



## **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

At HopeWorks we believe that every individual who accesses our services should be treated with dignity and respect.

HopeWorks is committed to safeguarding all service users and their children coming into contact with our organisation. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all employees who, during the course of their employment, have direct or indirect contact with vulnerable adults or children, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.

This policy applies to anyone employed directly or indirectly by HopeWorks and includes Trustees, employees, volunteers, work placements, trainers, and consultants. HopeWorks acknowledges its duty to act appropriately to any allegations, reports, or suspicions of abuse.

The policy and procedures are in place in order for staff to work to prevent abuse and know what to do should a concern arise. They will enable staff to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm and abuse occurring.
- Be aware of our legal responsibilities.
- Understand the safeguarding risks for those we work with
- Ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing abuse is supported.

We will ensure that we have made all clients aware of our Safeguarding Policy and ensure that they understand it. In addition, we will explain the reporting process should a client be concerned about a fellow client or member of staff.

An audit of safeguarding concerns, actions taken, and employees training and support will be conducted annually, and safeguarding policy and procedures will be reviewed annually or in the light of significant changes to best practice or legislation.

### Related Policies

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Equality & Diversity
- Whistle Blowing & Sharing Concerns
- Equal Opportunities & Recruitment



- Data Protection
- Complaints Policy & Procedure
- Working with Volunteers
- Confidentiality Policy

These policies and procedures relate to both the safeguarding of adults at risk and to children. It is important that from the outset of the support relationship, employees do not promise service users absolute confidentiality. As soon as the support commences, employees must outline that information may be shared with third parties if there is a concern of abuse. Information should only be shared when it is in the best interests of the service users and on a need-to-know basis.

### **Adults**

Adults at risk are defined in the Care Act 2014 as individuals aged over 18 who:

- Have needs for care and support (whether or not the Local Authority is meeting any of those needs).
- Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- As a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.”

### **Children**

A child is defined in the Children Act 1989 as: “anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday even if they are living independently, are a member of the armed forces or are in hospital.”

### **Digital Safeguarding**

Digital safeguarding refers to the safeguarding policies, procedures and practices relating to online spaces. The same safeguarding principles apply to the HopeWorks programmes and activities, whether these take place digitally or physically.

Our approach to digital safeguarding covers all digital spaces where the HopeWorks work is conducted. This includes but is not limited to email; internal and external social media channels and online platforms relating to our work (including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, ICT equipment and mobile telephones provided by HopeWorks.

The HopeWorks digital safeguarding commitment is to:

- Support our employees to navigate digital spaces and use equipment and digital tools safely and effectively.



- Be proactive in promoting digital safety by giving guidance, tools and training to staff.
- Take action on digital safeguarding and data protection incidents when we are made aware of these.

HopeWorks Employees and Related Personnel have a responsibility to report any suspicion or concerns concerning digital safeguarding. Any individual can raise a concern/complaint to HopeWorks about an incident they have experienced, witnessed, or heard about concerning a HopeWorks staff member without fear of retribution. HopeWorks employees must not investigate allegations or suspicions themselves. Issues relating to data protection should be reported to Head of Operations, Data Protection Officer. The following risks should be taken into account when considering digital safeguarding.

### **Content risks**

Risks that are produced as a result of the material that people can access online. People may be exposed to this content actively or passively, and it may produce a harmful effect. Content may be illegal to possess or share according to national law, e.g. sexually exploitative images of children or radicalising videos. Inappropriate and offensive content is more subjective, and includes: commercial adverts or spam; violent, extremist or hateful material; sexually exploitative or sexual material; and content which is discriminatory based on someone's race, ethnicity, nationality, class, socioeconomic status, age, sex and gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, religion, language or other status.

