Safeguarding Policy

(Initial Directors' Approval: April 2021. Last Reviewed: January 2026 Next Review Date: January 2027)

For the purposes of this document:
'**Child**' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years.
'**Adult at risk'** refers to a person over the age of 18 who may not be able to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm/exploitation.
'**CIC**' refers to Community Interest Company.

Safeguarding Statement:

Everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect. Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity, with a right to privacy. Hive Helpers has a responsibility to prevent, recognise and act on abuse and neglect. All individuals involved in the service are to be made aware of this policy and are required to sign their unqualified agreement to it.

Safeguarding Policy Overview:

- Hive Helpers has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children and all adults at risk who participate in the service and recognises the potential for some people who use its services to be particularly vulnerable.
- Hive Helpers will promote good practice through its Code of Conduct to allow all staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to safeguarding issues.
- Hive Helpers will have at least two Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL).
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. All staff and volunteers working at Hive Helpers have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns to a DSL.
- All safeguarding policies and practices will be reviewed annually, when legislation changes, or considering any actual events.

How Hive Helpers Implements the Safeguarding Policy:

Recruitment

- Pre-employment checks of staff and volunteers who are to be working with participants will include: proof of identity, self-disclosure of any criminal record, two confirmed references, consent for an enhanced DBS check to take place with nil disclosures in respect of related offences, and substantiation of qualifications.
- Interview, clarifying job specifications, responsibilities and requirements
- Induction, including signing relevant agreements and policies, explanation of safeguarding procedures and identification of training needs.

Training and Practice

All staff & volunteers working with children, and adults at risk to:

- Attend recognised and appropriate training to safeguard children and young people (CYP) and to safeguard adults at risk. Training to be updated every two years or as needed
- Be encouraged to follow good practice guidelines, ensuring their practice is likely to protect them from false allegations and to promote a positive culture within the CIC.
- Recognise their responsibility to be vigilant and report any concerns about suspected poor practice, possible abuse or concerns expressed by a participant.
- Support all participants to keep themselves safe.

- Be made aware of how to manage a disclosure and provide appropriate levels of support to the person in question.
- Follow Health and Safety advice and procedures implemented by Hive Helpers.
- Attend supervision as needed.
- DBS checks to be renewed every 3 years

Information Sharing and Confidentiality
- Every effort to be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only.
- Confidential information is to be stored in a secure place and accessed only by designated people.
- All employees and volunteers to be issued with Hive Helpers Confidentiality Policy and sign their agreement to abide by its content.
- Good communication links established between Hive Helpers and those caring for children or adults at risk. Mutual expectations between Hive Helpers and families and involved outside agencies to share relevant information will be established, including relevant disclosures of previous abuse, child protection plans, care plans, EHCPs and persons not allowed contact.

Reporting Incidents, Concerns and Allegations
- Hive Helpers will fully support anyone, both inside or outside the CIC, who in good faith reports their concern(s) that a participant who is being abused, either when at Hive Helpers or elsewhere.
- Staff and volunteers are to report any incidents, concerns and allegations to a DSL in writing the same day they witness or become aware of an issue.
- Concerns about poor safeguarding practice by staff and/or volunteers will be pursued as misconduct issues by the Hive Helpers Leadership Team and the DSLs.
- Allegations and suspicions of abuse against either CIC staff or persons outside the CIC will be investigated in accordance with Hive Helpers' Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. A DSL will notify the necessary authorities.
- Support will be provided to the person who disclosed the abuse and their family as necessary.

Response to Bullying and Discrimination
- Everyone, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, has the right to protection from bullying and discrimination and for their needs to be considered.
- Staff & volunteers will take all signs of bullying and discrimination seriously.
- Hive Helpers' Anti-Bullying and Discrimination Policy to be followed in the event of any participant being the victim of bullying or discrimination.
- A culture of openness and respect to be encouraged throughout the CIC to prevent discrimination and bullying at all levels.

Use of ICT equipment
All staff and volunteers are to sign that they will comply with Hive Helpers' Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Equipment and Personal Devices.

Record Keeping and Documentation
- Safeguarding disclosures, concerns and updates, accidents, and incidents are to be reported and documented on the day of occurrence and stored appropriately.
- Where record keeping is required for monitoring purposes or as part of implementing a protection plan, Hive Helpers will document necessary information and pass it to the relevant person/s.
- Staff and volunteers will be made aware of how to accurately record data; including incidents, disclosures and longer-term record keeping.
- All documentation to be stored safely, securely and confidentially.
- Documentation and records will be shared on a need-to-know basis only.

Prevention
Hive Helpers aims to create the environment where abuse and neglect is prevented from occurring onsite by:
- Operating a policy of zero tolerance of abuse, bullying and discrimination.
- Empowering all participants to take responsibility for their own behaviour and supporting them to stay safe.
- Ensuring staff access to relevant information and training as well as qualified safeguarding support from senior staff.

Reviewing and Updating
The Safeguarding Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually and updated in the event of legislation changes or in response to actual events, if necessary.

Additional Safeguarding Information:

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse is actual or likely physical injury. This includes the failure to prevent injury. Physical abuse can result from acts of commission or omission on the part of others. It can cause pain, injury or impairment. It includes hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, biting & pinching, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions or when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness.

Sexual abuse includes rape and sexual assault or any sexual act to which consent has not been given (by law, a minor who is over 16 can legally consent to sex if they have no learning disability or mental illness that will impede their choice. However, if this is with a person over 18 who is in a position of trust, the consent is void) or if pressure was applied to gain consent. Sexual abuse might also include exposure to pornographic materials or being made to witness sexual acts. It also encompasses sexual harassment, non-contact abuse, female genital mutilation and sexual exploitation.

Psychological and emotional abuse includes threats of harm, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks such as friends, family and organisations.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the health and development of the person being cared for. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- Protect from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of poor caregivers)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care, treatment or education.

It also includes neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, basic emotional needs. This can apply to care given by a parent, other family member or member of staff/volunteer.

Financial or material abuse includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions. It includes the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Discriminatory abuse includes racist, sexist comments and those based on a person's disability or other protected characteristics. It can also involve forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Radicalisation is a process through which someone comes to support/be involved in extremism, potentially engaging in activities which are harmful, criminal or dangerous.

Online abuse can occur on any device connected to the internet, and includes cyberbullying, psychological and emotional abuse, sexting, grooming, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

How to Manage a Disclosure of Abuse

- Listen carefully and stay calm.
- Believe what the person says and take it seriously.
- Note the main points if you can.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing.
- Give them time to talk and do not probe, ask leading questions or put words into their mouth. Investigation is not your responsibility.
- Do not promise to keep secrets. All allegations of harm or potential harm must be acted upon.
- Explain to them that to help keep them safe the information must be passed on, but only to those who need to know and inform them of to whom the matter will be reported.
- Do not investigate concerns or allegations yourself but report them immediately to a DSL.
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what they said and did. Pass documentation to a DSL.

Helpful Links:

Children

NSPCC
https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/safeguarding/
NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 Childline: 0800 1111

Adults at risk

Ann Craft Trust: Safeguarding Adults
https://www.anncrafttrust.org/

Related Policies and Procedures

- Safeguarding Procedures: Children and Adults at risk
- Code of Conduct: Promoting Good Practice at Hive Helpers
- Anti-bullying and Discrimination Policy and Procedure
- Lone Working Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Equipment and Personal Devices
- Hive Helpers Risk Assessments

IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS ANYONE IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER CALL 999