

D3.5: Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults - Policy, Procedures and Guidance

1. Preamble

'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2015), HM Government statutory guidance, defines safeguarding as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

This policy applies to both children and vulnerable adults as defined below. The actions that we take to prevent harm, to promote wellbeing, create safe environments; educate on rights, respect and responsibilities, and respond to specific issues and vulnerabilities all form part of the safeguarding responsibilities of the organisation.

1.1. Legislation and Guidance

The following legislation and guidance documents have been consulted in order to develop and update this safeguarding policy:

- Revisiting Safeguarding Practice, 2022
- Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) guidance on 'Fair Treatment of Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances', 2023
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, July 2018 (with 2022 updates)
- Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services to Children, Young People, Parents and Carers, 2015
- The Prevent Duty, 2015
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 0-25 Years, 2014
- Care Act, 2014
- Children and Families Act, 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act, 2012
- Equality Act, 2010
- The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations, 2006
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act, 2006
- The Children Act, 2004
- Sexual Offences Act, 2003
- The Children Act, 1989
- Human Rights Act, 1998
- Data Protection Act, 1998

1.2. Aims

- To provide Hodan staff, volunteers and Management Committee members with the framework to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults, and in doing so, to ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities.
- To ensure consistent good practice at all levels of the organisation.
- To demonstrate our commitment to protecting children and vulnerable adults against all forms of abuse, harassment and victimization
- To protect staff, volunteers, Management Committee members and service users against serious and imminent threats to public health, including the 2019 novel coronavirus (Covid-19).

1.3. Definitions

‘Child’ is defined for the purposes of this policy as a person under the age of 18.

‘Vulnerable adult’ is defined for the purposes of this policy as a person aged 18 or over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- 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

‘Abuse’ includes physical abuse, emotional / psychological abuse, sexual abuse, domestic abuse, financial abuse, and neglect (including self-neglect in the case of vulnerable adults) as defined in section 9 of this policy.

Characteristics of vulnerability: The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) treats vulnerability as a spectrum of risk, defining vulnerable customers as those who are especially susceptible to harm because of their personal circumstances, particularly when a firm is not acting with appropriate levels of care. As they explain: *‘All customers are at risk of becoming vulnerable, but this risk is increased by having characteristics of vulnerability.’*

For the purposes of this policy, we will treat the term ‘customers in vulnerable circumstances’ as interchangeable with ‘vulnerable adults’, ‘characteristics of vulnerability’ as synonymous with ‘needs for care and support’, and ‘susceptible to harm’ as equivalent to ‘at risk of abuse or neglect’. This has the effect of broadening the scope of our duty of care to ‘vulnerable adults’ beyond that which might normally be expected in a safeguarding policy. It includes, for example, people with:

- Poor English language skills, or poor literacy and numeracy in their mother tongue
- Social isolation
- Mental health difficulties, sensory disabilities, or neurodiversity
- Lowered resilience to cope with financial and emotional shocks, e.g., because of trauma, stressful life events, or new caring responsibilities

We recognize that a customer may move in and out of these categories at different times in their life and that characteristics of vulnerability can be intersectional. For example, an

autistic person who is experiencing social isolation may have different needs from someone who is autistic but not isolated, or isolated but not autistic.

2. Ethos

Hodan Somali Community is committed to an ethos and environment that will help vulnerable service users to feel safe, secure and respected; encourage them to talk openly; and enable them to feel confident that they will be listened to.

