

# Safeguarding Policy

## Introduction and Purpose

Betterclean Services is committed to protecting service users against all forms of abuse. You have a responsibility towards service users to ensure that they are protected from abuse.

Betterclean Services sometimes works with clients who operate within a setting that brings our employees into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults. These include schools, colleges, universities and attractions.

This policy sets out the Company's policy for those job roles that involve working with children and vulnerable people and on monitoring and reporting information about you received during the course of your employment in those roles.

The Company is committed to working with these clients to ensure our employees safeguard and promote the welfare of children or young and vulnerable adults in the workplace.

Everyone working within these settings has a responsibility for safeguarding children and young or vulnerable adults. Our staff members will be made aware that it is important to maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.

The purpose of this policy is to make sure that the actions of any adult in our employ, whilst performing the works for which they are employed by us, are transparent and safeguard the children, young people and vulnerable adults that they may come into contact with.

We will be guided by the client and in particular the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) within the client's workplace.

## Good practice guidelines and staff code of conduct

To meet and maintain our responsibilities towards safeguarding we expect our employees to:

- treat everyone with respect;
- set a good example by conducting themselves appropriately;
- ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present where they are working in the vicinity of vulnerable adults or children;
- be aware that any physical contact with vulnerable adults or children may be misinterpreted, no matter how well intentioned;
- operate within the Company's principles and guidance and any other specific procedures;
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations or suspicions of abuse to the appropriate person at the client premises;
- share any concerns with your supervisor/area manager and/or the DSL at the client premises without delay.

Employees must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults;
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of vulnerable adults, children or young people;
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts by discussing concerns with your immediate line manager;
- either exaggerate or trivialise vulnerable adults or child or young people abuse issues;
- show favouritism to any individual;

### **What is abuse?**

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse. The following definitions are taken from “Working Together to Safeguard Children” a Department for Education publication.

- Physical Abuse

This includes anything from a hand slap to death by suffocation. Injuries may be caused by blows, punches, kicks, shakes, bites, belts, scalds, burns, suffocation, drowning or poisoning. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms or deliberately causes ill health to a vulnerable adult or child they are looking after, Physical abuse, as well as being the result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through the omission or the failure to act and protect.

- Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in serious impairment to their health or development. It may involve a carer failing to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold or starvation, or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in significant impairment of the child’s health or development.

- Sexual Abuse

Forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they are aware of what’s happening. This includes rape, incest and all forms of sexual activity involving children, including encouraging children to look at, or to be involved in the production of pornography material, prostitution or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

- Emotional Abuse

This is persistent emotional ill treatment which is likely to cause serious harm to the child’s emotional development. This may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate and cause children to feel frightened, in danger, be exploited or corrupted.

### **What to do if someone discloses an abusive act or experience to a Betterclean Services employee**

If a vulnerable adult, child or young person confides to a Betterclean Services employee that they are being or have been abused then they have placed that person in a position of trust. The employee concerned must:

- be clear that they cannot keep secrets or promise confidentiality and that they must pass on information if they think a child or young person has been or is being harmed, or is at risk of being harmed, in some way;
- react calmly. Do not panic as this may frighten or silence the person;
- make a full record of what is being said, heard or seen as soon as possible and report it to the Clients DSL and their respective supervisor/area manager.
- DO NOT DELAY IN PASSING INFORMATION ON.

It is not the sole responsibility of the Company to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. This will be decided after a full investigation and the relevant Clients' DSL has been informed. It is the responsibility of our employees to act if there is cause for concern, in order that the client and appropriate agencies can investigate and take the necessary action to protect a vulnerable adult or child. All concerns should be reported the same working day.

### **Responding to allegations of abuse or inappropriate or dangerous behaviour against a member of Betterclean Services staff**

Regardless of the age of the individual person, if an allegation of abuse or inappropriate conduct is made against the Company's employee then it must be reported immediately to the client's DSL and their respective supervisor/area manager.

Concerns about employees must be treated with the same rigour as other concerns. If there are concerns that child abuse has taken place then this information will be passed to social services and/or the police for a full investigation by the client, supported by the relevant the Company's Senior Manager.

The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult is paramount. Even when the presenting circumstances appear not very serious they must be followed up, and they are examined objectively by someone independent of the Company.

The Company's Senior Managers will also need to refer to any disciplinary policy and procedure and decide whether the member of staff should be suspended pending a full investigation.

### **After an allegation**

After an allegation or suspicion or concern has been investigated, there are likely to be strong feelings among the staff, service users, parents and maybe the wider community, which will need to be addressed. There are likely to be issues of rumour or fact, guilt and blame – if suspicions have been around for some time, impact on individuals, of the nature of what occurred and to whom. The Company's Senior Management team will support the client and employee in considering the best way of managing this.

### **Training**

Our employees will undertake basic safeguarding training as required by our client organisation. Please also refer to our Training & Development Policy (BCS3011)

### **Recruitment**

The Company will make it clear when advertising jobs whether the work will involve "regulated activity" as defined by the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

Enhanced checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be conducted on Betterclean Services staff on appointment, when they work within client settings that operate with children, young people and vulnerable adults. We will be guided by our client requirements with regards to the frequency of DBS checks.

Please also refer to our Recruitment & Selection Policy (BCS3014) and any local recruitment processes.

### **Work that becomes a regulated activity**

If your work either becomes a regulated activity or where you are asked to perform work that is a regulated activity, the Company will require you to provide a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure with a Barred List check from the Disclosure and Barring Service to confirm your suitability to carry out regulated activity

If you refuse to undertake this check, or if you appear on the Barred List, the Company will investigate whether you can continue to be employed in activities that are not regulated activities, but the Company reserves the right to dismiss you.

### **If you are added to a barred list during the course of your employment**

If you are added to a barred list during your current employment, the Company will be legally obliged not to allow you to continue to engage in regulated activity. This may mean that the Company cannot continue to employ you.

If the Company receives notification that you have been barred, the Company will investigate whether you can continue to be employed in activities that are not regulated activities, but in these circumstances the Company reserves the right to dismiss you without notice.

### **The Company's duty to refer information**

By law, the Company has a duty to refer certain information to the Disclosure and Barring Service. This includes:

- if the Company has dismissed an individual because he or she has harmed, or may harm, a vulnerable adult or child.
- if an individual has resigned from employment with the Company in circumstances where there is a suspicion that he or she has harmed, or may harm, a vulnerable adult or child (this will apply where an allegation has been made and the employee resigns before the Company can take disciplinary action)
- if the Company has suspended an individual and has reason to think the employee has engaged in "relevant conduct" or has harmed, or may harm, a vulnerable adult or child, or has received a caution or a conviction for, a relevant offence.

Signed:



Date: 01/05/24