### **Contact risks**

Risks that are produced as a result of others' online behaviour. Individuals may have information about them shared or may be engaged in ways which lead to harmful consequences. The types of behaviour which people may experience include

- Bullying online or through mobile phones;
- Harassment and stalking;
- Ideological grooming;
- Harvesting, tracking and illegal sharing and possession of information –



including having personal data collected, processed or shared without the individual's consent or on another unlawful basis;

- Distribution of private and sexual images, e.g. the distribution of sexually exploitative images or videos without an individual's permission;
- Non-contact sexual abuse and exploitation – including grooming, flashing, being persuaded to perform sexual acts online, and being exposed to sexually exploitative images or videos

### **Conduct risks**

Risks that are produced as a result of people's own online behaviour, which may put themselves and others at risk. People may download something illegally, bully, harass or exploit others, unintentionally reveal their location, create and upload sexual material or sext (send someone sexually explicit photographs or messages via mobile phone). This may also include online activism in politically oppressed or conservative contexts, or breaking confidentiality of closed spaces by reposting, sharing, downloading or in other ways transmitting information that leads to harassment, exploitation, or other harm in another setting.

### **USE OF EQUIPMENT, INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

All HopeWorks staff must adhere to the HopeWorks Code of Conduct, the terms of their employment and the below guidelines when using equipment, internet, social media or digital platforms on behalf of, or belonging to HopeWorks.

Use of the HopeWorks internet and ICT equipment which has been provided by HopeWorks must follow the relevant policies and procedures.

It is prohibited for anyone to browse, download, access or share content, which is illegal, harmful, violent, extremist, sexually exploitative, abusive, offensive or otherwise inappropriate using equipment or internet which has been provided by the HopeWorks, unless this is required for their role, e.g. safeguarding and investigator roles.

### **Safe Recruitment**

HopeWorks has procedures in place to ensure that thorough checks are made prior to appointment of employees and volunteers, The following vetting checks are



carried out prior to confirming the appointment:

- Identity documents including photographic identity
- Proof of right to work in the UK
- References (including at least one professional reference)
- Disclosure and Barring Service Check (see separate DBS Checks policy)
- Induction Procedure – HopeWorks ensures a thorough induction for new employees into the organisation. As part of Induction, the Line Manager ensures new employees read key policies, including Safeguarding, Data Protection and Confidentiality policies and understand their personal responsibilities within these.
- Training – All employees receive training in Safeguarding. Online training is provided as part of the induction programme for all employees that work directly with service users, within the first 2 weeks of employment. A refresher takes place every 2 years.
- HopeWorks ensures that all employees receive regular ongoing supervision and feedback on performance, to ensure that performance meets appropriate standards and training and development opportunities are discussed.
- On the Staff supervision questions, there is a prompt to ask about Safeguarding concerns, this is asked to every staff member as part of their regular supervision meetings.

### **Safe Environments**

- HopeWorks cannot use photographs, videos and text relating to any of its service users in any of its publishing or marketing materials without first receiving the informed written consent from the service user involved.
- HopeWorks will ensure that all service delivery environments will be assessed in line with the HopeWorks Health and Safety Policy and all HopeWorks properties are kept up to date with Health and Safety legislation.
- HopeWorks will ensure that all external service providers are DBS checked if necessary and risk assessments are carried out prior to their appointment.
- It is HopeWorks policy that employees/volunteers only work alone with clients' children in public spaces and only with the prior approval of the line manager.



## Culture

Employees are encouraged, in line with the HopeWorks Equal Opportunities Policy to value diversity and respect the contribution of each individual.

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns about employment practices. Unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment will not be tolerated. The Complaints Policy and Bullying, Harassment and Whistleblowing Policy sets out how to raise concerns both informally and formally, how concerns will be investigated and how individuals raising a concern will be supported, as well as support for employees who are the subject of a complaint.

We will work to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs and children.
- Promote the wellbeing of any adults and children at risk in safeguarding arrangements.
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults and children concerned.
- Raise awareness of safeguarding to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult or child.

## Roles and responsibilities

Safeguarding and Child Protection Responsibilities are set out as follows: ·

- Trustees are ultimately accountable for safeguarding at HopeWorks
- The Chief Executive Officer has delegated responsibility by the Trustees to ensure there is a clear safeguarding framework in operation.
- The Director of Services as part of the Senior Management Team is the designated safeguarding lead responsible for developing and updating this policy on behalf of the CEO. Senior Managers take line management responsibility for the safe delivery, quality and effectiveness of their services.



They will also be responsible for assessing at the start of a project whether there are Local Adult Safeguarding Board procedures that should take precedence over HopeWorks procedures where there are significant differences.

- Our role in protecting children and vulnerable adults is to pick up cues that the child or adult may need protecting and pass this information to those who can assess the situation and act when required. Employees are required to be aware of the different types and signs of abuse and the circumstances in which it can occur. Guidance on spotting the signs of abuse can be found [here](#)
- All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately (this may require a referral to MASH, Adult Safeguarding Team, the Police and or emergency services). Employees have a duty to report concerns in line with HopeWorks procedures. Failure to comply with these responsibilities will be seen as a serious matter and may lead to disciplinary action.

#### **In the event of a safeguarding concern:**

1. Is there an immediate threat to life Call 999, and then contact Sarah Blakey, Safeguarding Lead for HopeWorks.
2. If there is not an immediate threat to life, gather the necessary info and report back to the team leader within 24 hours.
3. Team Leader to escalate to Sarah Blakey (Kirstie Cook in her absence) if action needs to be taken on the same working day if possible (out of hours contacts detailed below if necessary).
4. Relevant contact details/access to forms below depending on circumstance.

#### **Important Contacts and referral forms**

Director of Services (designated safeguarding lead) – Sarah Blakey  
07921 948430  
[sarah.blakey@hopeworksuk.org](mailto:sarah.blakey@hopeworksuk.org)

Chair of Trustees – Vanessa Lipski



[vanessajhollis@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:vanessajhollis@yahoo.co.uk)

CEO – Kirstie Cook

[kirstie.cook@hopeworksuk.org](mailto:kirstie.cook@hopeworksuk.org)

### **Safeguarding Adults**

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/report-abuse-safeguarding-vulnerable-adults>

Please fill in the Safeguarding Adults Concern form

Bedford Borough Council

Safeguarding Adults Team

Tel: (01234) 276222

Email: [adult.protection@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:adult.protection@bedford.gov.uk)

For after hours emergencies only contact Tel: 0300 300 8123

Bedfordshire Police

Adult Protection Team

Tel: (01234) 275106/7/8/9/10/29

Non Emergency Out Of Hours: 101

Emergency Services: 999

Central Bedfordshire Council

Tel: 0300 300 8122

Email: [adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:adult.protection@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

### **Safeguarding children**

Safeguarding concerns about a child or young person

<https://www.bedford.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/children-and-families/safeguarding-children-harm-and-child-protection-0>

Please fill in the concern form

Multi Agency Support Hub (MASH)

Tel: 01234 718700 (office hours)

Tel 0300 300 8123 (out of hours)



Bedford Borough Council  
Safeguarding Children Board Team  
Tel: (01234) 276512  
Email: [lscb@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:lscb@bedford.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.bedford.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/lscb)

Safeguarding concerns regarding a child in Central Beds  
[Child protection – safeguarding children and young people | Central Bedfordshire Council](#)

Concerned about a child or young person? Call 0300 300 8585 immediately.

Out of hours: 0300 300 8123

Email: [cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:cs.accessandreferral@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk)

If you think a child you know is being harmed or at risk of being harmed, please contact the Access and Referral Hub on 0300 300 8585, who you can talk to about your concerns.

Bedfordshire Police  
Public Protection Unit  
Tel: (01234) 846960  
Non Emergency Out Of Hours: 101  
Emergency Services: 999  
**Bedfordshire Police** 01234 841212

**NSPCC Child Protection Service Helpline** 0808 800 5000

**Further documentation to complete: -**

- For each referral form submitted to the Local Authority, please ensure that the Safeguarding concerns document is completed and saved to your client record on Inform. Please update this with the outcomes of the case and ensure copies are sent to your team leader and the Designated Safeguarding Officer. [Safeguarding master concerns doc.docx](#) Team leaders please keep a record of all Safeguarding referrals submitted



Safeguarding [Safeguarding referrals record Child](#)

- [KAP Safeguarding Concerns Procedure.docx](#)

Further resources:-

[Children's services referral and assessment - childlawadvice.org.uk](https://childlawadvice.org.uk/)- what happens after you submit a Safeguarding referral for a child.

Reviewed by Matt Croxon – Head of Operations

Signed:

Reviewed by Sarah Blakey- Head of Outreach, and Support Services and Safeguarding Lead

Signed: