

ACUITY BUILD GROUP

SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

Document Reference: ABG-CORP-SG-001

Version: 1.0

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Acuity Build Group is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk who may come into contact with our employees, subcontractors or work activities.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Acuity Build Group has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, neglect, exploitation, harassment and inappropriate behaviour.

All safeguarding concerns will be taken seriously and reported appropriately.

The welfare and safety of the person at risk will remain a primary consideration when responding to safeguarding concerns.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm.
 - Establish clear safeguarding responsibilities.
 - Provide procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns.
 - Promote appropriate behaviour by employees and subcontractors.
 - Support safe working in schools, care settings and occupied premises.
 - Reduce opportunities for abuse or inappropriate conduct.
 - Ensure safeguarding concerns are handled appropriately.
 - Promote a culture of awareness and professional conduct.
-

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Directors.
- Employees.
- Site managers.

- Supervisors.
- Subcontractors.
- Agency workers.
- Temporary workers.
- Consultants.
- Visitors working on behalf of Acuity Build Group.

This policy applies to all Acuity Build Group activities and is particularly relevant where work is undertaken within:

- Schools.
- Colleges.
- Nurseries.
- Children's facilities.
- Care homes.
- Supported living environments.
- Healthcare environments.
- Residential properties.
- Occupied buildings.
- Public buildings.

All persons working on behalf of Acuity Build Group must comply with this policy and any additional client or site-specific safeguarding procedures.

4. SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

Acuity Build Group will:

- Treat all safeguarding concerns seriously.
- Act in the interests of the person at risk.
- Promote dignity and respect.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Report concerns promptly.
- Share safeguarding information only where appropriate.
- Cooperate with clients and relevant authorities.
- Provide appropriate safeguarding awareness.
- Take action where inappropriate behaviour is identified.

Employees must never assume that someone else will report a safeguarding concern.

IF YOU SEE, HEAR OR SUSPECT SOMETHING – REPORT IT.

5. DEFINITIONS

CHILD

For the purpose of this policy, a child is any person under the age of 18.

ADULT AT RISK

An adult at risk may be a person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and because of those needs may be unable to protect themselves from the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding means protecting a person's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live safely and free from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

Acuity Build Group will consider applicable safeguarding legislation and guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989.
- Children Act 2004.
- Care Act 2014.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Data Protection Act 2018.
- UK GDPR.
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, where applicable.
- Relevant local safeguarding partnership procedures.

Client and site-specific safeguarding requirements must also be followed.

7. TYPES OF ABUSE AND SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Safeguarding concerns may include:

PHYSICAL ABUSE

This may include:

- Hitting.
- Slapping.
- Pushing.
- Kicking.
- Physical assault.
- Inappropriate restraint.
- Deliberate physical harm.

SEXUAL ABUSE

This may include:

- Sexual assault.
- Inappropriate touching.
- Sexual harassment.
- Sexual comments.
- Sexual exploitation.
- Exposure to inappropriate sexual material.

EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE

This may include:

- Threats.
- Humiliation.
- Intimidation.
- Verbal abuse.
- Controlling behaviour.
- Deliberate isolation.

NEGLECT

This may include a failure to provide appropriate:

- Care.
- Supervision.
- Food.
- Clothing.

- Medical assistance.
- Safe living conditions.

FINANCIAL OR MATERIAL ABUSE

This may include:

- Theft.
- Fraud.
- Financial exploitation.
- Misuse of money.
- Pressure regarding financial matters.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic abuse may include:

- Physical abuse.
- Sexual abuse.
- Emotional abuse.
- Controlling behaviour.
- Coercive behaviour.
- Economic abuse.

MODERN SLAVERY AND EXPLOITATION

This may include:

- Forced labour.
- Human trafficking.
- Criminal exploitation.
- Sexual exploitation.
- Domestic servitude.
- Labour exploitation.

DISCRIMINATORY ABUSE

This may include abuse or harassment relating to:

- Age.
- Disability.
- Race.
- Religion or belief.

- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.
- Gender reassignment.
- Other personal characteristics.

ORGANISATIONAL ABUSE

This may include poor or inappropriate care practices within an organisation or care environment.

SELF-NEGLECT

This may include serious neglect of personal health, hygiene or living conditions.

Any concern regarding the welfare or safety of a person must be reported.

8. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD

Acuity Build Group will nominate a Designated Safeguarding Lead or responsible safeguarding contact.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: _____

Position: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Deputy / Alternative Contact: _____

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is responsible for:

- Receiving safeguarding concerns.
- Providing safeguarding guidance.
- Maintaining appropriate safeguarding records.
- Assessing concerns.
- Liaising with client safeguarding personnel.
- Making or supporting referrals where appropriate.
- Escalating serious concerns.
- Maintaining confidentiality.
- Reviewing safeguarding procedures.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is not responsible for personally investigating suspected abuse unless specifically authorised and competent to do so.

9. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Acuity Build Group management will:

- Promote safeguarding awareness.
 - Appoint an appropriate safeguarding contact.
 - Ensure this policy is communicated.
 - Assess safeguarding risks associated with company activities.
 - Provide suitable training and information.
 - Cooperate with clients and relevant authorities.
 - Review safeguarding concerns.
 - Take appropriate action following allegations.
 - Maintain suitable safeguarding records.
-

10. EMPLOYEE AND SUBCONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees and subcontractors must:

- Follow this policy.
- Follow client safeguarding procedures.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Treat individuals with dignity and respect.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately.
- Cooperate with safeguarding investigations.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Complete required safeguarding training.
- Avoid inappropriate contact or communication.

Employees and subcontractors must not attempt to personally investigate safeguarding allegations.

11. WORKING IN SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTS

When working in schools or children's environments, Acuity Build Group personnel must:

- Follow the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Sign in and out.
- Wear identification where required.

- Follow visitor and contractor arrangements.
- Remain within authorised work areas.
- Follow site access restrictions.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with children.
- Never arrange private contact with a child.
- Never exchange personal telephone numbers or social media details.
- Never photograph children.
- Never use inappropriate language.
- Report safeguarding concerns to the appropriate person.

Where possible, construction work areas must be appropriately segregated from pupils.

Site personnel must not deliberately place themselves in situations where they are unnecessarily alone with a child.

12. WORKING IN CARE HOMES AND ADULT CARE SETTINGS

When working within care environments, personnel must:

- Follow the care provider's safeguarding procedures.
- Respect residents' dignity and privacy.
- Remain within authorised work areas.
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Never accept inappropriate gifts or money.
- Never request money from residents.
- Never access residents' personal information without authorisation.
- Never photograph residents.
- Report concerns regarding abuse or neglect.

Employees must not interfere with care activities unless immediate action is necessary to prevent serious harm.

13. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Employees and subcontractors must maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Personnel must not:

- Form inappropriate relationships with children or adults at risk encountered through work.
- Share personal contact information unnecessarily.
- Contact individuals through personal social media.
- Make sexual or inappropriate comments.
- Engage in inappropriate physical contact.
- Give inappropriate gifts.
- Request or accept money.
- Take unauthorised photographs or videos.
- Share confidential information.
- Use threatening, abusive or discriminatory language.

Any concern regarding professional boundaries must be reported.

14. PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING

Photographs and video recordings must only be taken for authorised business purposes.

Where work takes place in schools, care settings or occupied premises:

- Avoid capturing identifiable persons where possible.
- Do not photograph children or residents without appropriate authorisation.
- Do not use personal photographs for social media.
- Do not share site photographs through unauthorised channels.
- Follow client photography procedures.

Any accidental capture of sensitive or inappropriate information must be reported.

15. SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Employees and subcontractors must not use social media to make inappropriate contact with children or adults at risk encountered through work.

Personnel must not:

- Send personal friend or follow requests.
- Exchange inappropriate private messages.
- Share photographs of children or residents.
- Discuss confidential safeguarding matters online.
- Post inappropriate information about client premises.

Company and client confidentiality must be maintained.

16. RECRUITMENT AND DBS CHECKS

Acuity Build Group will consider safeguarding risks when recruiting personnel.

Recruitment arrangements may include:

- Identity checks.
- Right to Work checks.
- Employment history.
- References.
- Qualification and competency checks.
- DBS checks where the role is legally eligible and the level of check is appropriate.

DBS requirements will be assessed based on the role and nature of the work.

A DBS certificate does not remove the need for appropriate safeguarding procedures, supervision and professional conduct.

17. SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Appropriate safeguarding awareness will be provided based on role and work activities.

Training may include:

- What safeguarding means.
- Types of abuse.
- Signs and indicators of abuse.
- Professional boundaries.
- Working in schools.
- Working in care environments.
- Reporting concerns.
- Responding to disclosures.
- Confidentiality.

Additional training may be provided to managers and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

18. RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

If a child or adult tells an Acuity Build Group employee that they are being harmed or abused, the employee must:

LISTEN

Remain calm and listen carefully.

TAKE THE CONCERN SERIOUSLY

Do not dismiss or minimise what is being said.

DO NOT PROMISE CONFIDENTIALITY

Explain that information may need to be shared with someone who can help keep them safe.

DO NOT INVESTIGATE

Do not ask leading or unnecessary questions.

Do not attempt to establish whether the allegation is true.

REASSURE APPROPRIATELY

Explain that they have done the right thing by speaking to someone.

RECORD

Make an accurate factual record as soon as possible.

Use the person's own words where reasonably possible.

REPORT

Immediately report the concern through the safeguarding reporting procedure.

