

Safeguarding Children Policy

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Executive Lead (Owner):	Executive Director of Customer Services					
Author (Leadership Team member):	Director of Customer Services					
Which Strategy does this support?	Landlord Resident Strategy					
Review frequency:	Every 3 years	☒	Other (state period)			
Date created:	December 2017					
Previous review date:	March 2023					
Review date:	October 2025					
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Current status:	Draft	☒	Final	☐		
IMPACT ASSESSMENTS						
Equality Impact Assessment						
STAGE 1 completed?	STAGE 2 required?	No	☐	Yes	☒	
☒		If not required, state reason:				
Customer Impact Assessment						
1) Is this one of the agreed policies requiring resident consultation? Please refer to: Our policies - Settle		Yes	☒	No	☐	
2) If yes, please confirm resident consultation has taken place		☒	Briefly detail changes arising from resident feedback: Restructured the wording and ordering of multiple parts of the policy.			
APPROVAL						
Approval journey:	Executive Team	Committee				Board
		ARC	DAC	Ops	NRC	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Date approved:						
Which Regulatory Standard does this Policy support?	Economic					
	Governance & Viability	Rent			Value for Money	
	☐	☐			☐	
	Consumer					
	Neighbourhood & Community	Safety & Quality	Tenancy	Transparency, Influence & Accountability		
	☒	☐	☐	☐		
Associated legislation	- ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014 - Care Act 2014 - Children Act 1989-2004 - Children and Young Persons Act 2008 - Data Protection Act 2018					

	• Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) • Domestic Abuse Act 2021 • Equality Act 2010 • Female Genital Mutilations Act 2015 • Homeless Reduction Act 2017 • Human Rights Act 1998 • Sexual Offences Act 2003 • Modern Slavery Act 2015 • Prevent Strategy 2011 and Revised Prevent duty guidance for England 2021 • Protection of Freedoms Act 2015 • Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 – Disclosure and Barring service (DBS) • Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
Associated procedures	Safeguarding Children procedure
Does this policy contains delegated authority?	Yes

Safeguarding Children Policy

Introduction

Our purpose is to give residents a firm foundation on which to build their lives. Our vision is a safe, comfortable, and affordable home for every household.

Settle has a duty of care to protect our residents from abuse, harm or neglect. Safeguarding and protecting children is the shared responsibility of both Settle and partner agencies. Housing Providers are required to have clear policies and procedures and colleagues must be trained to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect. This policy seeks to improve our collaborative working with partner agencies.

For the purpose of this policy, the term resident refers to all people living in our homes.

Purpose

This policy, aligned to our Landlord Resident Strategy:

- Outlines our approach to safeguarding children.
- Sets out our responsibilities to safeguarding children to ensure all colleagues and residents are clear on our moral and legal obligations.
- Ensures that Settle has in place reporting channels to support individuals who need to raise a concern.
- Demonstrates how Settle adheres to relevant legalisation:
 - The government guidance 'Working together to safeguard children 2018', The Children Act 2004 and section 213A of the Housing Act, which set out duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children living in our homes. Every child has the right to feel safe and to be protected from any situation or practice that could result in them being significantly harmed.

Scope

This policy applies to all residents.

All colleagues, including contractors and Board members, have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of children living in our homes who may be at risk.

The Local Authority has overall responsibility for safeguarding. To support this, housing associations are responsible for reporting any concerns and cooperating with the Local Authority as required.

Settle also has a duty to safeguard colleagues and this is supported by the Dignity at Work and Wellbeing policies.

Section 2 – Policy

2.1 Policy Principles

- Any concern or suspicion of abuse, neglect or risk should be reported as soon as the concern is identified in every case.
- Allegations of abuse or neglect made by children, family members, residents, colleagues or partner agencies will be prioritised and taken seriously.
- Where possible, a resident-led approach is taken to decisions on safeguarding cases; ensuring informed consent is obtained where appropriate to do so.
- We proactively engage with residents to offer support and partner working with appropriate agencies.
- All colleagues are trained and accountable for safeguarding and understand their role in reporting, by maintaining knowledge on any legislative changes that impact on our obligations to deliver services.
- All colleagues are expected to handle safeguarding concerns in line with the relevant legislation, policies and procedures.
- Expectations and responsibilities of contractors are outlined in the Code of Conduct for Contractors.
- We will have designated safeguarding leads to provide advice and guidance to colleagues.
- Leadership responsibility is taken for our safeguarding arrangements, including representation on the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board.
- We will be responsive and adaptable to changes in the way services are delivered by partner agencies.
- We will ensure any high-profile cases where risks were not managed in other organisations are made known to colleagues, applying learning from casework and reviews to implement changes as identified.
- We are committed to doing as much as is practically possible to enable all residents to access and understand our services.
- Settle has legal obligations for safeguarding as set out in key legislation and will respond to any emergency changes to this legislation or guidance as needed.

