.

GT will only share information without an information sharing agreement being in place where there is an immediate risk of harm or criminal activity is taking place.

10. Perpetrators of Abuse

Where allegations are substantiated, GT will consider legal action and sanctions against perpetrators of abuse who are tenants. Abuse and neglect will not be tolerated.

Where appropriate, GT will refer perpetrators of abuse to the relevant support agencies.

11. Statutory Requirements

In observing this policy, GT will comply with all the legal and regulatory expectations, noting that there is a substantial amount of legislation, and this list is not exhaustive:

- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Children Act 2004 Child Safeguarding
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 2002
- The Human Rights Act 1998

- The Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Disclosure and Barring Service
- Family Law Act 1996
- Sexual offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act
- Licensing Act 2003
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Related internal policies include:

- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Harassment and Hate Crime Policy
- Allocations and Lettings Policy
- Income Management Policy

12. Monitor and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years or when there is a change in circumstances, in work practices or the introduction of new regulation or legislation.

An annual update on safeguarding to the GT Board

Document Owner and Approval

The Head of GT is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring that this procedure is reviewed in line with the review requirements.

A current version of this document is available to all members of staff on the corporate intranet.

Document History

Policy Owner	Head of Grainger Trust
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