We will support the welfare and safety of all service users, especially those with protected characteristics, additional needs and vulnerabilities, by:

- Maintaining the welfare of service users as our paramount concern, with particular attention to those who might need additional support
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that service users have a range of appropriate people to approach if they don't feel safe
- Promoting a positive, supportive, neutral and secure environment where service users are valued, listened to, believed, and heard in their own right
- Building a culture of learning and continuous improvement around equality and diversity – constantly asking ourselves how we can do more to understand the needs of service users, reduce discrimination (whether direct or indirect) and bias (whether conscious or unconscious) within Hodan, and keep all service users safe from abuse, harassment, and victimization
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse in children and vulnerable adults and are aware of procedures and lines of communication
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies
- In the case of adult safeguarding, taking a holistic, intersectional, empowering, and person-centred approach that focuses on people's assets and strengths, supports them to make their own decisions, and prioritises informed consent

We will know if we are effective in our safeguarding through the following evidence:

- Children and vulnerable adults using Hodan's services, and whose parents and/or carers use Hodan's services, feel protected and safe.
- Staff and volunteers are proactive and clearly know the procedures involved when there is a concern about the welfare and safety of a child or vulnerable adult
- Staff and volunteers understand and enact the measures that they need to take in order to protect themselves and service users against Covid-19
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead plays an effective role in pursuing concerns and protecting children and vulnerable adults
- Written records are kept securely and shared appropriately
- Safeguarding concerns are shared with the relevant Local Authority

2.1. Principles and values

Hodan Somali Community believes that a child or vulnerable adult should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the well-being of all

children and vulnerable adults who use our services, or whose parents or carers use our services, and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects them. Safeguarding, which includes protection against avoidable risks to health from Covid-19 and prevention of financial abuse and exploitation, is everyone's responsibility.

We recognise that all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, sexual orientation, racial heritage, religious belief (or the lack of it), pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, have a statutory right to equal protection from all forms of harm or abuse. We also recognise that some people are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, pre-existing health conditions, communication needs or other issues.

Hodan takes a user-centred approach to safeguarding, ensuring that the needs of staff and volunteers are not placed above those of service users, and recognising that children and vulnerable adults need:

- **Vigilance:** to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- **Understanding and action:** to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- **Stability:** to be able to develop an ongoing stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- **Respect:** to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- **Information and engagement:** to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- **Explanation:** to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions, and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- **Support:** to be supported in their own right, as well as a member of their family
- **Advocacy:** to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views
- **Protection:** to be protected against all forms of abuse and discrimination and the right to special protection and help if a refugee.

Anyone working with children and vulnerable adults should see and speak to them; listen to what they say; take their views seriously; and work with them and their families collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs. Special provision should be put in place to support dialogue with children and vulnerable adults who have communication difficulties, unaccompanied children, refugees and those who are victims of modern slavery and/or trafficking.

3. Policy Statement

We will seek to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Acknowledging and honouring the needs listed above
- Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for children and vulnerable adults, a Deputy Safeguarding Lead, and a lead Trustee for safeguarding
- Adopting safeguarding procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of the circumstances in which children may benefit from early help, the nature of the early help process, and how to refer a child for early help.
- Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information professionally and securely
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with service users, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, and one-to-one discussions
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, vulnerable adults, families and carers appropriately
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure for dealing effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing policies in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our service users by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance, e.g., in relation to preventing or limiting the spread of Covid-19.
- Ensuring that providers of information, advice and guidance explicitly recognize characteristics of vulnerability, flag them where appropriate in Advice Pro, and deliver appropriate services that respond flexibly to the needs of users
- Reviewing our policy and procedures annually, or more often if required to keep up-to-date with government safeguarding guidance and changes in the law.

4. Key Personnel Contact Details

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the organisation is Mr Mohamed Farah – Director, Tel. 07949 514936. The Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Mr Khalid Ali, e-mail khalidali@live.com, and the lead Trustee for Safeguarding is Ms Priscilla Hon, priscilla.hon@gmail.com.

CEOP can be contacted at www.ceop.police.uk

The NSPCC Helpline can be contacted on 0808 800 5000.

5. Responsibilities

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead** has overall responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of safeguarding within Hodan, including:

- Co-ordinating safeguarding action for individual children and vulnerable adults
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals
- Ensuring that locally established procedures are followed and making referrals as necessary
- Acting as a consultant for volunteers to discuss concerns
- Maintaining a confidential recording system
- Organising training for all staff and volunteers

However, **safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers**. ANY observation, information or issue which results in concern for the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult **MUST** be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy. What may seem to be a minor issue to one staff member may be highly significant to the bigger picture of risk.

6. Safeguarding Procedures

6.1. General procedures

All personnel, paid and unpaid, should be encouraged to demonstrate good practice to create a positive environment for children and vulnerable adults.

- Recognising the position of trust in which they have been placed.
- Working to build a culture of respect for diversity.
- Ensuring that their behaviour is appropriate at all times:
 - Never allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching.
 - If any form of physical/manual support is required, it should be provided openly and according to proper guidelines.
 - Do not make sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable adult, even in fun.
 - Use positive and encouraging language.
 - Treat all service users with respect.
 - Take appropriate protective measures to prevent or reduce the spread of Covid-19 when interacting with service users face to face, if required: wear appropriate personal protective equipment, abide by social distancing

regulations or guidelines, use hand sanitiser, use desk screens or free-standing screens where appropriate, disinfect surfaces with an appropriate anti-viral cleaning agent after use.

- Always putting the welfare of each child or vulnerable adult first and following the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult.
- Keeping a written record of any suspicion or allegation of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, along with details of any action taken.
- Obtaining written consent for outings and visits involving children
- If residential events are organised, adults should not enter the rooms of children or vulnerable adults or invite them into their own rooms.
- Obtaining written parental consent before taking or storing photographs or video images of children.
- Always working in an open environment e.g. avoiding situations in which you are alone with a child or vulnerable adult, and encouraging an open environment i.e. no secrets.
- Building balanced relationships based on mutual trust, which empower children and vulnerable adults to share in the decision-making process.
- Considering the potential positive and negative impacts of services on vulnerable people, and involving them in all stages of the design process for new services (idea generation, development, testing, launch, and review) to prevent harm and ensure that the services meet their needs
- Encouraging service users to communicate openly about characteristics of vulnerability when they register for Hodan's advice service, and ensuring that information about users' needs is flagged in Advice Pro so it can be easily retrieved
- Evaluating the extent to which vulnerable service users' needs are being met, and learning from any situations in which disadvantage or harm has been evident
- Being an excellent role model - that includes not smoking in the company of children.
- Keeping up to date with technical skills, qualifications and insurance relating to work with children and vulnerable adults.

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to a colleague and record the incident in writing, together with the details of any actions taken or treatment given. You should also ensure the parents or carers of the child or vulnerable adult are informed.

- If you accidentally hurt a child or vulnerable adult.
- If a child or vulnerable adult is injured or harms themselves while using Hodan's services.
- If a child or vulnerable adult is distressed in any manner.
- If a child or vulnerable adult appears to be sexually aroused by your actions.
- If a child or vulnerable adult misunderstands/ misinterprets something you have done.

6.2. Safer recruitment

We are committed to ensuring, as far as possible, that the staff employed by Hodan, in either a paid or unpaid capacity, pose no threat to children, young people or vulnerable adults. All staff recruited to positions involving contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, and to positions which give access to information about these individuals, will be required to complete an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check with Lists Check

Disclosure check prior to initial appointment and as often as considered appropriate by Hodan thereafter, as part of the conditions of their employment.

Any convictions disclosed will be considered fairly in line with the Hodan Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, taking into account the nature and circumstances of the offence and its relevance to the post. We undertake not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed and we are committed to the fair treatment of our staff, potential staff or users of our services, regardless of offending background, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy, maternity, religion or belief, race, sex, or sexual orientation.

We undertake to comply fully with the relevant sections relating to pre-employment vetting and retention of recruitment records of the Employment Practices Code which is issued by the Information Commissioner and the DBS Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure information. Hodan will also comply fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

We acknowledge that information about the commission, or alleged commission, of criminal offences is sensitive personal data for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

6.2.1. Safer recruitment procedure

Where a DBS disclosure is required for the post, the job advertisement and job description should include a statement indicating that offers of employment will be made subject to a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check with Lists Check Disclosure.

Candidates will be asked to disclose any previous convictions on the application form. We guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Hodan will avoid asking for information that is not relevant, such as medical records, details about unrelated or spent convictions of household members, DBS certificates from third parties, or copies of a person's criminal record.

Failure to disclose a conviction or to provide truthful information which subsequently comes to our attention may lead to disciplinary action against the individual including dismissal. In addition, a failure to answer a question about previous convictions during the recruitment process will be a valid reason to withhold employment or to dismiss the individual.

Once an offer of employment has been accepted, the successful candidate will be asked to complete a DBS application form and to provide the necessary evidence for verification of identity (original certificates will be required). The person verifying the application must complete their section of the form using the evidence of identification presented by candidates, taking care to ensure vigilance in checking these and accuracy in completion. Once the identity check has been completed, the completed form will be sent to DBS for processing.

As DBS certificates are issued to the individual on whom the check was carried out (not directly to Hodan), Hodan will need to ask the applicant for sight of their DBS certificate. This information will be kept in line with the organisation's Data Protection Policy.

Where a recruitment agency is used, Hodan must receive written notification from the agency to confirm that they have carried out all the appropriate checks on the individual, including the dates on which the checks were performed, together with a copy of the candidate's Enhanced DBS Certificate with Lists Check Disclosure. This provision must be included in any contract or other agreement that Hodan makes with recruitment agencies for the supply of staff.

Before a person offered for supply by a recruitment agency begins work at Hodan, the Director will check the person's identity (irrespective of any such check carried out by the recruitment agency before the person was offered for supply). We reserve the right to include a continuing disclosure obligation in our employment contracts.

6.2.2. Start date

An Enhanced DBS check with List Checks should be sought immediately once an offer of employment is accepted, so that Hodan can review the contents of the disclosure before the individual commences employment. Candidates should be encouraged to provide a copy of the Enhanced DBS certificate to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy as soon as possible in order to avoid delays with the recruitment process.

Where possible, the start date should be set to allow sufficient time for the return and clearance of the DBS disclosure.

If it is not possible to delay the start date, or if there is any delay in receiving the disclosure, the successful candidate may start employment; subject to a satisfactory medical clearance and a second written reference, provided that the individual does not engage in an activity that includes unsupervised access to children or vulnerable adults.

It is the responsibility of the DSL to establish appropriate supervision arrangements and/or adjustment to the individual's duties until a satisfactory DBS check is received. If appropriate supervision arrangements cannot be put in place, the individual must not start work until the checks are received by Hodan.

Two written employment references from previous employers are also required by Hodan before appointment is confirmed.

6.2.3. What to do if a criminal record is revealed on a Disclosure

Past convictions will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position. Consideration must be given to the nature and circumstances of the offence and its relevance to the post applied for, and Hodan will carry out a risk assessment which is relevant to this DBS Policy, the position and situation. Where there is a potential concern, the candidate will be requested to bring a copy of their disclosure to a meeting with the Management Committee to discuss the concern. The DSL and lead Board member for safeguarding will jointly decide whether the individual should be appointed.

Any matters revealed by disclosure that will affect a recruitment decision will be discussed with the candidate prior to a decision being made.

Under the Rehabilitations of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013, certain protected convictions and cautions will not be required to be disclosed in a DBS and Hodan will not be entitled to ask questions about them or to rely on them to refuse employment or dismiss an employee. This includes, for example:

- a) a conviction received by a person aged under 18 at the time of the offence resulting in a non-custodial sentence after five and a half years has lapsed (unless it related to an offence specified as never being eligible for filtering); and
- b) a caution administered to a person aged under 18 at the time of the offence after two years has lapsed (unless it related to an offence specified as never being eligible for filtering).

Hodan will notify the DBS if it dismisses a person for harming a child or putting a child at risk of harm (or if it would have dismissed that person, had the person not left their employment) as it is a criminal offence not to do so.