19. SAFEGUARDING REPORTING PROCEDURE

Any person who identifies a safeguarding concern must:

STEP 1 – CONSIDER IMMEDIATE DANGER

If a person is in immediate danger or a serious crime is taking place:

CALL 999.

Take reasonable action to protect life without placing yourself or others at unnecessary risk.

STEP 2 – REPORT THE CONCERN

Report the concern immediately to:

- The client or site's Designated Safeguarding Lead where applicable; and
- The Acuity Build Group Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where the concern relates to the Acuity Build Group Designated Safeguarding Lead, it must be reported directly to a Company Director.

STEP 3 – RECORD THE CONCERN

Record:

- Date.
- Time.
- Location.
- Name of person at risk, where known.
- What was seen or heard.
- Exact words used where relevant.
- Persons present.
- Immediate action taken.

Records must be factual.

Do not include assumptions or personal opinions as facts.

STEP 4 – PRESERVE INFORMATION

Do not delete:

- Messages.
- Emails.
- Photographs.
- Documents.
- Other potentially relevant information.

Do not independently circulate safeguarding information.

STEP 5 – SAFEGUARDING LEAD REVIEW

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the concern and determine appropriate action.

This may include:

- Immediate escalation.
- Contacting the client's safeguarding lead.
- Referral to children's social care.
- Referral to adult safeguarding services.
- Contacting the police.
- Seeking specialist advice.
- Internal management action.

20. SAFEGUARDING CONCERN RECORD

Safeguarding Reference: _____

Date Concern Reported: _____

Time: _____

Person Reporting Concern: _____

Project / Site: _____

Person at Risk, if known: _____

Child: ☐

Adult at Risk: ☐

Unknown: ☐

DETAILS OF CONCERN

EXACT WORDS USED, WHERE RELEVANT

PERSONS PRESENT / WITNESSES

IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN

REPORTED TO

Name: _____

Position: _____

Date / Time Reported: _____

SAFEGUARDING LEAD ACTION

External Referral Made: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Agency / Organisation: _____

Referral Date: _____

Reference Number: _____

Completed By: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

21. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST EMPLOYEES OR SUBCONTRACTORS

Any allegation that an employee or subcontractor has:

- Harmed a child or adult at risk.
- Behaved inappropriately.
- Breached professional boundaries.
- Committed a safeguarding offence.
- Created a safeguarding risk.

must be reported immediately.

Acuity Build Group will take appropriate action, which may include:

- Removing the person from the work area.
- Suspending duties or site access.
- Preserving relevant information.
- Informing the client.
- Referring the matter to relevant safeguarding authorities.
- Contacting the police.
- Commencing an internal process where appropriate.

Internal investigation must not compromise a police or safeguarding authority investigation.

No person will be considered guilty solely because an allegation has been made.

22. WHISTLEBLOWING

Employees are encouraged to report genuine safeguarding concerns.

Concerns regarding:

- Unsafe safeguarding practices.

- Failure to report abuse.
- Deliberate concealment of concerns.
- Inappropriate conduct by management.

may be raised through the company's whistleblowing arrangements.

No person should suffer retaliation for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

23. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Safeguarding information must be handled carefully and confidentially.

Information must only be shared with persons who have a legitimate safeguarding or legal reason to receive it.

Safeguarding concerns must not be:

- Discussed casually.
- Shared through personal messaging groups.
- Posted on social media.
- Disclosed to unauthorised persons.

Data protection requirements do not prevent appropriate safeguarding information from being shared where there is a lawful and necessary reason to protect a person from harm.

24. RECORD KEEPING

Safeguarding records must:

- Be factual.
- Be dated.
- Identify the person making the record.
- Be stored securely.
- Have restricted access.
- Be maintained separately from general site records where appropriate.

Records will be retained in accordance with applicable legal, safeguarding and data protection requirements.

25. SUBCONTRACTORS

Subcontractors working on behalf of Acuity Build Group must comply with this policy.

Where working in higher-risk safeguarding environments, subcontractors may be required to provide evidence of:

- Safeguarding policies.
- Safeguarding training.
- Recruitment procedures.
- Appropriate DBS checks where legally eligible.
- Employee conduct procedures.

Serious safeguarding breaches may result in immediate removal from site and review or termination of contractual arrangements.

26. MONITORING AND REVIEW

Acuity Build Group will monitor safeguarding arrangements through:

- Policy reviews.
- Safeguarding concern records.
- Training records.
- Site observations.
- Client feedback.
- Incident investigations.
- Subcontractor reviews.

This policy will be reviewed periodically and following:

- A serious safeguarding concern.
- Changes to legislation or guidance.
- Changes to company activities.
- Increased work within care or education environments.
- Identified weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements.

POLICY APPROVAL

Company: Acuity Build Group

Designated Safeguarding Lead: _____

Position: _____

Director Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Next Review Date: _____

ACUITY BUILD GROUP

SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

RECOGNISE – RECORD – REPORT – PROTECT

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY