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**Safeguarding Policy: Children, young people and adults at risk**

**Inner Strength Network (hereafter ISN)**

**Vestry Hall**

**338 London Road**

**CR4 3UD**

**1. Policy Context and Statement of Commitment**

**1.1 Policy Context**

Inner Strength Network (ISN) is Community Interest Company (CIC) whichwas set up with the aim of supporting women and girls and their families to overcome difficult moments in their lives. We are committed to gender equality issues working in the community in order to improve women's and girls' aspirations, their physical and emotional health and well-being and to support families who have been placed at a disadvantage, discriminated or faced injustice.

**ISN** makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

**ISN** comes into contact with children and vulnerable adults through the following activities: training, coaching, 1-2-1 support work and events

**1.2 Statement of Commitment**

ISN acknowledges that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and are committed to promoting and protecting the safety and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, irrespective of individual roles and responsibilities.

ISN believes that everyone has the right to protection from all types of abuse, neglect and exploitation without discrimination based on gender, nationality, ethnicity, disability, sexuality/sexual orientation, life choices or religion/belief.

**1.3 Policy Awareness and Communication**

ISN will ensure that all staff, trustees, volunteers and other representatives have a good working knowledge of this policy and associated procedures. They will be invited and encouraged to ask for clarity and guidance on all aspects of this policy and related procedures.

ISN will endeavour to communicate and embed this policy

through the following mechanisms:

* The safeguarding policy and procedures are part of the group induction for all staff and volunteers.
* The policy will be reviewed annually.
* All amendments to the policy will be communicated by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to the staff and volunteers.

**1.4 Policy Scope**

This policy applies to all ISN Trustees, staff and volunteers.

**2. The Legal Framework and Guidance**

**2.1 Statutory Legisaltion**

* The Human Rights Act 1998
* The Mental Capacity Act 2005
* The Health and Social Care Act 2008
* The Equality Act 2010
* The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
* The Care Act 2014
* The Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 (in relation to the Prevent Agenda)
* The Children Act 1989/2004
* The Children and Social Work Act 2017
* The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
* The Children and Families Act 2014
* The Education Act 2002
* The Digital Economy Act 2017
* The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
* Education Act 2011

**Statutory Guidance**

* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
* General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
* Think Family: Think child, think parent, think family

**4. Reference to other organisational policies and procedures**

This policy is complimented by, and should be read in conjunction with the following list of policies and protocols:

* Whistleblowing
* Confidentiality & Information Sharing
* Data Protection (Information &Technology Services)
* Equalities
* Complaints
* Recruitment & Selection Policy
* Code of Conduct

**5.0 Definitions of Safeguarding**

**5.1 Safeguarding Adults**

“Adult safeguarding” is working with adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect. It is an important part of what many public services do, and a key responsibility of local authorities.’[[1]](#footnote-1)

All organisations have a duty to ensure that the welfare of all adults is ensured. As part of this they need to understand when to implement their safeguarding adults reporting procedures.

Safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

* Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
* Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and;
* As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

**Types of harm -** [**https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/**](https://www.anncrafttrust.org/resources/types-of-harm/)

**5.2 Safeguarding Children**

Safeguarding children is a term which is broader than ‘child protection’ and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.[[2]](#footnote-2) Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility and is defined as:

* Protecting children from maltreatment
* Preventing impairment of children’s health and development
* Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
* Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Types of abuse** - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/>

**6.0 Recognising, Responding, Reporting and Recording**

Staff, volunteers and trustees may be required to respond to concerns and allegations of abuse.

**Recording**

Safeguarding concerns will be recorded and stored. According to Data Protection principles, records containing personal information should be:

* adequate, relevant and not excessive for the purpose(s) for which they are held
* accurate and up to date
* only kept for as long as is necessary (Information Commissioner’s Office, 2021).

To keep personal information secure, you should:

* compile and label files carefully
* keep files containing sensitive or confidential data secure and allow access on a ‘need to know’ basis
* keep a log so you can see who has accessed the confidential files, when, and the titles of the files they have used.

ISN will keep an accurate record of:

1. the date and time of the incident/disclosure
2. the date and time of the report
3. the name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details
4. the name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details
5. the names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses
6. the name, age and any other relevant information about the child who is the subject of the
7. concern (including information about their parents or carers and any siblings)
8. what was said or done and by whom
9. any action taken to look into the matter
10. any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
11. the reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant).

**Think Family**

When determining action to be taken by ISN the “Think Family” approach is adopted. ISN recognises the importance of adopting a “Think Family” approach to recognising and responding to abuse. The Think Family initiative was introduced by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in 2008 aimed at supporting families who are experiencing multiple and complex problems, which frequently lead to poor outcomes for children within those families. ISN will ensure that the risk to all family members is considered when assessing safeguarding concerns.

**7.0 Governance**

The board of trustees ISN has collective and ultimate responsibility for all the activities of that organisation, even though operational matters are delegated to an executive team and other staff. They have a duty of care to those involved in or affected by its activities and are required to take reasonable steps to manage the risk of causing harm. The board plays a crucial leadership role in setting the culture, behaviour and priorities of the organisation.

The Trustees of ISN will:

1. Provide a safe and trusted environment.
2. Secure an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding and people protection, so that it is safe for those affected to come forward and to disclose concerns, allegations and incidents with the assurance that they will be handled sensitively, confidentially and appropriately.
3. Be committed to ongoing learning and reflection to continuously improve policies, procedures and practices.
4. Ensure that concerns, allegations and incidents and complaints are handled appropriately, should they arise, and prioritise the safety and dignity of the victims and survivors.
5. Hold those who have been involved in causing harm or pose a risk of harm to account through appropriate disciplinary processes and/or external reporting to relevant authorities.
6. Ensure appropriate transparency so that ISN can be held accountable by regulators, the public in respect of its management of safeguarding and people protection.

In addition, at least one Designated Safeguarding Trustee (DST) is identified who will:

* Be suitably experienced and trained in safeguarding
* Be informed of and contribute to decisions on high-risk cases and maintain oversight of any follow up to help ensure that all risks are appropriately managed
* In conjunction with the DSL, ensure that Trustees are fully informed of safeguarding issues across the organisation and contribute to maintaining safe practice across all our operations.

**8.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

The Trustees of ISN are primarily responsible for all safeguarding policy and procedures. However the trustees delegate oversight and management of these procedures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**Designated Safeguarding contact:**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Maureen Bailey- 07903 737780, maureen@innerstrengthnetwork.com

Chief Executive Officer

**Designated Safeguarding Trustee**

Melanie Monaghan – 07710 497 436, hello@melaniemonaghan.com

Chair

This will ensure safeguarding responsibilities and accountabilities at every level of the organisation.

**9.0 Safer Recruitment**

ISN is committed to a safer recruitment and vetting process for all candidates. Recruitment is managed by the *CEO of ISN*. ISN will ask for references from two previous employers and conduct appropriate background checks, such as DBS, as and when required by law and in accordance with ISN’s recruitment policy.

**10.0 Managing Allegations against a person in a Relationship of Trust**

ISN recognises that those who have responsibility for, authority or influence over children, young people and/or adults at risk are in a ‘relationship of trust’ in relation to the children, young people and/or adults at risk in their care.

It is crucial that staff and volunteers are aware of the power imbalance inherent in their role with children, young people and adults at risk and therefore recognise their responsibility to always maintain professional boundaries. Moreover, they should never use their position for personal advantage or gratification.

Where that person is employed by ISN as a member of staff, a volunteer or a trustee; ISN should invoke disciplinary procedures for employed staff as well as taking safeguarding action below.

The local authority must be contacted within one working day in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children, young people or adult at risk has:

* Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, young person or adult at risk
* Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or adult at risk
* Behaved towards a child, young person or adult at risk in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm, including any concern that may arise from the person’s home / personal life, as well as within their work

ISN should ensure a referral is made to the Disclosure and Barring Service if an employee is found to have caused harm to an individual.

**10.1 A person who works with children**

If the allegation is made about a person who works with children a referral should be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is responsible for the management and oversight of all child safeguarding *allegations made against staff and volunteers* who work with Children.

**10.2 A person who works with adults at risk**

If the allegation is made about a person who works with adults at risk:

A referral should be made to the Local Authority adult safeguarding team. Some Local Authorities have a named person who manages these allegations.

**11.0 Responding to a Non-Recent disclosure of abuse**

ISN understands that abuse may have occurred at any point during an adult's childhood; there is no time limit on reporting these offences.

An alleged perpetrator may continue to present a risk to children, and if the information is not shared, there is potential for children to remain at risk of harm and further abuse. It may also be the case that there are other historical victims.

Therefore, it is important that non-recent disclosures of abuse are treated as any disclosure of abuse and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be notified and reporting procedures followed.

**12.0 Safe Information, Communication and Technology Usage**

ISN are committed to ensuring that staff, volunteers and trustees keep themselves and others safe in their communication with anyone who they come into contact within their ISN role, we will therefore ensure the following is in place:

A clear policy on appropriate internet usage, email and SMS is in place.

ISN will ensure that staff and trustees are trained in understanding digital safety and their professional and personal responsibilities when using this as part of their induction process.

**13.0 Whistleblowing, “Speak Up, Speak Out”**

ISN is committed to the highest possible standards of conduct, openness, honesty and accountability and take any issues of malpractice or wrongdoing very seriously.

We encourage anyone who has serious concerns about any aspect of our work to come forward and voice those concerns and to feel supported when doing so.

All staff can approach the regulatory bodies, the local authority or the police, independently, to discuss any worries they have about abusive acts or services.

They should do this if:

* They have concerns that their safeguarding team, line managers or organisation are not responding to their concerns appropriately or are implicated in the matter
* They fear intimidation and/or have immediate concerns for their own or for a service user’s safety

**14.0 Working with Partners or External Agencies**

We are committed to actively promoting safeguarding within all partnerships and commissioned services. We will demonstrate this by:

* + - Actively communicating our safeguarding policies and procedures to partners and external providers.
    - Assessing the suitability of partners and service providers and the adequacy of their safeguarding and safer recruitment policies and practice.
    - Ensuring that contractual agreements outline respective safeguarding responsibilities.
    - Working together to protect the safety and welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

**15.0 Promoting a Listening Culture**

ISN understands that part of ensuring a safer working environment is creating a culture where all staff, volunteers, trustees and grantees feel able to raise concerns.

ISN has an open and reflective culture that encourages professional curiosity. All staff are supported to raise and discuss any concerns they may have. The designated safeguarding email is also available to staff to raise issues of poor practice or conduct.

**16.0 Confidentiality and Sharing Information**

Safeguarding raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all. In a safeguarding situation, staff are likely to be sharing information that would normally be considered confidential. However, the legal framework is clear in its guidance to ‘co-operate amongst agencies’ and share information, where there is a duty to safeguard people.

Staff are not expected to be experts in recognising abuse, neglect and exploitation. However, we do expect all staff and volunteers to understand their responsibility to report any concern they may have about a child, young person or adult at risk as well as any unsafe practice. It is this awareness that will contribute to a safer culture and environment for all.

With regards to data protection and data sharing under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the sharing of case studies, images and quotes from grant holders and/or their beneficiaries, ISN will:

1. Ask for informed consent about precisely what we intend to use the data for.
2. Consider the ethical considerations as well as laws on data sharing.
3. Consider the emotional impact of asking people to share their stories.

Further information is available on the following external website:

* [Information sharing: advice for practitioners (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf)

**17.0 Workforce Development and Training**

ISN staff will receive safeguarding training, enables them to feel more confident in their safeguarding responsibilities.

Future staff members will receive internal safeguarding training on induction will be enrolled on external training within six months of joining ISN. Staff are made aware that any safeguarding concerns should be reported to ISN's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| All Staff | Understanding Safeguarding Standards |
| Designated Safeguarding Leads | Update on current legislation and review of Safeguarding Standards |
| Trustees | Understanding Trustees Responsibilities (in accordance with Charity Commission) |

Any new initiatives or activities will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to determine whether any additional safeguarding training is needed and who will ensure that appropriate training is undertaken before involvement in such activities.

**18. Safeguarding Support and Supervision**

Safeguarding supervision and support is essential for all staff with safeguarding responsibilities. Staff should feel confident that they are supported in their safeguarding decisions and have the right training and professional development through regular supervision and opportunities.

**19. Quality Assurance**

**19.1 Internal Safeguarding arrangements**

ISN will regularly assess the implementation and effectiveness of this Policy which will be reviewed annually or whenever there are changes in legislation, new or revised government or statutory guidance, or after dealing with any safeguarding concern. The most current version of this Policy will always be available to view or download.

**20. Appendices**

**Appendix 1** ISN Reporting Procedure

**Appendix 1**

**Procedure what to do if you have concerns about a child or adult at risk:**

Concern may arise from observations of the child (e.g. injury, behaviour, appearance and nature of play or work produced) **or** as a result of something said by the child or ault at risk, another child **or** an adult.