2.2.4. DBS Update Service

The DBS Update Service allows applicants to keep their DBS certificate up to date online and to take it with them from role to role if the applicant pays an online fee. It also allows employers to check a certificate online.

There is currently no registration process or fee for employers to check a certificate online, but employers:

- a. must be legally entitled to carry out a check
- b. must have the worker's written permission.

Hodan reserves the right to use the DBS update service to check that an individual's DBS certificate is still current, subject to the requirements above.

2.2.5. Rechecks

Routine rechecks are not required for any staff member or volunteer unless they have a break in service of more than three months (note that extended sickness or parental leave does not constitute a break of service). However, Hodan may request an enhanced DBS check with barred list information at any time if concerns arise.

6.3. Staff induction and training

The DSL and/or their Deputy will provide all new staff with induction to enable them to fulfil their role and to understand the safeguarding policy, staff code of conduct, AQS guidance and requirements in the case of advice workers, and site-specific COVID safety measures. This induction may be covered within the annual training if this falls at the same time; otherwise it will be carried out separately during the initial starting period.

The DSL and their Deputy will attend training as necessary to refresh or update their knowledge of relevant legislation and guidance.

The DSL will organise a staff training session on Safeguarding every year, immediately after updating Hodan's Safeguarding Policy, to ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of any changes in policy or procedures and of the implications for their work.

An important outcome of this training is that all frontline staff must have the skills and capability to recognise and respond to a range of different characteristics of vulnerability. They must be able to understand what types of harm or disadvantage could result from these characteristics, how these vulnerabilities may affect users' experiences and outcomes while receiving services from Hodan, and how their own role affects the fair treatment of vulnerable service users.

6.4. Communicating effectively with service users

As set out in the Ethos section, timely and accurate communication with vulnerable service users is fundamental to good service provision. Staff and volunteers should ensure that all communications and information about Hodan's services are understandable for service users. Where possible, they should offer multiple channels to give users a choice.

Good communication is vital when concerns arise. Staff and volunteers should ensure that they have a clear understanding of what is being said by an individual raising a safeguarding concern, and that their command of the language being spoken by that person is good enough to distinguish facts from opinions. This can be challenging in situations where emotions are running high, and it will usually be achieved most effectively by speaking face to face.

Where speaking to an individual face to face is judged to pose an unacceptable risk to that individual's health or to the health of the staff member in question, in the light of Covid-19 or other public health threats, Hodan staff should try (wherever possible and to the best of their ability) to communicate with them directly by a similar means, such as video calling.

If the staff member or volunteer dealing with the case does not have any language in common with the service user, the need to ensure that the service user receives urgent help and protection must be balanced against the need to identify an experienced interpreter. In some circumstances, both immediate action to get an individual out of danger and subsequent follow-up with an interpreter may be needed.

In exceptional circumstances, a service user may authorise a household member to communicate with Hodan staff or the emergency services on their behalf. In this latter case, the staff member should check to the best of their ability that the service user is present in the room with the person appointed as a proxy and that messages are communicated accurately. This course of action should not be taken if there is any suspicion that the proxy or another person in the room is or may be abusing, or complicit in the abuse of, the service user.

6.5. Responding to suspicion or allegations

It is not the responsibility of anyone working in the organisation, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However, there is responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with appropriate authorities.

It is important to note that data protection legislation (including the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) is not a barrier to information sharing that may safeguard and promote the welfare of children or vulnerable adults, and consent is not necessarily required for the sharing of personal information. Consent to share information should be explicit and freely given wherever possible, but there may be circumstances where consent cannot be obtained, where it is not reasonable to seek consent, or where gaining consent would put a child or vulnerable adult's safety at risk.

Hodan will assure all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports their concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adult, according to its own Whistleblowing Policy. Where there is a complaint against a member of staff or a volunteer, there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation.
- A child protection investigation.
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The result of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

The following action should be taken if there are concerns:

Poor Practice

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice, or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the DSL, who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not to initiate disciplinary proceedings.

