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Elevated Minds CIC Safeguarding Policy – Children and Young People

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- to protect children, young people and adults who use the services of Elevated Minds, from harm.
- to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working with or on behalf of Elevated Minds, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff and students. We acknowledge our duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, we are committed to ensuring that safeguarding practise reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice and the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) requirements.

Safeguarding statement in connection to measures taken to prevent the spread of Covid 19

Here at Elevated Minds, our employees and our visitors Health and Safety are of paramount concern to us. In connection to this, please be advised that we will always follow the relevant Government advice available on Covid 19 health and safety measures.

We have implemented a risk assessment to ensure that we continuously review and practice safe working, together with the required sanitisation. While most of our work can be carried out online, we recognise that some clients would like and need face-to-face meetings, especially when they cannot access equipment to facilitate online discussions.

Some of our work during the national lockdown will require delivery to residential homes. We will not enter into any residential home unless Government guidelines permit us to do so. Before any delivery, we will inform residents of our pending arrival via telephone. All delivery personnel will be wearing a face covering and disposable gloves. They will confirm verbally and in written form that they are not suffering from any Covid 19 symptoms.

We can only accommodate face to face meetings if clients confirm that they are not suffering from any Covid 19 symptoms such as: a high temperature, a new continuous cough and/or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. Therefore, we will require all visitors to our office to complete and sign our visitor questionnaire ahead of attending our premises for any pre-arranged meetings and provide contact details in the event we need to contact them.

Revised January 2021, reviewed annually.

Visitors to Elevated Minds CIC will be required to wear a face covering when you visit our premises, and we politely ask that you do not attend without one unless you have medical proof that you cannot wear one.

Please also follow any instructions regards social distancing and one-way flows whilst you are on site. We will always keep to a maximum number of two visitors to our offices at any one time.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about visiting our office: info@elevatedmindscoaching.com .

1. Policy statement

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children, young people and vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances. It aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background, all children, young people and vulnerable adults:

- have a positive experience of life coaching and training in a safe and child/young person/vulnerable adult centred environment
- are protected from abuse whilst participating in life coaching and training activities provided by Elevated Minds or third party organisations working with Elevated Minds.

Elevated Minds acknowledges that some children, young people and vulnerable adults, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse. We accept the responsibility to take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare.

As part of our safeguarding policy Elevated Minds will promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults, we endeavour to:

- ensure everyone understands their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and is provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young people
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support provided to the individual/s who raise or disclose the concern
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored
- prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are in operation.

The policy and procedures will be widely promoted and are mandatory for everyone involved with Elevated Minds. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

2. DBS checks

All paid staff members, volunteers and any other person/group operating on behalf of Elevated Minds will undergo an enhanced DBS check before undertaking any work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

3. Safe recruitment procedures

All paid staff and volunteers working on behalf of Elevated Minds, who are entrusted with the care of children, young people and vulnerable adults will be subject to the full range of pre-employment checks.

Safe recruitment procedures will apply to staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the course of his/her duties. A written application is essential for all posts, including those of volunteers. Safe recruitment applies to both staff and volunteers, and this will include:

- Interviewing applicants
- A full investigation of applicants' employment history
- Taking up two references
- Proof of identification

4. Induction and training for staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will be given details of this policy as part of their induction. All staff and volunteers will participate in training courses on Safeguarding Children and young people.

Staff and volunteers also have the health and safety procedures detailed to them as part of their induction. From this training, staff and volunteers should recognise signs of abuse (please see section 6) and know the appropriate reporting systems for this.

Information regarding access to this policy will be disseminated to all involved with Elevated Minds –vulnerable adults, young people, parents and carers, schools, community groups and other 3rd party organisations. It will be the role of staff and volunteers to ensure this happens.

5. Good practice guidelines

Good Practise Guidelines will also be available for staff and volunteers as part of their induction pack. They are in place to ensure good practise whilst working on behalf of Elevated Minds. Examples of these guidelines are below:

- Treating all children, young people, and vulnerable adults equally, and with respect and dignity.

- Always putting the welfare of each child, young person and vulnerable adult first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children, young people and vulnerable adults (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or share a room with them).
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust empowers children, young people and vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process.
- Making activities in group and one to one sessions fun, enjoyable and safe.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible. For example, encouraging them to talk about confidence, self-esteem and their future goals with their children and vulnerable adults supporting them with activities to help build confidence and motivation
- Being an excellent role model giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of children, young people and vulnerable adults and not pushing them against their will.
- Elevated Minds believe that all employees should be safe at work and should not be exposed to undue or unreasonable risk. We work with schools and families to ensure that our staff are able to work safely, free from the threat of injury or upset through acts of aggression and violence.