2.2 Policy Detail and Outcome

Policy expectations:

- All Settle Leaders take responsibility for ensuring their teams understand their legal and moral duties and are confident to report concerns.
- Annual refresher training is carried out to ensure all colleagues understand their safeguarding obligations.
- Safeguarding issues relating to children living in our homes who may be at risk of abuse, harm or neglect will be managed and reported.
- Data will be gathered and used to support a preventative approach to protecting children from harm; aiming to reduce risk before it escalates.
- Regular visits will be carried out by Neighbourhood Services – leading to early intervention and helping to mitigate the risk of abuse, harm, or neglect to children in our homes.
- Vulnerable children will be assisted to help them access the relevant care and support in accordance with their needs.
- If child protection meetings take place colleagues involved in the case will attend.

- Use safeguarding data to help determine any trends or areas of concerns, providing regular reports to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board.
- Cases will be reviewed by appropriate managers. In the event where any service failures are identified, these will be acted on appropriately and learning applied to implement changes.
- Information relating to the safeguarding of children at risk will be shared with our partners in line with relevant legislation and stored confidentially, in line with Settle's Data Protection Policy.
- Feedback from residents and other agencies is factored into any changes to our approach.

Desired outcomes:

- 100% of colleagues will have regular training at the appropriate level for their role.
- All Settle colleagues are confident to make referrals into external agencies promptly where concerns are identified.
- Vulnerable residents are supported by Settle, in partnership with external agencies, to receive appropriate support and sustain their tenancies.
- Improved consistency on how and when we refer cases to external agencies.

Section 3 – Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Key Roles and Responsibilities

- Settle's Executive Director of Customer Services has strategic oversight of this policy as the policy owner and is responsible for conducting a review every 3 years, or sooner should there be a material change or if a more frequent review is required.
- Monitoring and review of our approach to safeguarding cases is the responsibility of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board.
- The Director of Customer Services attends the Local Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board.
- The Executive Director of Central Services has overall responsibility for Safeguarding at Settle.
- The Operations Committee, which operates under the jurisdiction of the Board, is responsible for reviewing and monitoring this policy.
- All colleagues have a responsibility to safeguarding our residents and are expected to report concerns to the appropriate partners internally and externally.
- Designated safeguarding leads are responsible for providing advice and guidance to colleagues.

Section 4 – Compliance and Enforcement

4.1 Compliance

- Compliance with this Policy will be monitored and enforced by Settle Leaders and designated safeguarding leads through case reviews, reporting any identified failures and learning to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board.

- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations and checks are carried out during the recruitment process and on expiry, for specific roles that work closely with children, with records and renewals managed by the People team.
- All colleagues will complete appropriate training, which is monitored through Actus to ensure compliance.

Section 5 – Related Policies, Procedures and Key Documents

This policy supports all of our resident facing policies and procedures, which can be found on our website [Settle policies](#).

Related Policies

Arrears Policy
 Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
 Common Housing Allocations Policy
 Complaints Policy
 Data Protection Policy
 Domestic Abuse Policy
 Reasonable Adjustments and Vulnerable Needs Policy
 Recruitment Policy
 Speak Up Policy
 Temporary Accommodation Policy

Related Procedures

Recruitment procedures
 Colleagues Code of Conduct
 Disciplinary Procedure
 Reasonable Adjustments and Vulnerable Needs Policy
 Safeguarding Children procedure
 Temporary Accommodation Policy

Key Documents

Landlord Resident Strategy
 Settle's Safeguarding toolkit
 Settle Code of Conduct
 Code of Conduct for Contractors

Section 6 – Review, Approval, Publication

6.1 Review and Approval

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner should there be a material change or if a more frequent review is required.

Section 7 – Document Control

Document Name	Safeguarding Children Policy
Approval Date	7 th November 2025

Approved By	Executive Director of Customer Services
Version Number	1.0
Version History	

IMPACT ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE					
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT ATTACHED		Stage 1		Stage 2	
		☐		☐	N/A ☐
CUSTOMER IMPACT ASSESSMENT Resident feedback		Attached ☐		N/A ☒	
PUBLISHING REQUIREMENTS					
INTERNALLY	☒	WEBSITE	☐	SETTLE CONNECT	☐

OFFICE USE ONLY	
RELEVANT 'APPROVAL LOGO' ADDED TO COVER	☐
<i>Keywords for search function</i>	