APPEER Connecting autistic girls and women

# SAFEGUARDING ADULTS POLICY (V1.3)

THIS POLICY MUST BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH **APPEER'S SAFEGUARDING ADULTS GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES** AND **ALL APPEER POLICIES**, WHICH ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE. IF YOU CANNOT ACCESS OUR WEBSITE, PLEASE TELEPHONE US ON 07861 696542 OR EMAIL **SARAH@APPEER.ORG.UK** TO REQUEST COPIES TO BE SENT TO YOU.

In this policy, the following definitions apply:

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| "APPEER CIC " | Appeer Community Interest Company ("We, our, us") |
| "Session" | An activity session, talk or other event, run either by Appeer or a third-party service provider contracted by Appeer, whether one-off or as part of a Programme |
| "Online Session" | Activity Sessions, talks or group meetings utilising the Zoom or other remote online meeting platform, either delivered by Appeer or a third party service provider contracted by Appeer. |
| "Programme" | A package of Activity Sessions delivered during a set period (including online Sessions), taking place at predetermined times and locations, and run either by Appeer or a third-party service provider contracted by Appeer. |
| "Representative" | A caregiver (legal guardian) of the Participant |
| "Adult" | A person aged 18 or over |
| "Safeguarding" | Protecting adults at risk from maltreatment; preventing impairment of adults' at risk health or development; ensuring that adults at risk are in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all adults at risk to have the best life chances. Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and/or adults at risk wherever possible. |
| "Adult at risk" | Within this policy we use the definition of an "adult at risk" according to the Care Act 2014.<br>a) Where a local authority has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there)<br>b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs),<br>c) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, and |

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| | d) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. |
| "Abuse" | "Cruelty or wilfully assault, ill-treatment (whether physical or otherwise), neglect, abandonment" or causing any of those things to occur "in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health (whether the suffering or injury is of a physical or psychological nature)." (www.bond.org.uk) |

**1. Policy Statement**

Appeer CIC recognises the right of every individual to stay safe and believes vulnerable adults should never experience abuse or neglect of any kind. It understands that disabled adults are at a particular risk of abuse and neglect. Appeer is committed to Safeguarding Adults in line with national legislation and relevant national and local guidelines.

This extends to recognising and reporting harm experienced anywhere, including within our activities, within other organised community or voluntary activities, within the community, in the person's home and any care setting. Appeer believes everyone has the right to live free from abuse or neglect regardless of age, ability or disability, sex, race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, marital or gender status.

Our unwavering commitment is to foster a safe, positive environment and an open, listening culture. We strive to create a space where individuals can voice their concerns without fear of retribution, ensuring everyone feels secure and protected.

- We understand that safeguarding is not just a duty, but a shared responsibility. We are committed to empowering each individual to prevent abuse and neglect, thereby safeguarding the welfare of all adults.
- We recognise that health, well-being, ability, disability, and need for care and support can affect a person's resilience.
- We recognise that some people experience barriers, for example, when communicating, raising concerns, or seeking help.
- We recognise that these factors can vary at different points in people's lives.
- We understand the importance of a legal framework in safeguarding adults with care and support needs and we are committed to acting in accordance with the relevant safeguarding adult legislation and local statutory procedures, ensuring our compliance and your confidence in our actions.

**This policy is underpinned by the following legislation:**

- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Mental Capacity Act 2005

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Disclosure and Barring Service 2013
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- UK GDPR

**2. The purpose of this Policy is to:**

Demonstrate the commitment of Appeer to safeguarding adults and to ensure that everyone involved in Appeer is aware of:

- The legislation, policy and procedures for safeguarding adults.
- Their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults.
- What to do or who to speak to if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult within the organisation.

**3. Scope of this policy:**

This safeguarding adults policy and associated procedures apply to all individuals involved in Appeer CIC, including Board members, staff, volunteers, and contractors, and to all concerns about adults' safety while participating in our organisation, its activities, and the wider community. We expect any partner organisations, including for example; suppliers and sponsors to adopt and demonstrate their commitment to the principles and practice as set out in the Appeer **Safeguarding Adults Policy** and associated procedures and guidance.

**4. Principles of Safeguarding adults**

Appeer CIC's actions are guided by the principles of adult safeguarding. We ensure that any action taken is prompt and proportionate, always including and respecting the voice of the adult concerned. This commitment to safeguarding is at the core of our operations and will continue to guide our actions in the future.

