



PA Housing

PA Housing Safeguarding Children and Young People

June 2025

Owning manager

Joanna Connolly, Head of Tenancy Sustainment

Department

Customer Services Directorate

Approved by

Emma Conlon Director of Tenancy Management

Next review date

June 2026

		Page
1	Introduction	2
2	Aims and Overview	2
3	Scope	3
4	Definitions	3
5	Our approach to Children's Safeguarding	4
6	Roles and Responsibilities	4
7	Recognising and Responding to Children's Safeguarding	5
8	Recruitment and Training	6
9	Data Protection and Information Sharing	6
10	Guidance	7
11	Related Documents	8

Paragon Asra Housing Limited (PA Housing) is committed to equality and diversity. This policy has considered the Equality Act 2010 and its protected characteristics which are: race, gender, gender reassignment, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage, civil marriage and partnership, and pregnancy and maternity explicitly.

We will make sure that all our communication is fully accessible and to achieve this if a policy or document needs to be available in other formats we will provide them

1. Introduction

PA Housing provides housing and support services to a wide range of people. Some of whom may be vulnerable or may be at risk of abuse, neglect and harm.

PA Housing takes all concerns, allegations and of abuse, neglect and harm seriously.

We are committed to keeping children and young people safe. We safeguard to protect individuals from maltreatment.

PA Housing is committed to working in partnership with the local authorities and relevant agencies in its areas of operation, to protect vulnerable children and young people from maltreatment

This policy is grounded in our core values of making a positive difference in people's lives. Doing the right thing, whilst treating people with respect and integrity, ensuring we meet our statutory obligations. We are committed to ensuring a supportive and confidential environment for victims and survivors of abuse.

As a responsible social landlord, PA Housing recognises good quality homes and neighbourhoods play a critical role in promoting positive health and wellbeing of children and young people. We will ensure individuals and families have access to safe, secure, and high-quality housing.

2. Aims and overview

This policy provides guidance on how PA Housing will identify and manage safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people and the appropriate action we will take to protect individuals from harm.

We will align our practices with current legislative and statutory requirements.

The **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023** statutory guidance sets out inter-agency responsibilities to ensure effective safeguarding. We have aligned our policy with core principles:

1. **Early Intervention & Prevention**
2. **Child Centred**
3. **Reporting**
4. **Partnership**
5. **Action**

Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 places duties on a range of duties of organisations, agencies and individuals. The Statutory Guidance sets out the responsibilities of key stakeholders including housing services. PA Housing will work in partnership with

- **Local Authorities (Children's Social Care):** Lead agency for safeguarding, conducting assessments and interventions.
- **Health Services (NHS, GPs, Mental Health Services):** Identify signs of abuse/neglect and provide medical support.
- **Police:** Investigate safeguarding concerns and take legal action where necessary.
- **Education Settings:** Recognise and report signs of abuse, providing a safe learning environment.

- **Voluntary & Community Organisations:** Support children and families, offering additional safeguarding interventions.

This policy aligns with **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 Guidance** to ensure that all safeguarding concerns are addressed in accordance with legal requirements, best practices, and the well-being of children and young people.

- Prioritising their safety and well-being
- Offering timely support
- Collaborating with statutory and voluntary organisations
- Comply with statutory and regulatory duties and best practice.
- Raise awareness of types of abuse and indicators to be alert to.
- Raise awareness of action PA will take in relation to abuse and safeguarding concerns.
- Provide information and support in a range of accessible ways.
- Work in partnership with agencies in relation to safeguarding.
- Work collaboratively with safeguarding partners policies and procedures.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all PA Housing staff, board members, volunteers, and contractors, covering all properties and neighbourhoods under PA Housing's management.

4. Definitions

PA Housing uses the following definitions aligned with Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance (2023) to ensure clarity in safeguarding:

- **Abuse and neglect** - Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment that harm a child's physical, emotional, or psychological well-being. This harm can be caused by direct actions (abuse) or by failing to act to prevent harm (neglect). Abuse and neglect can occur within families, institutions, or communities and may be perpetrated by adults or other children.
- **Child** – *“a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. ‘Children’ therefore means ‘children and young people’”*
- **Making Safeguarding Personal** - means safeguarding is not simply a process but a person-centred approach. We work in partnership with children and their families to understand their needs and involve them in decision making as far as possible.
- **Safeguarding** - means protecting an individual's right to live safely, free from abuse and neglect.
- **Statutory Duty** Several pieces of legislation, guidance, and frameworks that are designed to ensure the protection and well-being of children, young people, and adults at risk. These responsibilities are legally binding and apply to organisations like PA Housing, which interact with vulnerable individuals.

5. Our approach to Children's Safeguarding Concerns

PA Housing strongly believes that a child's welfare is paramount. We will work tirelessly to ensure that all children living in or affected by our housing services are safe, protected from

harm, and supported through robust safeguarding measures, effective partnerships, and a culture of vigilance and care.

We will:

- Work to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse and neglect to children.
- Focus on the child's well-being, ensuring that safeguarding support is tailored to their circumstances rather than driven solely by procedures.
- Notify statutory services if we believe that a child is being harmed or at risk of harm.
- Ensure a robust case management and referral system is in place where there are concerns about a child's welfare.
- Identify children at risk through interactions with families and households.
- Collaborate with local authorities, social services, and other agencies.
- Ensure that staff are trained to spot the signs of child abuse and neglect.
- Signpost to relevant stakeholders, where appropriate.
- Attend multi-agency meetings to support our residents and build stakeholder relationships.
- Engage with our partner agencies to ensure that we have a framework of support for all residents.

Structured Referral Process:

- **Identify the concern** – signs of abuse, neglect, or risk.
- **Check the local authority** – refer to the child's home borough.
- **Follow local procedures** – each authority may have different reporting mechanisms (e.g., online forms, phone hotlines).
- **Record the referral** – ensure compliance with data protection (GDPR) and safeguarding record-keeping policies.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at PA Housing and the individual responsibility of specific individuals and teams.
- PA Housing has a designated strategic safeguarding lead who is accountable to the PA Housing Board for the overall framework of good practice and control in relation to safeguarding.
- The Safeguarding team manages all safeguarding cases across the organisation.
- The Learning and Development Team monitors compliance and ensures all colleagues complete regular safeguarding training.
- We monitor and evaluate our services to ensure fairness, accessibility, and best practice.
- PA Housing meets all statutory safeguarding requirements and continuously improves services through regular monitoring.
- We ensure effective implementation of this policy, supporting and protecting residents at risk.
- We attend Child Protection Conferences to contribute to intervention plans for at-risk children.
- We collaborate with external agencies through shared safeguarding plans, information-sharing protocols, and joint training.
- We prioritise early intervention, identifying risks before harm escalates.
- Regular case reviews ensure clear decision-making for case closure while maintaining necessary safeguards.
- We engage in Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) to learn from critical incidents and improve safeguarding practices.

7. Recognising and Responding to Children's Safeguarding Concerns

By prioritising a child-centered approach, we aim to provide clear and accessible reporting mechanisms, robust risk assessments, and effective multi-agency collaboration.

- We will take all reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation seriously, ensuring that children's voices are heard, and their needs prioritised.
- We will make it easy to report concerns for a children and young people's welfare.
- We will provide tailored support to families, always ensuring that the child's welfare remains the primary focus.
- We will take immediate and effective action when safeguarding concerns are raised, ensuring timely referrals to appropriate agencies, including Social Services or the police.
- A comprehensive risk assessment will be conducted for every safeguarding case.
- We will work closely with statutory agencies, social services, and other safeguarding partners to ensure a coordinated and effective response.
- We will actively participate in multi-agency meetings, safeguarding reviews, and information-sharing agreements, ensuring the best outcomes for children.
- We will ensure all colleagues receive regular safeguarding training to recognise and respond to signs of child abuse and neglect.
- We will provide additional training on domestic abuse and its impact on children, ensuring staff are well-equipped to offer appropriate support.
- We will foster a safeguarding culture where colleagues feel confident in reporting concerns and acting upon these.
- We will ensure that reporting safeguarding concerns is simple, accessible, and well-communicated to all residents and colleagues.
- We will review the and triage all cases within one working day of receiving a safeguarding report.
- We will handle all safeguarding concerns with discretion and sensitivity, adhering to data protection legislation.
- We will regularly review and monitor safeguarding cases to ensure timely intervention and effective resolutions.
- Cases will only be closed when a resolution is achieved, or further action is no longer feasible, with clear documentation of outcomes.
- We will conduct regular audits and provide reports to assess and improve our safeguarding practices.
- We will use anonymised data to analyse trends, inform future policies, and improve service delivery.
- We will adjust our services to meet the diverse needs of individuals and families, ensuring a personalised approach to safeguarding.
- We will avoid language that is triggering, blaming, shaming, or judgmental, ensuring trauma-informed communication.
- We will actively monitor and evaluate the impact of our services to ensure fairness, accessibility, and best practice.
- We will implement this policy effectively, ensuring that residents feel supported and understood throughout the safeguarding process.
- We will embed safeguarding best practices across all areas of service, ensuring that children's safety and wellbeing remain at the heart of everything we do.

8. Recruitment and Training

PA Housing is committed to ensuring that all colleagues, contractors, and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge and skills to safeguard children and young people at risk. To achieve this, we will implement a comprehensive training framework that is role-dependent and includes robust monitoring of compliance.

Induction Training:

All new colleagues, regardless of role, will receive an introduction to safeguarding, covering the basic principles, procedures, and responsibilities.

- **Resident facing roles**
Colleagues who have direct contact with residents (e.g., neighborhood coordinators) will undergo further Safeguarding training. This includes recognising signs of abuse, neglect, and radicalisation.
- **Specialist Roles:**
Safeguarding officers and safeguarding leads will receive advanced safeguarding training, including modules on risk assessments, partnership working, and case management.
- **Contractors and Volunteers:**
Contractors and volunteers working on behalf of PA Housing will receive training in safeguarding protocols relevant to their roles, ensuring they understand how to report concerns effectively.

Safe Recruitment: PA implements a robust recruitment process, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, to ensure we are safeguarding our residents and neighbourhoods.

9. Data Protection, Information Sharing and Confidentiality

In accordance with data protection legislation, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, we are committed to ensuring that personal data is handled with the utmost care and confidentiality.

Information can be shared, and this is supported by the safeguarding framework to make a lawful decision ensuring when we do it is:

- Justified
- Adequate
- Proportionate
- Accurate
- Necessary

Information sharing will only occur when it is:

- With appropriate consent when appropriate.
- Where legally required to safeguard individuals or protect children.

Safeguarding concerns must be referred to the relevant local authority where the child resides.

Ensure the policy aligns with statutory guidance such as Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), which requires cooperation with Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCP).

We will ensure that any data shared with third parties is done so securely and only with appropriate consent or legal basis.

Confidentiality is paramount, and all our colleagues are trained to handle personal information responsibly, ensuring that it is used solely for the purposes for which it was collected.

Regular audits and reviews will be conducted to ensure compliance with legal requirements and best practices in data protection

10. Guidance

10.1 Early Intervention

Early intervention is crucial, and PA Housing plays a vital role in identifying emerging problems and unmet needs. Staff will share information with other professionals to facilitate early identification and assessment.

We will provide support to prevent issues from escalating and ensure that we signpost where necessary.

Colleagues will be alert to the need for early help for children who:

- Have disabilities or additional needs
- Have special educational needs
- Are young carers
- Exhibit signs of anti-social or criminal behavior
- Experience family challenges, such as substance misuse, mental health
- Witness domestic abuse
- Show signs of abuse, neglect, or radicalisation

It is everyone's responsibility to recognise signs of abuse or neglect, and report concerns to the Safeguarding Team, who will support multi-agency efforts to safeguard children.

10.2 Keeping Safe Online

- Online communication can pose risks, especially for vulnerable residents.
- PA Housing ensures remote services are safe and confidential.
- Colleagues and contractors must avoid sharing personal contact details and use work-provided equipment for communications.
- Social media interactions with residents, especially children or young people, must align with the Social Media policy to prevent misinterpretation or inappropriate behavior.

10.3 Use of Photographs and Videos

- Publications featuring images of children or vulnerable adults will avoid including identifying personal details.
- Only approved staff or professionals may take photographs or videos, and these must be securely stored in line with the Data Protection policy.
- Written consent from guardians or adults is required before using any individual's image.
- Group images do not require consent, but individuals may opt out. Schools require permission from headteachers for photos of pupils.

10.4 Contractual

- Tenancy agreement
- Lease
- License to Occupy

10.5 Legislative

- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Family Law Act 1996
- Childrens Act 2004
- Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996, and 2004

10.6 Regulatory

- Regulator of Social Housing Regulatory (RSH) Standard April 2024)
Neighbourhood and Community Standard

11. Related documents

- Managed Move Policy (Link to be attached)
- ASB Policy (Link to be attached)
- Adult Safeguarding Policy (Link to be attached)
- Domestic Abuse Policy (Link to be attached)

If you have any questions about this policy, please contact Emma Conlon, Director of Income Services and Home Moves Emma.conlon@pahousing.co.uk