**Do not delay:**

1. Tell the **Designated Safeguarding Lead** - as soon as you can. See emergency contact numbers attached to this policy and procedure.

Early referral gives more time to help before the situation becomes severe or serious. When necessary, early referral gives more time for others to protect the child or adult at risk.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead may consult with the Local Authority, Social Services and Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.**

In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead contact the **Designated Safeguarding Trustee**.

1. **Make written notes -** as soon as you can, write down your concerns and record the facts accurately. Be clear when you are expressing an opinion and what your opinion is based on.

**Information to be recorded:**

* the date and time of the incident/disclosure
* the date and time of the report
* the name and role of the person to whom the concern was originally reported and their contact details
* the name and role of the person making the report (if this is different to the above) and their contact details
* the names of all parties who were involved in the incident, including any witnesses
* the name, age and any other relevant information about the child or adult at risk who is the subject of the concern (including information about their parents or carers and any siblings if a child)
* what was said or done and by whom
* any action taken to look into the matter
* any further action taken (such as a referral being made)
* the reasons why the organisation decided not to refer those concerns to a statutory agency (if relevant).

**These notes must be given to the Designated safeguarding Lead immediately and will help to ensure accuracy in recalling events.**

# 4. **Remember**

If in doubt, consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Do not ignore concerns, even if these are vague. **Your first responsibility is to the child or adult at risk.**

**5. Contact with the family of a child.**

Before speaking to the child's family, you should talk to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead**, who may consult outside the bounds of **ISN.**

In cases where a physical injury causes concern, it may be appropriate to discuss this with the parent or carer. If the explanation suggests the injury was non-accidental (or a failure to protect the child from harm), the parent or carer should be informed of the need to refer the matter to Social Services.

In cases of possible neglect or emotional abuse, the concern is likely to have built up over a period of time. There may have been discussion with the family about sources of help (e.g. Social Services, NSPCC), but if concerns persist, there must be an immediate referral to Social Services Referral and Assessment Team.

Where there are suspicions of sexual abuse, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will seek immediate advice from the Social Services Department before discussing the matter with the family.

1. **Important Contacts**

**Designated Safeguarding Lead**

Maureen Bailey- 07903 737780, maureen@innerstrengthnetwork.com

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Designated Safeguarding Trustee**

Melanie Monaghan – 07710 497 436, hello@melaniemonaghan.com

**Chair**

## **Safeguarding Adults**

## **First Response Team Merton**

**Telephone:**020 8545 3983/020 8545 4388

**Email:**[safeguarding.adults@merton.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.adults@merton.gov.uk)

**Out of Hours (anytime outside of Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and on Bank Holidays) call:**08456 189762

**Safeguarding Children**

Children and Families Hub  
Children, Schools and Families Department  
12th Floor, Merton Civic Centre  
London Road  
Morden  
SM4 5DX

Telephone: **020 8545 4226** or **020 8545 4227**(out of hours: 020 8770 5000)  
Fax: 020 8545 4204

You do not have to give your name and your conversation will be treated confidentially.

You may also contact us by email: [candfhub@merton.gov.uk](mailto:candfhub@merton.gov.uk)

# **Managing allegations against adults who work with children (LADO)**

**Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): John Shelley – Office Hours – Monday-Friday – 9:00am-5:00pm. 0208 545 3187**

**LADO Business Support Officer: Jody Khan 020 8545 3179**

**Other useful contacts**

[Merton Domestic Violence One Stop Shop](https://www2.merton.gov.uk/community-living/communitysafety/safermertondomesticviolence/domesticviolenceonestopshop.htm)

The one stop shop is a confidential service for people experiencing domestic violence or abuse in Merton.

Open Monday from 9.30am – 12.30pm (closed Bank Holidays)   Morden Baptist Church, Crown Lane, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5BL For more information please telephone: 07852 155945 or 07950 138932

[Elder Abuse](http://www.elderabuse.org.uk/) website  
0808 808 8141

[Merton CCG website](http://www.mertonccg.nhs.uk/Pages/default.aspx)  
020 3668 1221

[Care Quality Commission](http://www.cqc.org.uk/)  
This organisation investigates (in conjunction with Social Services and/or Health) incidents of alleged abuse within residential and nursing homes, home care agencies and nurse agencies  
Telephone: 03000 616161

**I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THIS POLICY----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------**

1. The Care Act 2014 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Childrens Act 1989 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)