Our commitment to safeguarding adults is firmly rooted in the essential principles established by The Care Act 2014 and the Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) framework. These guidelines ensure that the individual's needs and wishes are at the forefront of all safeguarding efforts. At APPEER CIC, we strive to make this vision a reality by ensuring:

**Empowerment -** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

**Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

**Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

**Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need

**Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

**Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

## 5. Our Commitments

APPEER CIC is committed to best safeguarding practice and to uphold the rights of all adults to live a life free from harm from abuse, exploitation and neglect.

**We are committed to creating a culture of zero-tolerance of harm to adults which necessitates:**

- the recognition of adults at risk and the circumstances which may increase risk
- knowing how adult abuse, exploitation or neglect manifests itself;
- being willing and able to report safeguarding concerns
- ensuring that activities are delivered in a way which keeps all adults safe

## 6. Recognising the signs of abuse:

Employees, trustees, and volunteers are well-placed to identify abuse. An adult may say or do things that let you know something is wrong. This may come as a disclosure, complaint, or expression of concern. Everyone within the organisation should understand what to do and where to go to get help, support, and advice.

### 6.1 Types of Abuse:

**The Care Act 2014** defines the following ten areas of abuse. These are not exhaustive but are a guide to behaviour that may lead to a safeguarding enquiry. This includes:

- **Physical abuse** - Including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Domestic violence/ Domestic abuse** - This could be any of the indicators of abuse relating to physical, psychological/emotional, sexual or financial but by a person with whom you have a close family or intimate relationship such as a partner, child, parent.
- **Sexual abuse** - Including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography. Witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological or emotional abuse** - Including threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or material abuse** - Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse of misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern slavery** - Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and those who coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

- **Discriminatory abuse** - Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment because you are, or are perceived to be different due to race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- **Organisational or institutional abuse** - Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example or in relation to care provided in one's own home. This may range from one off incidents to long-term ill treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes or practices within an organisation.

**6.2 Neglect or acts of omission** - Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

**6.3 Self-neglect** - This covers a wide range of behavior, neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. There is a difference between what constitutes a safeguarding incident that requires a statutory response and an incident that is rooted in concern for someone's general wellbeing.

**6.4 Radicalisation to Terrorism**:
The Government through its PREVENT programme has highlighted how some adults may be vulnerable to exploitation and radicalisation and involvement in terrorism. Signs and indicators of radicalisation may include:

- Being in contact with extremist recruiters.
- Articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders.
- Accessing violent extremist websites, especially those with a social networking element.
- Possessing violent extremist literature.
- Using extremist narratives to explain personal disadvantage.
- Justifying the use of violence to solve societal issues.
- Joining extremist organisations.
- Significant changes to appearance and/or behaviour.

**7. Reporting Concerns:**
Any employee, director or volunteer who becomes aware that an adult is or is at risk of, being abused or radicalised must raise the matter immediately with their line manager/or with the organisation's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
Lindsay Prior
Email: DSL@Appeer.org.uk
Tel: 07476 156 807

Early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response where there are emerging concerns. To ensure effective safeguarding arrangements no one should assume that someone else will do it.

You will find full guidance on the procedures for reporting and managing concerns in our **Safeguarding procedures and guidance available on our All Staff Hub.**

**Where a report has been made:**
**APPEER CIC will:**

- Inform the adult of the action we propose to take.
- Seek their agreement for any referral.
- Ensure that they are kept informed about what will happen next, so they can be reassured about what to expect.
- Endeavour to ensure that they are safe and supported before proceeding with any other action.
- Inform the adult if (APPEER CIC) are planning to seek advice from or report concerns to an external agency.

In most situations there will not be an immediate threat and the decision about protecting the person with safeguarding needs will be taken in consultation with themselves and through referral to Adult Social Care.

**If the adult requires immediate protection from harm, contact the emergency services.**

**8. Safe Recruitment & Selection:**

Appeer is committed to safe employment and safe recruitment practices, that reduce the risk of harm to adults with care and support needs from people unsuitable to work with them. APPEER CIC has policies and procedures that cover the recruitment of all employees and volunteers which you can find in your employee handbook and our **Safer Recruitment Policy.**

**9. Social Media:**

All employees and volunteers should be aware of internal **ICT, E Safety, Social Media & Virtual Support Policy procedures** and **the code of conduct for behaviour towards the adults we support.**

**10. Training and Awareness:**

Appeer CIC will ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is available to its directors, employees, volunteers and any relevant persons linked to the organisation who requires it (e.g. contractors) For employees and volunteers, this will include a comprehensive induction plan and subsequent refresher training throughout the year. Appeer will provide managers with regular group supervision with the DSL and ad-hoc opportunities to advance their knowledge and practice for example; self-harm, prevent training, mental health first aid. Information about our supervision and performance management guidance can be found in our supervision policy and **for all employees who are working or volunteering with adults at risk this requires them as a minimum to have awareness training that enables them to:**

- Understand what safeguarding is and their role in Safeguarding Adults.
- Recognise an adult potentially in need of safeguarding and take action.

