**Safeguarding Policy**

“We at the LALIA believe that children have the right to play in a safe and secure place and play in an environment where they can be happy, be themselves, and are kept safe from abuse and in which any suspicion of abuse promptly responded to”

**The Aim:**

The LALIA is a voluntary run community based play & Stay, based at the Middle Park Community Centre providing support to parents/ carers to interact with their children who have social & communication difficulties and gain an understanding relationship with their child.

**Prevention of abuse by means of good practice:**

Children will be encouraged to develop a sense of independence through adult support in making choices and in finding names for their own feelings with acceptable ways to express them. The nature of the work will bring workers / volunteers into contact with children and their parents therefore there may be a time when they may notice or see something that makes them suspect that children are at risk of suffering significant harm. Staff will be encouraged to adhere to the following guidelines:

* **Staff / volunteers must notify the LALIA Team Leader if they suspect a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm.**
* **Where there is visible injury, two members of staff must always be present when asking parents how the injury occurred.**

* **Record all relevant information about the incident or grounds for suspicion, including details of any comments or explanation given by the child or parent, and file the information in a secure area that is accessible to staff / volunteers only.**

* **Staff / volunteers must discuss concerns with LALIA Team Leader for safe guarding children before taking any action such as, referring the case to the safeguarding board.**

* **Staff / volunteers must be aware that parents are entitled to know of the allegation, unless the safety of the child or any other person is put at risk as a result. The safeguarding board will advise as to whom should inform them.**
* **If referral is made to the LALIA Team Leader then they will agree who will contact social services. A feedback process will also be agreed.**
* **Staff / volunteers will not undertake any Social Work Tasks, such as;**

* **a. No investigative visits or follow up visits with the social worker.**

* **b. No escort duties with the client to the Duty Office.**

* **c. No escort duties with the client for medical examinations of the child (ren) as these are perceived to be the role of the social services department.**

* **The LALIA management committee will agree as to whether it is appropriate for a volunteer / worker to attend the child protection conference. It is vital that the worker who has referred the child for a child protection investigation attends the conference. If it is not possible to attend a report must be submitted to the chair prior to the conference.**

* **The LALIA management committee will make every effort to ensure that volunteers / staff are honest, committed individuals who feel fully supported.**

* **Staff and volunteers at the LALIA will be subject to CRB checks and references will be taken up on recruitment.**

* **Staff will be offered training in areas of Child Development, Safe Guarding children, Risk Assessment and Play.**
* **Staff will be made aware of their responsibilities at induction and will have the opportunity to discuss concerns at Support and Supervision sessions.**

**THE CHILDREN’S ACT:**

The Children’s Act 2004 provides a framework for the care and protection of children. The local authority has a duty to investigate reports of children suffering or likely to suffer from significant harm and to take appropriate action to safeguard or promote the child’s welfare.

**CHILD ABUSE:**

Child abuse may be defined as: ‘The abuse of power by a person developmentally older / stronger than another resulting in some distress, harm or neglect of necessary attention for the victim.’ It may be further defined as follows;

**Physical Abuse** is intentional use of force against a child by a parent, carer or any other adult aimed at hurting, injuring or destroying that child or failure to protect that child from physical injury or suffering whether deliberately or by neglect.

**Sexual Abuse** is the involvement of developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activities for the sexual gratification of the adult.

**Emotional Abuse** is persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection of a child.

**Neglect** is inattention by parents or carers to a child’s medical, educational, nutritional, environmental, physical, emotional and stimulation needs and failure to protect a child from danger.

**Signed: ….……………………………………………………**

**Date: ………………………………………………………….**

**Signed… ….………………………………………………….**

**Date……………………………………………………………**

**Telephone number of the LBG Safeguarding children unit based in Woolwich**

**TEL: 0208 9213172**