

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

**We believe that for children and young adults safeguarding and protection is the individual and collective responsibility of everyone working in or visiting the organisation. Our policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and young adults are paramount in all circumstances. We are committed to ensuring our safeguarding practices reflect statutory responsibilities, government guidance and comply with best practice.**

**This policy applies for the duration of a young person's participation on the Ideas Foundation's programme. For the avoidance of doubt, should a mentor and mentee elect to remain in contact following the end of the programme, then they do so at their own risk and outside the scope of Idea Foundation's responsibility.**

### 2. POLICY PURPOSE AND GUIDANCE

This policy states the Ideas Foundation's (IF) commitment in relation to Safeguarding children and young adults and gives guidance on:

- What IF staff or volunteers should do if they think a child/young adult they are working with has raised a safeguarding disclosure or a safeguarding incident occurs. [See Appendix 1]
- What the organisation will do to ensure that employees, whether paid staff or volunteers, do not pose a risk to children and young adults.
- How IF procedures work alongside other local agencies.

### 3. TERMINOLOGY

A **child/children** is any individual under the age of 18. **Young adults** are people aged 18 to 27.

**Safeguarding** and promoting the welfare of children and young adults is:

- protecting children/young adults from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's /young adults' health or development
- taking action to enable all children/young adults have the best outcomes
- promoting the freedom and dignity of the person who has experienced or is experiencing abuse
- promoting the rights of all people to live free from abuse and coercion
- ensuring the safety and well-being of people who do not have the capacity to decide how they want to respond to abuse that they are experiencing
- managing services in a way which promotes safety and prevents abuse
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

#### 4. **STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead** is the person with the overall responsibility of ensuring the organisation's Safeguarding Children and Young Adult Policy is implemented and ensures that the Policy and procedures are kept up to date and are applied consistently.

**The Deputy Safeguarding Lead** is the person who will have the role of the Safeguarding Lead when they are not contactable or available.

Ideas Foundation's Designated Safeguarding Lead & Deputy are:

**Heather MacRae**, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

e-mail: [Heather@ideasfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Heather@ideasfoundation.org.uk)

Mobile: 07815 768699

**Emma Hope**, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

e-mail: [Emma@ideasfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Emma@ideasfoundation.org.uk)

Mobile: 07786 656669

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (or where safeguarding concerns relate to actions by the DSL or Deputy DSL), Trustees can be contacted in regards to a safeguarding incident:

**Jenny Wilkins**, Trustee

e-mail: [jennywilkins7@gmail.com](mailto:jennywilkins7@gmail.com)

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and young adults with whom they work and to respond to any concerns about safeguarding. All staff and volunteers should study this policy and ensure that they are clear about what they should do if they have any concerns about disclosure of abuse from a child/young adult. See Appendix 1.

## 5. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The Ideas Foundation is committed to the definition 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young adults. This policy is written with regard to the following documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2019)
- What to Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused (2006)
- The Children Acts (1989 and 2004)
- Care Act (2014)
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015)
- The Prevent Strategy (2015)

- London Multi Agency Adult Safeguarding Policies and Practice (2019)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education (2022)

Our policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children and young adults are paramount in all circumstances.

As part of our Safeguarding policy the Ideas Foundation will:

- promote and prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and young adults
- ensure all adults working with children understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of safeguarding and are provided with appropriate learning opportunities to recognise, identify and respond to signs of abuse, neglect and other safeguarding concerns relating to children and young adults.
- ensure appropriate action is taken in the event of incidents/concerns of abuse and support is provided to the individual/s raising or disclosing the concern.
- ensure that confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored.
- prevent the employment of unsuitable staff and volunteers using safer recruitment practices.
- ensure robust safeguarding arrangements and procedures are used effectively.

## 6. PROCEDURES

- To ensure appropriate recruitment we shall ensure that all [safer recruitment procedures](#) are undertaken including appropriate pre-employment, selection, vetting and identity checks.
- We will use Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks to help us to assess suitability and where there is eligibility to do so by determining which roles are in regulated activity and therefore subject to a barring list check and those roles eligible for enhanced DBS checks.
- We have a three-year renewal policy on DBS checks for all roles considered eligible for DBS or enhanced DBS checks.
- All new members of staff and volunteers are directed to the IF's website to read a copy of this policy and the Charity Commission Guidance on Safeguarding of Children, linked [here](#).
- All new staff and volunteers will have a meeting with the Safeguarding Lead to discuss the Ideas Foundation's child safeguarding policy. All staff and volunteers will be asked to acknowledge their understanding of their obligations in relation to safeguarding by signing a declaration

