

# SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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*Safety for Religious Guidance*



# Islamic Centre of England

## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Approved by	Board of Trustees		
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# 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The aim of this policy is to:

- Transparently inform and advise members of staff, worshippers, parents, carers, guardians and other stakeholders as to the Islamic Centre of England’s (“The Centre”) responsibilities towards the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults;
- To ensure that everyone has a clear understanding as to the understanding of this policy, its applicability, and its application.

1.2 The Centre follows the procedures as per The Local Authority’s Safeguarding Partnership framework and the Safeguarding Children Board which highlight the roles and responsibilities of all service providers within the Borough and their duties towards children and vulnerable adults.

1.3 This policy ought to be read in conjunction with:

- HM Government’s ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ (July 2018- updated 21.02.2019);
- London Child Protection Procedures (5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2017- updated 31.03.2020);
- HM Government’s ‘Safeguarding Policy: Protecting Vulnerable Adults’ (01.12.2015- updated 04.07.2017);

1.4 At the outset, The Centre, its staff, and associates are duty bound, whether under this policy or otherwise, to report any and all matters which *may* be classed as safeguarding concerns. This may include, but is not limited to, cases of:

- Abuse;
- Coercion;
- Neglect;
- Unwarranted conduct; and
- Threatening behaviour.

1.5 The Centre explicitly acknowledges that those associated with it are in a unique position in observing any of the above and should always err on the side of caution and report such concerns, irrespective of any evidential concerns. The Centre will then take the necessary and relevant steps in recording such concerns which may include making a referral to the Police, Local Authority, or other partner agencies.

1.6 The Centre seeks to establish the most inclusive environment where all service users feel safe and secure whilst visiting. In particular, staff members of The Centre should ensure that it is a welcoming and warm environment for all.

1.7 This Policy also applies to those members of staff and associates of The Centre who are suspected or accused of perpetrating any level of abuse. The following responsibilities are adopted by The Centre:

- Members of staff and associates should be aware as to the signs of any safeguarding concerns and should also be aware as to their responsibilities on recording and reporting such concerns such as to whom and by what timeframe;
- Members of staff and associates should be aware that any concerns should be recorded on The Centre's confidential records, and reported to The Local Authority's Social Care / Safeguarding Teams as well as The Metropolitan Police's Child and Adult Safeguarding Officers;
- The Centre's Designated Safeguarding Officer must ensure that all safeguarding concerns make their way to those external agencies such as The Local Authority or The Police, and must ensure that any follow-up action by The Centre is conducted in a thorough and timely manner;
- The Centre must ensure that all staff members and associates receive the appropriate safeguarding training, with refresher training provided where necessary;
- Parents, guardians, and carers should be informed about this policy and any updates including cases where referrals to the relevant partner agency ought to be made;

## 2. DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (DSO)

2.1 The Centre's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is **Mr. Mir Abbas Hussain**. It is the duty of The DSO to ensure that:

- This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is strictly understood and adhered to by all Members of staff and associates of The Centre.
- All Members of staff and associates receive adequate Safeguarding training which includes conducting supervisions
- There is a very good and close partnership working relationship with agencies such as The Local Authority and The Police;

- He actively liaises with the relevant partner agency concerning any safeguarding concerns The Centre may have;
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- Accurate records of any safeguarding concerns are kept in a safe and secure place and marked as ‘STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL’;
- He submits any reports and information requested by external agencies such as The Local Authority and The Police around any Child Protection or Adult Safeguarding concerns in a timely manner;
- Members of staff and associates of The Centre closely monitor those children / vulnerable adults who have been identified as being at risk;
- Guidance to parents, guardians, and carers around receiving the relevant support is provided;
- That this policy is regularly monitored and, where relevant, updated.

### 3. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

3.1 If any member of staff or associate is concerned about a child or vulnerable adult as per this policy, he or she must report their concerns to The DSO as soon as is practicable. In cases of a risk of immediate harm, a referral must be made to The Local Authority and The Police’s Safeguarding Teams which can be made directly, and by anybody, meaning they need not go through the DSO first.

3.2 If a report is submitted to those such as the Police, Action Fraud, or The National Crime Agency, members of staff or associates The DSO should also make “a serious incident report” to The Charity Commission by completing the following online report form:

<https://ccforms.charitycommission.gov.uk/reporting-or-updating-a-serious> [For further guidance see <https://gov.uk/guidance/how-to-report-a-serious-incident-in-your-charity>

3.3 To report a general concern, members of staff and associates must record their concerns in writing and address it to The DSO. These should highlight as much detail as possible surrounding the concern (including names of individuals, descriptions, dates and times of incidents), and must be signed and dated.

3.4 Following on from this, The DSO may deem it necessary to report these concerns to The Local Authority, The Police, or make a referral to The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

3.5 The Centre will ensure that parents, guardians, and carers are notified of any safeguarding concerns, except where there is a real risk of:

- Further endangerment to the child or adult on whose behalf the referral is being made;
- Hindering the integrity of any evidence which may be relied upon; or
- Any alleged perpetrator becoming aware of the allegations which would hinder any investigation.

3.6 All members of staff and associates will have regular training on areas relating to Safeguarding, which will include:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding;
- The Safeguarding of vulnerable adults;
- Legal and procedural changes to safeguarding (ongoing);
- The signs of abuse (which covers: FGM, trafficking, exploitation, child sexual exploitation, risks of extremism and radicalisation, domestic violence, internet safety, forced marriage, and gender equality).

## 4. WHEN MUST ONE BE CONCERNED?

4.1 Abuse can occur under a plethora of different categories and often occurs where the victim knows the abuser. The abuser could be a parent, guardian, carer, sibling, relative, minder, friend, teacher, etc.

4.2 Whilst there is not an exhaustive list of what may be deemed to be a safeguarding concern, members of staff and associates should pay particular attention to the following:

- Signs of injury which are not typical or common;
- Frequency of unexplained injuries or cases where explanations to injuries are conflicting in nature;
- Exhibiting significant changes in behaviour or exhibiting behaviour which is not appropriate for the age;
- The disclosure of an experience concerning an event of significant harm.

## 5. RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURE

5.1 If a child or vulnerable adult discloses that they have been abused in any way, the member of staff or associate should:

- Listen to what is being said in an empathetic manner;
- Accept what is being reported;
- Allow the child or vulnerable adult to talk freely;
- Impress that reporting the matter was the right and appropriate thing to do;
- Not to promise that the matter will be kept in strict confidence;
- Ask open questions and never leading questions;
- Explain what will happen next, including to whom the matter must be escalated to.

## 6. RECORD KEEPING

6.1 When a child or vulnerable adult makes a disclosure, the member of staff or associate should:

- Make notes as soon as possible after the disclosure and in any event, not unreasonably delay in the making of notes;
- To maintain the original written report in a safe and accessible location;
- Record the date, time, location, events, and detail of the disclosure and paying particular attention to the exact words mentioned and locations of any injuries;

## 7. SUPPORTING MEMBERS OF STAFF AND ASSOCIATES

7.1 The Centre acknowledges that dealing with cases of abuse and safeguarding concerns is likely to be a stressful experience. Members of staff and associates should speak with a member of the management team for further assistance and support. The Centre will seek to signpost / refer members of staff and associates to other organisations that can offer specialist support and assistance.

## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1 Dealing with child protection and safeguarding matters can indeed raise question marks concerning confidentiality. All members of staff and associates must understand and appreciate that there is a continuing duty to report and share appropriate information concerning the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. It must also understand that the relevant bodies- such as The Local Authority and The Police- are statutorily required to investigate such matters.

8.2 Should a child or vulnerable adult confide in a member of staff or associate of The Centre and requests that the information be kept a secret, it is very important that the member of staff or associate advises the child or vulnerable adult that they are under a strict duty to report matters to the relevant agency / body **so as to ensure their safety**. The member of staff and associate must inform the child or vulnerable adult, however, that they will only disclose this information to those who are required to know, such as a Social Worker or Police Officer.

8.3 Records should be kept in the locked cabinet within The Centre's office and marked as 'Strictly Confidential'.

## 9. EVALUATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

9.1 This policy will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that it is fully compliant with the relevant law and procedures and serves its purpose as diligently as possible.

9.2 Any questions, queries, or comments concerning this policy should be addressed to The Designated Safeguarding Officer.