



# Safeguarding Policy

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries, from any harm that may be caused due to their encountering New Beginnings Reading.

This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with New Beginnings Reading
- The design and implementation of New Beginnings Reading programmes and activities

This policy lays out the commitments made by New Beginnings Reading and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by New Beginnings Reading or associated personnel.

## **What is safeguarding?**

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

We understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from encountering our staff or programmes.

Further definitions relating to safeguarding are provided in the glossary below.

## **Scope**

All staff contracted by New Beginnings Reading.

Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to New Beginnings Reading, including but not limited to the following: trustees; consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians.

## **Policy statement**

New Beginnings Reading believes that everyone we encounter, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. New Beginnings Reading will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

New Beginnings Reading commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

## **Prevention**

### **New Beginnings Reading Responsibilities**

New Beginnings Reading will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their meeting New Beginnings Reading. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

### **Staff Responsibilities**

#### **Child safeguarding**

New Beginnings Reading staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of consent in their country of residence
- Sexually abuse or exploit any adult or child
- Subject any adult or child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities including child labour or human trafficking

#### **Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse**

New Beginnings Reading staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, New Beginnings Reading staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by New Beginnings Reading staff members or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

## **Enabling Reports**

New Beginnings Reading will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

New Beginnings Reading will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

## How to report a safeguarding concern

Anyone who has a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Team Leader. If they do not feel comfortable reporting to their Team Leader (eg if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to a member of the board of trustees.

## **Response**

New Beginnings Reading will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

New Beginnings Reading will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

New Beginnings Reading will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

## **Confidentiality**

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only and should always be kept secure.

## **Glossary of Terms**

### Beneficiary of Assistance

Someone who directly receives goods or services from New Beginnings Reading. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that New Beginnings Reading serves and can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

### Child

A person below the age of consent in their country of residence.

### Harm

Psychological, physical and any other infringement of an individual's rights.

### Psychological harm

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation.

### Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13).

### Safeguarding

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

We understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at-risk adults, from harm that arises from encountering our staff or programmes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

#### Sexual abuse

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

#### Sexual exploitation

The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

#### Survivor

The person who has been abused or exploited. The term 'survivor' is often used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive, however it is the individual's choice how they wish to identify themselves.

#### At risk adult

Sometimes also referred to as vulnerable adult. A person who is or may need care by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

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Owner: Chairperson

Date of last review: October 2020

Date of next review: October 2021