



Safeguarding Policy

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Inclusive Exeter CIC (IE) is committed to protecting the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults as they participate in our services, events and activities. We recognise the need to comply with legislation and to ensure that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount. IE will, therefore, strive to create a safe and secure environment where service users, Directors, paid staff and volunteers can work together confidently in mutual respect.

1.2 IE also recognises its responsibility to take appropriate action where disclosure of neglect or abuse occur, and to ensure staff and volunteers have an understanding of what action to take.

2. Definitions

2.1 In accordance with the Children Act 1989 and 2004, a **child** is any person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. This includes young people under the age of 18.

2.2 A **vulnerable adult** is a person aged 18 or over who is receiving, or would be eligible for, care services and maybe unable to protect themselves from serious harm or exploitation. This may be because they have a disability (physical or mental health), because of their age or because of illness.

2.3 **Abuse** can be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. It can also be financial, discriminatory or institutional abuse.

2.3.1 **Physical abuse** may include may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child or vulnerable adult.

2.3.2 **Emotional abuse** is persistent emotional maltreatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects. It may involve conveying to a child or vulnerable adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child or vulnerable adult opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

Inclusive Exeter CIC

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These may include overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing participation in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber-bullying), exploitation or corruption.

2.3.3 **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the individual is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse.

2.3.4 **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet the basic physical and/or psychological needs of a child or vulnerable adult, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- protection from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

2.3.5 **Financial abuse** can be the use of the individual's property, assets, income or any resources without their informed consent or authorisation.

2.3.6 **Discriminatory abuse** exists where values, beliefs or culture result in a misuse of power that denies equal access or outcomes to some groups or individuals. This can be on the basis of age, disability, gender, marital status, maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or transgender.

2.3.7 **Institutional abuse** is the abuse by an organisation or institution or by individuals within the organisation or institution. It occurs when the routines, culture, policies, practices and norms of the organisation and institution lead to discrimination.

3. Preventing Abuse

3.1 All Directors, staff and volunteers must ensure that they are familiar with the safeguarding and other IE policies.

3.2 IE's employment and recruitment policies around staff and volunteers will include vetting and timely DBS checks. Individuals new to IE will be inducted and trained so that any concerns are recognised, responded to, and reported appropriately.



3.3 IE will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Officer who will have attended appropriate training for the role.

The name of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is: *Neomi Alam*

4. Code of Conduct

4.1 It is important that Directors, service users and staff and volunteers can participate in IE activities in a safe and secure environment.

4.2 Each Director, member of staff and volunteer:

- Will inform IE of any relevant police record or other factor, or any change in his/her circumstances, which may make him/her unsuitable for any particular activity.
- Will recognise that their role within IE places them in a position of trust with regard to all children or vulnerable adults who are participating in our events or activities, and undertakes to uphold that trust at all times.
- Undertakes to maintain, within the organisation's procedures, the confidentiality of any information relating to Directors, other members of staff and volunteers made available to them in the course of their IE role.
- Will not knowingly place themselves in a situation where they are alone and unobserved with a child or vulnerable adult and will endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, that there is another adult in attendance at any time.
- Will ensure that any IE activities involving children or vulnerable adults outside the normal activities are agreed and approved in advance.
- Will not behave in any way, physically or verbally, that could be offensive.
- Will remember at all times that interactions between themselves and service users must be such that no reasonable person observing that interaction could construe its nature as abusive.

5. Action to be taken on suspicion or disclosure of abuse

5.1 All Directors, staff and volunteers have a duty of care to act on any concerns about the abuse of a child or vulnerable adult and ensure that the situation is assessed and investigated as a matter of priority.

5.2 The safety and protection of the child or vulnerable adult should be a priority.



5.3 Abuse occurs to children and vulnerable adults of both sexes and all ages, in all cultures, religions, and social classes and to children with and without disabilities. All Directors, staff and volunteers should be alert to signs that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm. Identification of abuse may be difficult and will require specialist involvement. Avoid making assumptions and ensure a thorough assessment informs any judgement.

5.4 If a child or vulnerable adult discloses abuse by someone else:

- Keep calm and listen - do not have physical contact at any time.
- Allow the child or vulnerable adult to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- Assure them that they will be taken seriously.
- Ask if they would like to have someone else present.
- Explain the consequences of you knowing and the action you will take. Assure them that you will offer support but must pass any information to another professional who may take appropriate action.
- Do not make judgements or offer opinion, and as soon as is practically possible make an accurate written record of what the child or vulnerable adult has said, being careful to use their own words as accurately as possible.
- Explain again what will happen next. Find out when the child or vulnerable adult is next due to see the individual who is the subject of the complaint. (You will then be able to make a judgement as to the appropriate timing of your follow-up actions to ensure safety).
- Refer the complaint directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer. Pass on all information disclosed to you by the child.
- Concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult may also be raised by behaviour or other indicators noticed by a Director, member of staff or a volunteer, but not disclosed by the child. In these instances, it is equally important to take action, and these concerns should be raised and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- Whatever the nature of the complaint, it must be kept **confidential**. You must not discuss the disclosure with any individual or party other than those identified in the above procedure.

5.6 If the concern relates to suspected abuse by a Director, staff member, or a volunteer:



● the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount, but the Directors also have a responsibility to ensure that other Directors, staff, and volunteers are treated fairly and with respect.

● A Named Senior Officer should be identified to whom such concerns should be reported. This should be a different person to the Designated Safeguarding Person.

The name of the Named Senior Officer is: *Mahi Ahmed*

● The Named Senior Officer will contact the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) who will consider, with the Named Senior Officer, the most appropriate way forward.

● It is essential that nothing is done to investigate the concern before contacting the LADO as this can contaminate evidence if a police investigation is deemed appropriate.

● It is also important to ensure that both the child or vulnerable adult and the alleged perpetrator receive appropriate support through this procedure.

5.7 Action to be taken if you receive an allegation about yourself:

● Keep calm. Do not get involved in an argument which is likely to make the situation worse.

● Immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Named Senior Officer. The more quickly action is taken to investigate the allegations, the sooner the situation will be resolved.

● Record the facts as you understand them.

● Ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

Signed on behalf of Inclusive Exeter CIC Directors

Date: December 2020

Date of review

If you are concerned about a child or young person and wish to speak with someone, you may also contact **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on **0345 155 1071** or email mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk and give as much information as you can.