- Staff and volunteers should conduct themselves with children and young adults mindful of this policy.
- As a general rule, staff and volunteers should avoid situations where they are on their own with a mentee and, in such situations, plan ahead and signal the arrangement with another member of staff. Avoid last-minute or informal arrangements for one-to-one meetings. Staff and mentors working with children should not give lifts in cars to children, particularly one-to-one, other than in an emergency, where another member of staff, preferably the Safeguarding Lead, should be informed.
- In order that staff and volunteers do not place themselves or children at risk of harm or of allegations of harm, staff and volunteers should seek immediate advice from the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead if a child's interaction with you seems inappropriate, out of the ordinary.
- Though Trustees are not directly mentioned in the above bullet points (as they are unlikely to interact with children or young adults taking part in Ideas Foundations programming), they are nevertheless required to follow the procedures as and when necessary.
- These policies and procedures will be widely promoted. Failure to comply with the policy and procedures will be addressed without delay and may ultimately result in disciplinary action, and dismissal/exclusion from the organisation.

## 7. ENTITLEMENT

The Ideas Foundation acknowledges that some children and young adults, including those who are disabled and those from ethnic minority communities, can be particularly vulnerable to abuse and we accept the responsibility to take all reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure their welfare. The Ideas Foundation aims to ensure that regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or beliefs, sexual orientation and socio-economic background, all persons are protected appropriately. If there are any concerns, contact the Safeguarding Lead immediately.

## 8. ADULT RESPONSIBILITIES

Adults working with children as part of the Ideas Foundation have a duty to:

- understand, adopt, adhere to and implement the Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy

- respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of all children and young adults
- safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young adults
- have a positive and enjoyable experience in a safe environment
- be protected from abuse whilst participating in dealings with the Ideas Foundation.

## 9. POLICY AND MONITORING PROCEDURES

The policy will be reviewed termly by the trustee committee and with a larger annual review in light of new or updated guidance from the UK Government.

**How:** The Ideas Foundation Safeguarding Lead will monitor updates from the UK Government regarding best practices. Feedback is welcomed and collected from members and staff and this will be collated, discussed and implemented.

Safeguarding is monitored through the Safeguarding register, the annual safeguarding audit submitted to Trustees annually and the training register.

**By Whom:** The Ideas Foundation will be responsible for this process.

## 10. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ideas Foundation meets its child and young adult protection responsibilities by ensuring that adults working with children are briefed on Safeguarding policies and best practices.

All Ideas Foundation staff and volunteers are given ample time to read and consider the Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy. Deviation from the guidelines or failure to enforce the Safeguarding Children and Young Adults Policy may result in immediate dismissal/exclusion from the organisation

If an issue arises or you have a concern it is important to escalate the matter to a senior member of staff. In some cases, you may feel the need to report issues/concerns directly to the Safeguarding Lead. Concerns shared will be treated with the strictest of confidence and investigated fully. Please see Appendix 1.

## 11. CODE OF CONDUCT

It is important that adults working with children and young adults understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. At Ideas Foundation, we aim to create a safe culture by ensuring adults working with children and young adults follow a Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct endeavours to:

- assist staff working with children, and young adults to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice
- set clear expectations of behaviour and codes of practice relevant to the age group.

In your role at Ideas Foundation, you are acting in a position of authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young adults we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model and are expected to act appropriately. Please see Appendix 2 for the 'Mentor Code of Conduct'.

### **You are responsible for:**

- prioritising the welfare of children and young adults
- providing a safe environment for children and young adults
- having a good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and taking action when appropriate
- following our principles, policies and procedures including, whistleblowing policy.
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young adults to follow
- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to the Safeguarding Lead
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour following our safeguarding procedures. This includes behaviour being displayed by an adult/child and directed at anybody of any age. See Appendix 1.

## **Rights**

- You should treat children and young adults fairly and without discrimination or prejudice
- Understand that children and young adults are individuals with individual needs
- Respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems and appreciate that all participants bring something different and valuable to the organisation
- Challenge discrimination and prejudice
- Encourage young people to speak about attitudes or behaviour that makes them feel uncomfortable

## **Relationships**

- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- Be patient with others
- Exercise caution when you discuss sensitive issues
- Ensure your contact with children and young adults is appropriate and relevant to the project
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities. If a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present

## **Respect**

- Value and take children and young adults' contributions seriously actively involving them in planning activities whenever possible
- Respect children and young adults' right to personal privacy as far as possible. If you need to break confidentiality in order to follow safeguarding procedures it is important to explain this at the earliest opportunity

## **Unacceptable behaviour**

When working with children and young adults you must not:



- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young adults
- make inappropriate promises to children and young adults
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive including having any form of sexual contact
- let children and young adults have your personal contact details (mobile number, personal email or home address or have contact with them through a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or abusive
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments/gestures

## 12. POWER AND POSITIONS OF TRUST

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, adults working with children and young adults are in positions of trust.

There is potential for exploitation and harm of children and young adults. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is a criminal offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

This means that adults should not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children and young adults
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.

## 13. PROPRIETY AND BEHAVIOUR

There may be times, for example, when a person's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the work environment, the local communities or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is

considered to compromise their position or indicate unsuitability to work with children. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

People in contact with children should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.

This means that adults should not:

- smoke or drink alcohol while responsible for children or young adults
- behave in an aggressive, violent or forceful manner which would lend any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children and young adults or act as a role model.

#### **14. INFATUATIONS**

Occasionally, a child or young adult may develop an infatuation with an adult. Staff and volunteers should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. They should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach. In this situation a staff member or volunteer who becomes aware that a child is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior member of staff so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment. Please see appendix 1.

This means that staff and volunteers should not:

- be in a one-to-one situation (there should always be another person nearby and no doors should be closed).
- encourage the obsession

#### **15. SEXUAL CONTACT**

Staff and volunteer mentors should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contact with children and young adults. Relationships, whether emotional or sexual between children or young adults and the adults who work with them will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship or intimate relationship is also unacceptable. Any sexual activity between an adult and the child with whom they work will be regarded as a criminal

offence and reported accordingly, and this will always be a matter of disciplinary action. In addition, any sexual activity between an adult and the young adult with whom they work will be regarded as a gross breach of trust and a matter of disciplinary action and may be reported to the police.

Children are protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young adult consents or not. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. There are occasions when a person may embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Adults should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such will give rise to concerns about their behaviour and, in relation to staff and volunteer mentors, could result in disciplinary action.

This means that staff and volunteer mentors should not:

- have emotional or sexual relations with any child or young adult mentee on the programme.
- have any communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative – either verbal, letter, notes, email, text, calls or physical contact
- talk about your own sexual relationships
- make sexual remarks about children or young adults

Relationships should be professional, healthy and respectful at all times. Your language, demeanour attitudes and conduct all require careful thought when dealing with children and vulnerable adults.

## **16. DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

Staff and volunteer mentors should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different from how they dress when not at work.

Staff and volunteer mentors should wear clothing appropriate to the role:

- not viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogan
- is not considered discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

## 17. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

All children and young adults have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour.

Staff and volunteer mentors should:

- not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child or vulnerable adult
- not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children or vulnerable adults.
- never use corporal punishment.

## 18. PHYSICAL CONTACT

There are occasions when it is appropriate and proper for staff and volunteer mentors to have physical contact with children or young adults, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adopted and staff should use their professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular situation. Some of these situations are:

- during certain activities such as drama, sports and outdoor activities
- when a child or young adult is in severe distress
- for restraint and physical intervention
- medical and First Aid

This means that staff and volunteer mentors should never:

- use physical force as a means of punishment and discipline
- never touch a child or young adult in a way which may be considered indecent
- indulge in 'horse-play'.

The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

## 19. COMMUNICATION

Communication with children and young adults by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, cameras, and websites. A person should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Staff and volunteer mentors should not share any inappropriate or unnecessary personal information with a child or young adult. and all contact should be made only for professional reasons.

### **This means that staff and volunteer mentors;**

- must use their work email.
- must use their work phone and mobiles if working with children.
- ensure that mobile numbers of children are not stored on a personal mobile and children should not have access to staff/mentors personal mobile numbers
- inform the DSL if contacted by a child on a personal number
- can use a personal number when working with young adults, if there is no access to a work phone or mobile.
- recognise that texting is not a professional means of communication and should not occur between a child and avoided with young adults.
- never use Whatsapp to communicate with a child.
- must not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child or young adult

- must not use a social network site to complain or criticize children or young adults
- report any unwanted contact/emails/messages from children to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## 20. ONLINE COMMUNICATION

With the shift to online, we recognise that face-to-face communication will be greatly replaced by online communication. It is imperative that clear boundaries are established so that staff, mentors, children and young adults foster safe professional relationships.

**This means that staff and volunteer mentors;**

- set clear boundaries as to when communication can be made within appropriate work hours
- conduct all video calls in an appropriate setting without distracting backgrounds or noise
- dress appropriately for video calls
- ensure permission is granted before sharing any contact details or personal information of anyone in your network with children or young adults
- be present in all video introductions of members from your network to children
- be copied into email communication with members of your network to children

## 21. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is vital to the success of mentoring (particularly now that much working practice takes place work online rather than face to face) but with it are inherent risks. As such certain precautions must be taken.

**This means that staff and volunteer mentors:**

- should never connect with a child or young adult on personal social media accounts such as Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok.
- can connect with children and young adults on professional sites such as LinkedIn and The Dots
- can allow a young adult to follow a merged personal and professional social media account but they must ensure that no inappropriate content is posted

For safeguarding purposes there must be an audit trail of any and all communications with a child or young adult so that staff or volunteers are protected against any possible allegations.

## 22. CHILD AND YOUNG ADULT PROTECTION GUIDANCE

### How to respond to concerns

If you have concerns about a child or young person's safety or well-being, discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Lead who will have the appropriate training and expertise to support you and advise on the next stage. You should act swiftly. There should not be any time delay (see Appendix 1). If you cannot contact this person and you believe that a child or young adult may be in imminent danger of abuse you should contact the Police immediately.

### How to respond to a disclosure

A concern may come to light as a response or something a child or young person says to you. Often, this disclosure can be made during casual conversation. If a disclosure is made to you:

- listen to the information and accept what you hear without passing judgement or dismissing what you hear. Do not dismiss or trivialise what the child or young adult has told you. Stay calm. Be aware of your own reactions. Do not transmit shock, anger or embarrassment
- never enter into a pact of secrecy with the child or young person. Assure them you will try and help but this may involve telling a more senior trained member of staff. Do not promise confidentiality but make clear that the information will be treated with great care. Reiterate you may need to share the information with a trained safeguarding person
- reassure and praise them. Tell them you believe them and it is not their fault. Children and young adults rarely lie about abuse but they may have tried to tell others and not been heard or believed

- encourage the child or young person to talk without leading questions. Do not put words into their mouth or make judgemental statements about any person. Keep your own responses short and simple and do not offer new information. Do not interrogate them. Check you have understood what they are telling you. Do not comment on the offender – it may be someone they love
- be aware the child or young person may retract what they have told you, but it is essential to report what you have heard
- as soon as possible afterwards (if possible during the conversation) make a detailed record of the conversation, including questions you asked. Do not add your opinion
- immediately after the meeting you should contact the Safeguarding Lead and report the outcome of the meeting, producing the written record of the conversation
- take into account the child or young adult's age, their level of understanding, their culture and level of language

### **Confidentiality:**

- You must never discuss issues with colleagues, family or friends. The information you have received must remain between yourself and the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Any information divulged must be on a need to know basis
- Parents / Guardians of a child will always be informed of allegations of abuse made by a child unless this puts the child or the subsequent investigation at risk (e.g. if they are the subject of the allegation).

### **How to record a disclosure and Record-Keeping**

Recording a disclosure is an essential part of the safeguarding process, if possible a disclosure should be recorded during the time of the disclosure, if this is not possible it should be done as soon as possible after (within 24 hours).

### **Why?**

- Clarifies the nature and extent of concerns
- Provides a clear record of the development of concerns
- Identifies patterns of behaviour
- Assists any subsequent referrals
- Ensures consistency



## **What?**

- Signs and indicators
- Disclosures
- Relevant contact with parents / guardians

## **How?**

- Factually - day, date, time place
- Give background information
- Record words verbatim
- Keep any initial notes
- Record action taken and the reasons

Secure provision is made for all records produced during any welfare discussions or disclosures. These records are then transferred to Ideas Foundation's server where they are stored for three years in a secure digital Safeguarding file. There are copies of all documents and information which may have been sent to any authority regarding any Safeguarding issue.

## **Recognising symptoms of abuse/ safeguarding issue**

Although a child or young person may make a disclosure of abuse to you, it is entirely possible that you will become concerned about the welfare of a child or young adult because of their behaviour or because you notice physical symptoms of abuse.

The four areas of abuse are physical, emotional, neglect and sexual (PENS).

There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Consideration of the severity of ill-treatment may include the degree and extent the duration and frequency of all the four abuses.

