



## Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

### Section A - Policy

#### 1: Intent and introduction 1.1 Statement of Intent

Through its *Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy*, Esteem Team CIC is committed to promoting the well-being and enjoyment and protecting the health, safety and general welfare of young people and staff.

#### **1.2 Introduction**

In promoting this policy Esteem Team CIC are keen to take reasonable steps to:

- Provide a welcoming, secure and comfortable environment for the benefit of all children, young people and staff;
- Keep children & young people safe from harm while in the care of its staff.
- Comply with relevant statutory requirements;
- Support and protect the interests of staff who have contact with, or access to children or young people.

#### **1.3 Legal Framework**

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children, namely;

Children Act 1989

United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991 Data Protection Act 1998

Sexual Offences Act 2003

Children Act 2004

Protection of Freedoms Act 2012

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

Children and Families Act 2004

Education Act 2002

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

#### **1.4 Content**

This policy has been broken down into:

**Policy:** the guiding principles, definitions of those affected and the manner of implementation

**Guidelines:** instructions for best practice based on the guiding principles, which must be followed.

Although detailed, this policy is not intended to be comprehensive and as such does not attempt to deal with **all** the issues of working with children and young people. Instead they are intended as a practical guide for staff who deal with them.

## 2: Scope of the policy and those affected

### **2.1 Esteem Team personnel affected**

This policy applies to all employees and others representing Esteem Team CIC who have contact with children, young people & families.

### **2.2 Children and young people**

In law a child is anyone under the age of 18, however older children, for example teenagers may prefer to be called young people.

### **2.3 Activities affected**

Example of Activities and involvement within the scope of this policy include but is not exclusive to:

- 1:1/ 2:1 work with children/ young people / Families
- Accompanying/ Enabling children / young people to access the community/activities/ appointments.
- Holding meetings with parents/ professionals and young people;
- Working with children/ young people in groups
- Transporting children / young people to and from their home;
- Transporting children /young people to access the community/ activities or appointments
- Working with children/ young people in a residential setting;
- Working with children/young people within their educational provision
- Mentoring on a 1:1 basis in a public place
- Mentoring on a 1:1 basis in a staff members home/ child's home
- Any other activity that might involve substantial, unsupervised access to children/young people.

## 3: Guiding principles

**3.1** In welcoming and working with children and young people Esteem Team CIC aims to:

- 1) Provide a safe, supportive and friendly environment for them and promote their general welfare;
- 2) Recognise their rights as individuals and treat them with dignity and respect
- 3) Plan activities involving children /young people with care to minimise risks to their health and safety;
- 4) Raise awareness of the dangers to which children/young people may be susceptible;
- 5) Develop appropriate procedures for responding to accidents, incidents and alleged or suspected harm.

Guidelines for good practice under each of the points listed above are set out in **Section B BELOW**.

## 4: Implementation of the policy

### **4.1 Distribution of copies**

Full copies of this policy will be distributed as a detailed reference guide to:

- External agencies/ organisations/ funders upon request
- Staff
- Parent/carers upon request/ available on our website

### **4.2. Self-Audit**

An annual safeguarding “Self Audit” is carried out by Esteem Team CIC using an audit tool.

### **4.3 Training**

A training programme to support the policy and good practice will be delivered to all staff. This will include at least level 2 safeguarding training for all staff and Level 4 for those in Management.

All staff will receive training as part of their induction into Esteem Team CIC. Child Protection and Safeguarding forms an essential element of staff induction and training.

No staff will be allowed to take part in any mentoring processes unless they have received appropriate induction and training.

The director (Jenna Grace) will receive training on the contents of “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (most recent copy can be found at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children)) and especially Appendix 5 on the procedure for managing allegations against people who work with children.

### **5: Other relevant Esteem Team CIC policies, instructions and guidance**

**5.1** This policy should be implemented in conjunction with other policies, instructions and guidance, including:-

- Risk assessments on individual children/ young people / families referred to Esteem Team CIC
- Risk assessments carried out on children/young people taking part in project activities
- E- Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.
- Esteem Team CIC Behaviour policy
- Esteem Team CIC lone worker policy
- Esteem Team CIC safer recruitment policy
- Staff Code of conduct
- Esteem Team CIC admissions policy

## **Section B - Guidelines**

### **1 Welcome and welfare**

#### **1.1 Promoting a friendly environment**

As an organisation that values and encourages the involvement of children, young people and their families, Esteem Team CIC aims to provide a welcoming, safe, secure and enjoyable experience for all of its staff and service users.