- Understand how to report a safeguarding alert.
- Understand dignity and respect when working with individuals.
- Have thorough knowledge of the safeguarding adults policy.

Each individual employee and volunteer will find specific information about their role and responsibilities, induction and training information within their employment contract and employee handbook.

**11. Mental Capacity:**

The Mental Capacity Act Mental is about whether an individual has the capacity to make a specific decision at a specific time and if they are unable, because they lack capacity under the defined terms.
This includes not being able to:

- Understand information given to them about a particular decision
- Retain that information long enough to be able to make the decision
- Weigh up the information available to make the decision
- Communicate their decision.

Employees or volunteer should refer to the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice, for further guidance and information.
**https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-capacity-act-code-of-practice.**
Where appropriate APPEER will involve an advocate if the person lacks capacity to make decisions about a safeguarding concern.

**12. Confidentiality and Information Sharing:**

Appeer expects all employees, volunteers and trustees to maintain confidentiality. Information will only be shared in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) and Data Protection 2018. Employees and volunteers will find further guidance with their employee handbook and internal GDPR and Data Privacy Policy.

However, information should always be shared with the relevant Local Authority if an adult is deemed to be at risk of harm or they pose a risk of harm to another. You should contact the police if they are in immediate danger, or a crime has been committed.

**13. Recording information regarding safeguarding concerns:**

A written record must be kept for any concern regarding an adult with safeguarding needs by using our internal safeguarding concern record.

Each record must include;

- details of the person/s involved
- the nature of the concern
- the actions taken
- decision made and why they were made
- signed and dated

All records must be securely and confidentially stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

**14. Whistleblowing:**

Appeer is committed to ensuring that employees and volunteers who in good faith whistle-blow in the public interest, and will be protected from reprisals and victimisation. Employees should refer to the **Whistleblowing policy** for full guidance on how the policy is implemented and guidance on raising concern in our **Safeguarding adults procedures and guidance.**

**APPEER CIC will further ensure that:**

- Everyone involved with Appeer is aware of the safeguarding adult procedures and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare or wellbeing of an adult.
- Any concern that an adult is not safe is taken seriously, responded to promptly, and followed up in line with Appeer Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.
- The well-being of those at risk of harm will be put first and the adult actively supported to communicate their views and the outcomes they want to achieve. Those views and wishes will be respected and supported unless there are overriding reasons not to (see the Safeguarding adults procedures).
- Any actions taken will respect the rights and dignity of all those involved and be proportionate to the risk of harm.
- Confidential, detailed and accurate records of all safeguarding concerns are maintained and securely stored in line with our Data Protection Policy and Procedures.
- Appeer acts in accordance with best practice advice, for example National Governing Bodies.
- Appeer will cooperate with the Police and the relevant Local Authorities in taking action to safeguard an adult.
- All Board members, staff, officials and volunteers understand their role and responsibility for safeguarding adults and have completed and are up to date with safeguarding adult training and learning opportunities appropriate for their role.
- Appeer uses safe recruitment practices and continually assesses the suitability of volunteers and staff to prevent the employment/deployment of unsuitable individuals in this organisation and within the sporting community.
- Appeer shares information about anyone found to be a risk to adults with the appropriate bodies. For example: Disclosure and Barring Service, Services, Police, Local Authority/Social Services.
- When planning activities and events Appeer includes an assessment of, and risk to, the safety of all adults from abuse and neglect and designates a person who will be in attendance as a safeguarding lead for that event.
- Actions taken under this policy are reviewed by the Board and senior management team on an annual basis.
- This policy, related policies (see below) and the Safeguarding Adults Procedures are reviewed no less than on a yearly basis and whenever there are changes in relevant legislation and/or government guidance as

required by the Local Safeguarding Board, and/or National Governing Bodies and or as a result of any other significant change or event.

| Change record | | | | |
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| **Date** | **Author** | **Version** | **Page/s** | **Reason for change** |
| 19th December 2024 | Annaliese Boucher | 1.1 | N/A | N/A |
| 19th December 2025 | Annaliese Boucher | 1.2 | Role change | N/A |
| 16th October 2026 | Annaliese Boucher | 1.3 | Clarifications – Monitoring and reporting | As mentioned |