6. Definitions and signs of abuse

There are four recognised types of abuse, and it is important that all staff and volunteers know what they are and how to recognise them.

The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department of Health, Home Office, Department for Education and Employment, 1999)

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child, young person and vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of or deliberately causes ill health to a child, young person or vulnerable adult whom they are looking after. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making conveying to children, young people and vulnerable adults that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children, young people and vulnerable adults frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, young person and vulnerable adults, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child, young person or vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual on-line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Boys and girls can be sexually abused by males and/or females, by adults and by other young people. This includes people from all different walks of life.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's, young persons or vulnerable adults basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care givers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child, young person or vulnerable adults basic emotional needs.

Physical signs of abuse:

- Any injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them,
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or games,
- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body,

- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching),
- Cigarette burns,
- Bite marks,
- Broken bones,
- Scalds,
- Injuries which have not received medical attention,
- Neglect-under nourishment, failure to grow, constant hunger, stealing or gorging food, untreated illnesses, inadequate care,
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation,
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts,
- Flinching when approached or touched,
- Reluctance to get changed, for example, wearing long sleeves in hot weather,
- Depression,
- Withdrawn behaviour,
- Running away from home.

Emotional signs of abuse

The physical signs of emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow particularly if a child puts on weight in other circumstances: e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care,
- Sudden speech disorders,
- Persistent tiredness,
- Development delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Obsessions or phobias,
- Sudden under-achievement or lack of concentration,
- Inappropriate relationships with peers and/or adults,
- Being unable to play,
- Attention seeking behaviour,
- Fear of making mistakes,
- Self-harm,
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour.

Sexual Abuse

The physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain or itching in the genital/anal area,
- Bruising or bleeding near genital/anal areas,
- Sexually transmitted disease,
- Vaginal discharge or infection,
- Stomach pains,
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down,
- Pregnancy.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour e.g. becoming withdrawn or aggressive,
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people,
- Having nightmares,
- Running away from home,
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level,
- Sexual drawings or language,
- Bedwetting,
- Eating problems such as over-eating or anorexia,
- Self-harm or mutilation, sometimes leading to suicide attempts,
- Saying they have secrets they can not tell anyone about,
- Substance or drug abuse,
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money,
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence),
- Acting in a sexually explicit way with adults.

Neglect

The physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children,
- Constantly dirty or smelly,
- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight,
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time,
- Not requesting medical assistance and/or failing to attend appointments,
- Having few friends,
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

7. Guidance on how to respond to a person disclosing abuse

DO:

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child, young person and vulnerable adult as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child, young person and vulnerable adult that they are right to tell you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the child, young person or vulnerable adult what you are doing and when, and keep them up to date with what is happening.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell your nominated person immediately.
- Do write down everything said and what was done.

DON'T:

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child, young person or vulnerable adult – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the child, young person or vulnerable adult has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child, young person or vulnerable adult feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated Safeguarding Children person immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

8. Reporting procedures – Do not delay

It is vitally important that any disclosure made in confidence is recorded factually as soon as possible; this is whether or not the matter is taken to another authority. An accurate account should be made of:

- Date and time of what has occurred and the time the disclosure was made
- Names of people who were involved
- What was said or done by whom
- Any action taken by the group to gather information and refer on
- Any further action, e.g. suspension of a worker or volunteer
- Where relevant, reasons why there is no referral to a statutory agency
- Names of person reporting and to whom reported

The designated person for Safeguarding Children should then use the appropriate reporting systems for the situation. This may be reporting the matter to Local Authorities Children's Social Care (previously known as social services) or the police. This is why recording all information impartially and accurately is vital as this could be used for evidence for later use.

We have safeguarding forms that have been designed to report any concerns. These forms are accessible for all staff. Completed forms and any written information regarding Safeguarding Children issues concerning individuals needs are to be kept in a safe locked place to ensure confidentiality.

If staff or volunteers encounter abuse or suspicious situations of concern, for example, a child, young person or vulnerable adult might tell, a friend may say something, or a volunteer might notice something then this needs to be reported to the designated Safeguarding officer in Elevated Minds. The first step would be to discuss the concerns with the designated person and the designated person to take the appropriate action.

Designated Safeguarding Officer: Doreen Sinclair-McCollin

9. Whistle Blowing

We recognise that children, young people and vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

10. Monitoring

- The policy will be reviewed a year after development and then every year, or in the following circumstances: changes in legislation and/or government guidance
- as required by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils and [insert name of regulatory body if appropriate]
- as a result of any other significant change or event.