Esteem Team CIC intends to see themselves as part of a team with the child /young person / family working “with” them, not “to” them.

Esteem Team CIC endeavours to provide an environment where anyone who may be vulnerable feels able to raise any concerns they may have and discuss anything they may be unhappy about.

## **1.2 Welfare paramount**

The fundamental principle, both in law and good practice, is that whenever the interests of children / young people / families are involved, their welfare must always be paramount. Esteem Team CIC recognises this and all staff seek to implement this principle.

## **1.3 Raising Awareness and Equipping Children & Young people with skills to keep themselves safe**

- We recognise Esteem Team CIC are well placed to establish and maintain an environment where children feel safe, secure, valued and respected and are encouraged to talk, believing they will be listened to.
- We will ensure children know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried;
- We will seek to include opportunities within our sessions for children/young people to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse and to know who they should turn to for help.
- We will ensure there are systems and opportunities in place for children / young people to share their views and provide feedback
- We will ensure that the child's thoughts/wishes/feelings are sought and recorded when possible

## **2: People as individuals**

### **2:1 People as individuals**

Esteem Team CIC recognises how we must all be aware of each person's needs and capabilities. Time should be taken to get to know people individually in order to make their experience with Esteem Team CIC more rewarding. It also enables Esteem Team CIC to be more responsive should a child/young person be suffering harm.

### **2.2 Children and young people's rights**

The Children's Act 1989 and The Children and Families Act 2004 gives children and young people certain rights, including the right to be listened to and to talk about any worries they may have, as well as the right to be protected if they are in danger, or at risk of harm. Children & Young people should feel able to approach any of our staff for help, without fear of recrimination. As a result they should be better able to protect themselves.

## **3: Selection of employees**

Esteem Team CIC will keep a centralised record of enhanced DBS checks. Esteem Team CIC will take appropriate steps to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children/ young people and families wherever possible. A thorough selection procedure for positions, is the most effective way of assessing a person's suitability, and may act as a deterrent to potential abusers.

In appointing any new member of staff Esteem Team CIC will follow the procedures and rigorous checks as laid out in its Safer Recruitment Policy. All members of staff will receive supervision as stated in the supervision section of our Staff Code of Conduct policy.

#### 4: Planning activities to minimise harm

##### 4.1 Risk assessments and other general considerations

Health and safety requirements must be carefully considered when planning and carrying out activities involving children / young people and families. Esteem Team CIC's Health and Safety Policy applies to all its employees.

All employees should carry out thorough risk assessments prior to undertaking events/activities with children/young people/ families.

All employees should maintain the standard of behaviour expected from them as outlined in Esteem Team's Staff Code of conduct policy.

#### 5: Raising awareness of dangers

##### 5.1a Types of harm summary

- **Physical** - where children or young people receive physical hurt or injury;
- **Neglect** - where adults fail to care for children or young people and to protect them from danger, seriously impairing their health, well-being or development;
- **Emotional** - where children and young people are harmed by a constant lack of love and affection or intimidated by threats or taunts;
- **Sexual** - where children and young people are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity by adults or children. This also includes the use of sexualised language.

*Common sense should be relied upon to recognise the warning signs. However, it is essential to rely on facts rather than opinions and not jump to conclusions.*

##### 5.1b Other Types of harm

Esteem Team CIC recognises that behaviours linked to issues such as drug taking, alcohol abuse, deliberately missing education and sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery) put children /young people in danger.

#### Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance in power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as increased status) of the perpetrator or facilitator. The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups, males or females, and children or adults. The abuse can be a one-off occurrence or a series of incidents over time, and range from opportunistic to complex organised abuse. It can involve force and/or enticement-based methods of compliance and may, or may not, be accompanied by violence or threats of violence. Victims can be

exploited even when activity appears consensual and it should be noted exploitation as well as being physical can be facilitated and/or take place online.

## Peer on peer abuse

Children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer on peer abuse). This is most likely to include, but may not be limited to:

- Bullying (including cyberbullying);
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm;
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault;
- Sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse;
- Upskirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm;
- Sexting (also known as youth produced sexual imagery); and
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

## Serious violence / violent crime

All staff should be aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school or attendance at Esteem Team sessions, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

## Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Whilst all staff should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM), there is a specific **legal duty on teachers**. If a teacher, in the course of their work at Esteem Team CIC, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher **must** report this to the police.

## County Lines

County Lines is a term used for organised illegal drug-dealing networks, usually controlled by a person using a single telephone number or 'deal line'. They operate out of major UK cities such as London, Liverpool and Birmingham, and they distribute illegal drugs across rural and suburban counties via 'runners'.

Vulnerable children and adults are recruited as runners to transport drugs and cash all over the country, so that the criminals behind it can remain detached and less likely to be detected. This crime is often associated with other serious crimes such as sexual exploitation, violence, money laundering and human trafficking. There are several signs to look out for when someone has been lured into this activity; these may include:

- Change in behaviour
- Signs of assault and/or malnutrition

- Access to numerous phones
- Use of unusual terms e.g. going country
- Associating with gangs
- Unexplained bus or train tickets
- School truancy or going missing
- Unexplained gifts (clothes, trainers) and cash

## Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse in the majority of cases is by a partner or ex-partner, but also by a family member or carer and can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Coercive control (a pattern of intimidation, degradation, isolation and control with the use or threat of physical or sexual violence)
- Psychological and/or emotional abuse
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Financial or economic abuse
- Harassment and stalking
- Online or digital abuse

**Radicalisation & Extremism** - *(The holding of extreme political or religious views e.g. animal welfare rights, environmentalists, EDL / white supremacy groups, anti-gay groups, Islam / Christian ideology.)*

Esteem Team CIC understands it had due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. ("The Prevent duty")

The current threat from terrorism in the United Kingdom may include the exploitation of vulnerable people, to involve them in terrorism or in activity in support of terrorism. The normalisation of extreme views may also make children and young people vulnerable to future manipulation and exploitation.

Esteem Team CIC is clear that this exploitation and radicalisation should be viewed as a safeguarding concern and that protecting children and young people from the risk of radicalisation is part of the companies safeguarding duty.

*(Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism. Children / young people may become susceptible to radicalisation through a range of social, personal and environmental factors - it is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them and their families and communities. It is vital that Esteem Team CIC staff recognise those vulnerabilities.)*

**Extremism is defined by the Government in the Prevent Strategy as:**

*"Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas."*



## 5.2 Who can harm

An abuser is often known to the person being abused, whether a parent, sibling, other relative, family friend or neighbour. Not only adults can harm. Children and young people can also suffer abuse from their peers. Sometimes the abuser may be an adult who holds a position of authority over a young person. There is no certain way of identifying a would-be abuser, they can be people of any background and do not appear different from the rest of society.

## 6: Responding to accidents, incidents and harm

### 6.1 Responding to accidents / incidents

In the event of an accident to an individual, first-aid should be administered, preferably by a trained first-aider and the situation managed to ensure the welfare of the individual and the safety of others. The emergency services should be called for where appropriate.

An Accident/Incident Report Form should be completed on Learning journals. Where appropriate the circumstances to the accident should be investigated to establish the cause and to identify what remedial action should be taken to minimise the possibility of a recurrence.

Fatal accidents, major injuries and dangerous occurrences should be notified without delay to the appropriate line manager, after alerting the appropriate authorities eg. *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)*.

Where an accident/incident involving children/ young people has been narrowly avoided employees should detail its nature and pass the information on to their line manager.