## **What is abuse and neglect?**

These are forms of maltreatment – a person may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or failing to act to prevent harm. Children and young adults may be abused by a family member or in an institution or residential or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.

Type of abuse	Definition	Indicators
Physical	May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, squeezing, burning or scalding, poisoning, biting, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm.	<p>There can be a lot of overlap between the signs and symptoms of one type of abuse and another.</p> <p>Indicators of abuse could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unexplained cuts, bruises, marks, abrasions, burns</li> <li>- Unwell</li> <li>- Distress</li> <li>- Self-harm or attempts at suicide</li> <li>- Withdrawn / isolated</li> <li>- Aggressive</li> <li>- Overtly sexual behaviour</li> <li>- Unwashed / clothes unchanged</li> <li>- Bed-wetting</li> <li>- Not taking part in activities</li> <li>- Not eating</li> </ul>
Emotional	Is the persistent emotional maltreatment such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the emotional development of the child or young adult. It may involve conveying to them they are worthless, inadequate, unloved and threatening severe punishment, preventing the child or young adult from taking part in normal activities and/or abandonment. Also verbal abuse, taunting and shouting. It may take the form of text or cyberbullying.	
Sexual	Children and young adults are abused by adults, those in a position of trust, adolescents or other young people who use them to meet their own sexual needs. This involves sexual intercourse, attempted sexual intercourse, fondling, and any penetrative act (oral/anal) intercourse, masturbation and exposure to pornographic material. 'Grooming' a child or vulnerable adult in preparation for abuse, including via the internet, is a form of sexual abuse.	
Neglect	Is persistent failure to meet a child or young adult's basic physical and /or psychological needs. This can include not providing appropriate food, clothes, warmth and medical care or leaving a child unsupervised and failing to protect them from physical or emotional harm.	

## 23. HANDLING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF

If an allegation is made against a member of the Ideas Foundation staff or volunteer mentor, the quick resolution of that allegation is our priority to the benefit of all concerned. At any stage of consideration or investigation, all unnecessary delays should be avoided.

- Any allegation of abuse by a member of staff or volunteer mentor should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead straight away. In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (or where safeguarding concerns relating to actions by the DSL or Deputy DSL), Trustees should be contacted in regard to a safeguarding incident.

- The Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will then immediately launch a full investigation and decide on strategy going forward. The Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead will inform the accused person about the allegations as soon as possible after completion of investigation.
- In response to an allegation, staff or volunteer mentor suspension will be the default option whilst a full investigation is undertaken. If the suspension is deemed appropriate, the reasons and justification should be recorded by the the Ideas Foundation and the individual notified of the reasons.
- The Ideas Foundation will investigate allegations of misconduct in good faith, with the assumption that allegations are made in good faith. Allegations made in good faith that cannot be substantiated will nevertheless remain in IF records as per this policy. Allegations that are found not to have been raised in good faith and are not substantiated, will be removed from personnel records and should not be referred to in employer references.

## 24. OTHER SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Safeguarding covers a range of issues. We should do everything possible to ensure that children feel safe at all times.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money or in some cases simply affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities. Sexual exploitation can take many forms ranging from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for affection or gifts, to serious organised crime by gangs and groups. What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim which increases as the exploitative relationship develops. Sexual exploitation involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation or enticement, including unwanted pressure from peers to have sex, sexual bullying including cyberbullying and grooming. However, it is also important to recognise that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not exhibit any external signs of this abuse.

If you suspect a child is at risk of CSE or that this has already taken place this should be reported to the Safeguarding Lead.

## Female Genital Mutilation. FGM

The UK Government Advice and guidance on FGM states “that FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women.” FGM is a form of abuse that may might affect your mentee. FGM is included in the training of staff and volunteers.

## Prevent

The Ideas Foundation is aware that all organisations working with young people as outlined in the Government’s Prevent Policy have a duty to understand the implications for young people. Prevent is included in the staff and mentor programme training programme.

## 25. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Any complaints about this policy or procedures should be addressed in writing to the Designated Safeguarding Lead with a copy to the Chair of the Trustees Board of the Ideas Foundation.

