



## **Safeguarding Children Policy Leicester Mammias CIC**

### **Introduction**

Leicester Mammias CIC is committed to creating an environment that enables children and young people to learn, develop, and express themselves in a safe, understanding and encouraging environment. We aim to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people participating in our activities.

The Children's Act makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and it gives everyone involved in the care of children a responsibility for the protection of those children. It is also essential that we honour the trust of those who allow us to care for their children.

Therefore it is necessary that all concerned have an understanding of the issues involved and that procedures are in place and are understandable to anyone providing a service to young people and easy to implement.

By setting out our values and expectations, this Safeguarding Policy aims to:

- Ensure a safe working environment for all those engaged in Comic Relief's work
- Ensure the safety and well-being of the children and communities we come into contact with

### **What is child abuse?**

Child abuse is a difficult issue and presents challenges to all involved in providing services for young people. It is not always easily recognisable but is generally divided into four categories:

1. Physical Abuse - Where adults physically hurt or injure children, hitting, shaking, squeezing, burning and biting are all forms of physical abuse. Giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison and attempted suffocation or drowning are also physical abuse.
2. Neglect - An adult may fail to meet a child's basic needs, like food, warm clothing or medical attention. Children might be left alone unsupervised. Abuse in any form can affect a child of any age.
3. Emotional Abuse – Persistent lack of love and affection damages children emotionally. Being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted can make the child very nervous and withdrawn.

4. Sexual Abuse – this is where children are encouraged or forced to observe or participate in any form of sexual activity. This could occur through unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact or through suggestive comments or innuendo or include showing children pornographic materials.

### **How to recognise abuse**

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries;
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him or her;
- Someone else (child or adult) expresses concern about the welfare of another child;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour such as becoming very quiet; withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper.
- Inappropriate sexual awareness;
- Engaging in sexually explicit behaviour;
- Distrust of adults, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected;
- Difficulty in making friends.

If you notice any social changes in the behaviour of a child, worrying marks or bruises or hear a child/children talking about things which give cause for concern then your first responsibility is to the child.

It is not safe to assume that someone else will take action. As an adult you have a duty to take appropriate action. Recognising and coping with child abuse is very stressful and the person reporting the concern will not have to cope alone.

### **What to do if you suspect abuse**

If a child spontaneously talks of experiences which give cause for concern, you should:

1. Explain to the child that if he/she discloses information which leads you to believe they are being abused, you will be unable to keep it confidential.
2. Listen to the child without questioning him/her. Be aware of your own reactions as showing disapproval may stop the child from continuing with their disclosure.
3. Do not try to stop the child from recalling events. Make a note of what is said, in what context, the setting, the timing and which people were present. (complete a log if you have one)
4. Inform the designated child protection worker immediately or if they are unavailable an appropriate senior member of staff immediately. If you are unsure of what action to take it would be appropriate to seek advice from either the police or social services department.
5. The child protection worker will contact the appropriate authorities including the Duty Social Worker in the area where the child lives as soon as possible.

Allegations of abuse will be treated similarly whether the disclosure is relating to an individual from within or externally from Leicester Mammias. The information should be passed onto the designated child protection worker and handled in the same way. Social Services will also follow the same procedure as they do to investigate allegations of abuse for a family.

The designated child protection worker in Leicester Mammias is Sally Etheridge who can be contacted on 0116 2418941/07580159278 or at 51 Cardinals Walk, Leicester, LE5 1LG. Any concerns or reports of abuse must be reported to this individual as soon as possible.

### **Further Measures**

The following extra measures will be adopted to ensure the safeguarding of young people in this organisation:

- We aim to ensure that recruitment of all staff and volunteers is conducted in a way to safeguard young people and undergo an enhanced DBS disclosure as part of this process.
- All workers and volunteers will be given a copy of the policy and receive training as part of their induction to the organisation.

### **Behaviour guidelines for all those working in our setting**

The aim of these guidelines is to ensure everyone's safety and wellbeing and to support in providing a safe, caring environment.

- Set an example of appropriate behaviour. People learn by example
- Avoid where possible being left alone with a mother's baby
- Allow the mother to comfort her baby herself when you are in a helping situation
- Where possible parents should take responsibility for their own children
- Always be publicly open when working with children
- Avoid being alone with children unnecessarily.
- Offer respect to all children at all times and strive to be sensitive to their feelings, including for babies and young children.
- Good behaviour should be positively encouraged in every setting

## **Whistle Blowing and Complaints**

### **Allegations against a member of staff or volunteer**

Leicester Mammias CIC will assure all staff/volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports concerns about a colleague's practice. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff, this will be followed up accordingly.

### **Action if there are concerns**

#### **1. Concerns about poor practice:**

- If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue
- If the allegation is about poor practice by the Designated Safeguarding Lead or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Board of Directors who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the organisation should initiate disciplinary proceedings

#### **2. Concerns about suspected abuse**

- Any suspicion of abuse either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure safety of those concerned
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer any allegation of child abuse to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours
- The parents or carers of any child concerned will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Board of Directors who will refer the allegation to Social Services

#### **3. Internal Enquiries and Suspension**

- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further police and social services inquiries

Irrespective of the findings of the social services or police inquiries the organisation will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, the organisation must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

**This policy will be reviewed annually**

**Last reviewed – 02/03/2023**

**To be reviewed – 02/03/2024**

**Signed – Anisa Panchbhaya - Director**

**Signed – S J Etheridge – Programme Lead**

Name of Young Person:	Date of birth:
Date of completing form:	Time of completing form:
Your name:	Your Position:
Your signature:	Your organisation:
Reasons for recording incident:	
Please record the following as factually as possible.	Who:
	What:
	Where:
	When:
Offer an opinion where relevant (how and why this may have happened)	
Substantiate the opinion. Please note the action taken, including the names of anyone to whom information was passed.	

# Mammas

## Logging your concerns about a child's safety and welfare

### Appendix 1

#### Code of Conduct for Mammas Staff and Volunteers

- Recruitment of staff and volunteers will involve careful selection procedures. There will be a commitment to children and a fulfilment of a duty to prevent child abuse.
- Always act in such a manner as to justify the trust and confidence that mothers have in you.
- Ensure that the environment that the children play in at meetings is safe.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in the relationships that you have with mothers and babies
- If visiting a mother alone, do not place yourself in a position of vulnerability e.g. long periods alone with an unknown child/children. Please refer to the Home Visit Policy.
- It will be necessary in cases of suspected child abuse and areas of concern to report your findings to someone. This can then break a promise and /or confidentiality. However, where there is an issue of child protection, you must act at all times in accordance with national and local policies, which could involve a disclosure of confidential information. Ethical and statutory codes are not intended to prevent the exchange of information between those who have a responsibility to protect children

#### In the event of concern

- A member of staff or volunteers may speak in the first instance to the mother involved (if they feel able), and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Mammas
- Mammas DSL will liaise with the family's health visitor or midwife and share concerns without delay.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is not available, the peer supporter should contact the Health Visiting team directly, with the full name and DOB of the child and the address and name of the mother.
- Information should include:

Child's name and DoB

The child's address:

What is said to have happened or what was seen;

Who else was there?

Whether there is any actual evidence e.g. bruises, changed behaviour

Who was concerned?

Parent/carers details.

Relevant phone numbers

When it occurred;

What was said by those involved?

Who has been told about it?

Whether the parents have been advised

1. The child protection co-coordinator should relay the concerns to the Social Services Department Duty Officer for the Children and Families Team for the appropriate area.

2. Strict records will be kept by the member of staff or volunteer, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) of all that has occurred and who has been notified. These records will be kept by Leicester Mammias for five years, or longer if felt necessary.

**IF THERE IS ANY DOUBT SHARE YOUR CONCERN - REFER TO SOCIAL SERVICES. IF A CHILD IS FELT TO BE IN IMMINENT DANGER, CALL THE POLICE**

The safety and well-being of everyone connected with our work is of paramount importance. We have a responsibility to ensure this does not result in harm, abuse or exploitation of any kind. The Safeguarding Framework ('Framework') sets out the measures that must be taken to ensure:

- **Prevention:** All reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm, abuse and exploitation across our operations;
- **Protection:** All safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and receive a robust response which prioritises the safety and well-being of those at risk;
- **Personify:** Representatives of Leicester Mammias maintain the highest standards of behaviour and fulfil their responsibilities to keep people safe; and
- **Partnership:** Listening to the organisations we work with, individuals with lived experience and others in the sector to continually learn and improve.

## FLOW CHART