### 6.2 Responding to alleged or suspected harm

#### If a person wants to talk about harm

If a young person wants to talk about harm, it is essential that the employee:

- Listens carefully to what the person says, keeping calm and maintaining appropriate eye\* contact and body language; (\*some children may prefer indirect/no eye contact)
- Lets them know that to help them someone else must be told;
- Reassure them that they are not to blame;
- Does not push them for information;
- Reassures them that they are right to talk about it and what they say is accepted;
- Lets them know what will happen next and what you're going to do eg "I will need to speak to my line manager to help keep you safe"

#### Dealing with alleged or suspected harm

When parent/carers refer into a service with Esteem Team CIC, the clause relating to confidentiality explains that members of staff cannot maintain a confidence relating to harm or abuse. This is also true of suspected harm or abuse. If a child/young person has talked about harm, or harm is suspected, the employee must do two things:

1. Explain to the young person what action they are required to take. This would in the first instance be informing the Director/DSL (Jenna Grace or if unavailable Cara Stratford/ Vicky Tarran) The young person also needs to know that if the Director has grounds to believe that the young person is suffering from harm or abuse, this must



be reported as below. It is vital to reassure the young person that this is a caring procedure, designed for their protection. This is not a punishment.

2. Once notified Jenna Grace ( OR if unavailable Cara Stratford/ Vicky Tarran), (giving them the completed proforma/written information. As soon as possible/ called if URGENT)

Jenna will then email the form to [mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk)

If staff believe that urgent action is needed because, for example, a child is in immediate danger or needs accommodation, Jenna /Cara/ Vicky will phone MASH on 0345 155 1071 and give as much information as she can, staff may need to be present to support this call. The information will be passed immediately to a manager who will decide the action needed and will normally respond within one hour. Jenna/ Cara / Vicky must follow up the telephone call by sending a completed referral from to the MASH within 48 hours. They will email the form to [mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gcsx.gov.uk)

Jenna/ Cara / Vicky will also liaise with parent/carers where appropriate.

Dealing with incidents of harm is difficult for any individual so employees **should not:**

- Start to investigate; or
  - Make any assumptions about the persons involved.
- Any employee who is involved in a disclosure of any kind may feel that they need to speak to a childcare professional to reassure themselves that they have done the right thing. The NSPCC operates a 24 hour help line for anyone concerned about a child or young person. It is primarily for use by adults and can be used anonymously: **0800 800 5000**.

*You can also call our designated safeguarding organisation:*  
**thirtyone:eight 0303 003 11 11**

### 6.3 Dealing with alleged or suspected harm involving an employee

Where it is suspected that an employee may be involved in the abuse, employees should let their Line manager know as soon as possible. The employee should be immediately removed from access to children/ young people / families, but be assured that no presumptions have been made and that the allegation will be fully investigated by the relevant authorities.

Where it is suspected that Jenna Grace may be involved in the abuse, employees should let the local safeguarding board know as soon as possible. If gross misconduct is reasonably suspected, it may be appropriate to ask them not to attend the office or property at all while the matter is under investigation. Once the relevant authority's enquiry has concluded, Esteem Team CIC should decide what further action is appropriate in conjunction with Esteem Team CIC's other relevant policies

The **local Authority designated Officer (LADO)** has the responsibility of managing and overseeing allegations made against those with work with children. If the allegation relates to their working role, you should make a LADO referral or request LADO advice using 01392 384964 or email [ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk).

### 6.4 Accurate notes

Full and accurate notes (i.e. **word for word**) must be written as soon as possible and documented on CPOMS. Notes should include:

The date and time of the alleged incident or disclosure; The parties involved;

What was alleged; and the action taken.

Records should be as accurate as possible as they may be invaluable to the investigation and used as evidence in court. A copy should be kept by Esteem Team CIC

## 6.5 Confidentiality and sensitivity

When dealing with personal and emotive details of this nature, confidentiality must be maintained at all times since the allegations or suspicions may prove to be unfounded. Notes and records should be kept in a secure place and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

A sensitive approach should be taken with the accused to explain why an investigation has to take place and to reassure them that the matter will be handled discreetly and even-handedly by Esteem Team CIC.

No assumptions of guilt should be made unless and until an actual conviction has been obtained in the proceedings. Impartial contact will be maintained by a nominated Esteem Team CIC staff member during this process.

*Jenna Grace is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and has received appropriate training for this role.*

Esteem Team CIC ensures there is always 1 member of staff who will act in the absence of the DSL and these are Cara Stratford and Vicky Tarran.

Posters of our designated safeguarding officers are displayed at the Esteem Team Base  
And details of them can also be found on our website.

## Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Reviewed: Sep 2024 (By Jenna Grace & Victoria Riley-Hill)

Next Review date: Sep 2025

