



# Close-Knit CIC Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and Child Protection Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, vulnerable adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Close-Knit Families. This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff associated with Close-Knit
- The design and implementation of Close-Knit's programmes and activities
- Harm that is disclosed to Close-Knit staff whilst in an official capacity

The policy lays out the commitments made by Close-Knit, and informs staff of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under Close-Knit's Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy<sup>1</sup>
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by or disclosed to Close-Knit.

## What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect<sup>2</sup>

In our sector, we understand it to mean protecting people, including children and at risk adults, from harm that arises from coming into contact with our staff or programmes.

Safeguarding means taking all reasonable steps to prevent harm, exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from

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<sup>1</sup> Some NGOs are now including workplace bullying and harassment in their safeguarding portfolio, as it relates to harm caused by coming into contact with our staff or programmes. However accompanying procedures for dealing with workplace bullying and harassment are likely to be different, due to legal and statutory differences in handling workplace incidents

<sup>2</sup> NHS 'What is Safeguarding? Easy Read' 2011

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**Next review: September 2025**

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that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur as outlined in the Children Act 1989 as amended 2004, Care Act 2014, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Protection of Freedoms Bill 2011.

## Policy Statement

Close-Knit believes that everyone we meet, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Close-Knit will not tolerate abuse or exploitation by staff.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding and adult safeguarding. These key areas of safeguarding may have different policies and procedures associated with them including the following:

- Code of Conduct
- Anti Bullying and Harassment policy
- Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblower) policy
- Complaints Policy
- Procedures for reporting and responding to safeguarding concerns
- Procedures for safeguarding in staff recruitment

Close-Knit commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

## Prevention

### Close-Knit responsibilities

Close-Knit will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with Close-Knit. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated

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- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff.
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organization.
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

## Staff responsibilities

Close-Knit staff must not harm any adult or child in any way and always follow the staff code of conduct.

Close-Knit staff must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since these are based on inherently unequal power dynamics

Additionally, Close-Knit staff are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by a Close-Knit staff member to the appropriate staff member
- Work with other professionals to share information where relevant to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This includes reporting any safeguarding concerns to the relevant body.

## Reports

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

Any staff reporting concerns or complaints through formal whistleblowing channels (or if they request it) will be protected by Close-Knit's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy.

Close-Knit will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

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## How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or line manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or their line manager (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern) they may report to the Charlotte Stevens trustee with the responsibility for safeguarding – Charlotte Stevens 07720344500  
Designated safeguarding officer – Beth Pearson - 07815785627

## Response

Close-Knit will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations (see Safeguarding Procedure).  
Close-Knit will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.  
Close-Knit will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff. Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

## Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times according to Close-Knit Data Protection Policy.

## Glossary of Terms

### Beneficiary of Assistance

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

### Child

A person who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

### Harm

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

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**Survivor**

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

**Abuse**

A violation of a person's physical, emotional or mental integrity by any other person.

**Vulnerable adult**

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

**Staff**

A person who works for or is contracted to work or volunteers on behalf of Close-Knit CIC.

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**Next review: September 2025**

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