These can be submitted to the below email addresses:

Chairman: [Ted@ideasfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Ted@ideasfoundation.org.uk)

CEO: [Heather@ideasfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Heather@ideasfoundation.org.uk)

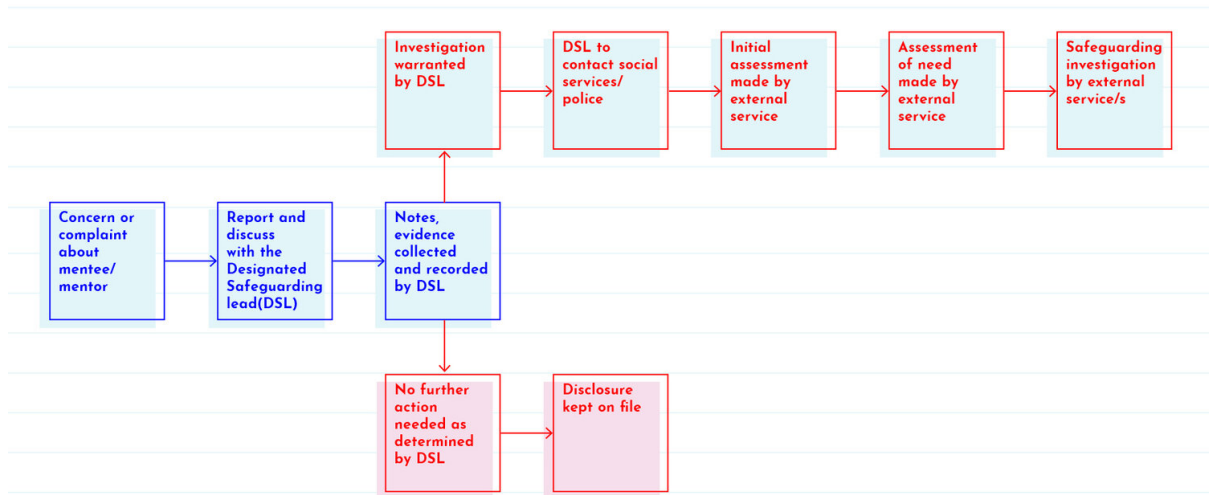
## 26. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

**Contact the NSPCC helpline:** If you're worried about a child, even if you're unsure, contact their professional counsellors for help, advice and support. Call on 0808 800 5000 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).

**Childline:** You can talk to them about anything. No problem is too big or too small. Call them on 0800 1111 or chat to them [online](#).

# Appendix

## 1. Safeguarding Disclosure and Complaints Policy



## 2. Ideas Foundation Mentor's Code of Conduct

As a Mentor it is important that you are aware of the issues surrounding safeguarding. IF has a duty of care to help protect you and the young people you will be working with. The following is IF's Code of Conduct.

Please make sure you read it thoroughly.

### **A mentor should**

- Do what you can to ensure that your mentee is safe.
- Treat everyone equally with the same fairness and respect you would expect to be treated with.
- Respect the participant's background, culture and traditions and be aware certain behaviour may offend his/her beliefs.
- Discourage negative or abusive attitudes or behaviour (e.g. ridicule, racism, swearing, exclusion, bullying).
- Inform young people if their behaviour is inappropriate and escalate this to the programme manager if the behaviour continues
- Be aware that you are a role model for the young people you are working with.
- Meet only in your designated professional locations or public spaces such as co-working spaces, libraries and cafes that do not serve alcohol.
- Always work in open spaces or with the office door open, ensure another member of staff is present nearby
- Avoid unnecessary physical contact with the young people.
- Contact the mentee only with the office/work number, in the absence of work number, use personal.
- Do not use Whatsapp with a mentee under the age of 18
- Avoid using Whatsapp with a mentee over the age of 18
- Be aware that mentees under the age of 18 should not follow a mentor on social media (Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, TikTok) or vice versa. They

can however follow each other on professional sites such as LinkedIn. Mentees over the age of 18 can follow a mentor's social media account if it is a merged work account, but the responsibility is on the mentor to ensure there is no inappropriate content.

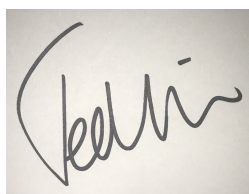
- Never meet or make contact with a young person outside the designated hours and location of the session
- Be aware that if your mentee is under 18 and is meeting someone you've introduced them to, be sure to be present at the meeting (because you are DBS-checked).
- Be aware that if your mentee is under 18 and you're considering inviting them to a professional evening event such as a talk or product launch, please notify the programme manager in advance so that parental consent can be checked.
- Be sure that if there is ever an issue then raise it with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

## MONITORING

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the board and will be updated and amended in the light of emerging legislation, guidance and best practice.

**Agreed by IF Board of Trustees**

**Signed**      Ted Smith

A square image showing a handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'Ted Smith'.

**Date reviewed:**      August 2022