Suspected Abuse

- Any suspicion that a child or vulnerable adult has been abused by either a member of staff or a volunteer should be reported to DSL, who will take such steps as necessary to ensure the safety of the person in question and any other vulnerable people who may be at risk.
- The organisations child protection officer will refer the allegation to the social services department who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.

6.6. Incident reporting

Information passed to the social services or police must be as helpful as possible, hence the necessity for making detailed records at the time of the disclosure/concern. Information should include:

- Name of child or vulnerable adult
- Date of birth
- Home address and telephone number.
- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns or those of someone else?

- What is the nature of the allegation?
- Dates, time, any special factors and other relevant information
- Make a clear distinction between fact, opinion and hearsay.
- A description of any visible bruising or other injuries, behavioural signs, indirect signs
- Witnesses to the incident, if applicable
- The child or vulnerable person's own account, if any can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or injuries occurred.
- Have any of the child or vulnerable adult's parent(s) or carer(s) been contacted?
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.
- Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser? Record details.

6.7. Internal enquiries and suspension

The Management Committee of the organisation will convene an emergency meeting to make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended, pending further police and social service enquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the social service or police inquiries, the Management Committee will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled. This may be a difficult decision, particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police

In such cases, the organisation's disciplinary committee must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability, it is more likely than not the allegation is true. The welfare of children or vulnerable service users should always remain paramount.

7. Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. This includes the following:

- The organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The parents or carers of the person who is alleged to have been abused.
- The person making the allegation.
- The alleged abuser (and parents if the alleged abuser is a child).
- Information should be stored in secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant, and secure).

8. High-Risk and Emerging Safeguarding Issues

8.1. Preventing radicalisation and extremism

While Hodan as a charity is not formally bound by the Prevent duty, we are committed to reducing the risk of children who use our services, and the children of adults who use our services, being drawn into terrorism. We will provide our staff and volunteers with awareness training to help them identify the signs of radicalisation and extremism.

We are committed to raising awareness among service users and, where possible, seeking funding for initiatives to prevent violent extremism. Our projects promote social cohesion and cross-cultural awareness and reduce social isolation, and as such, can make significant contributions to counter-terrorism efforts.

Any child who is considered to have been radicalised or to be particularly vulnerable to radicalisation will be referred by the DSL to Children's Social Care, where the concerns will be considered in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) process.

8.2. Gender-based violence

The DSL, in partnership with external consultants as required, will make all staff and volunteers aware of the characteristics of female genital mutilation (FGM), genital mutilation of non-binary and intersex children, forced marriage, honour-based violence, and other forms of violence based on sex, gender identity, and/or gender expression. If a staff member or volunteer has cause to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of, or has already been subjected to, any of these forms of violence, they should immediately contact the DSL.

In the event of a disclosure relating to gender-based violence or the risk of it, the DSL should take the following action:

- In the event of actual or suspected FGM, the DSL will seek advice through the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) FGM Helpline on 0800 028 3550 or by email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk.
- In the event of forced marriage or attempted forced marriage, the DSL will seek advice through the national Forced Marriage Unit or through the local police safeguarding team or children's social care.
- If the DSL believes that a child or vulnerable adult is at risk from honour-based violence, they will follow the usual safeguarding referral process. However, if it is clear that a crime has been committed or the person is at immediate risk, the police will be contacted immediately. It is important that **if honour-based violence is known or suspected that communities and family members are NOT spoken to, prior to referral to the police or social care**, as this could increase risk to the person.
- In making a police report about violence or abuse on the basis of sex, gender identity or gender expression, the DSL should identify it as a suspected hate crime if this would not normally be evident.

8.3. Missing, exploited and trafficked children

The DSL, in partnership with external consultants as required, will make all staff and volunteers aware of safeguarding issues relating to missing, exploited and trafficked children and modern slavery.

If a Hodan staff member or volunteer becomes aware that a child or vulnerable adult meets the legal definition of being 'missing' from home or care (*anyone whose whereabouts cannot be established and where the circumstances are out of character or the context suggests the person may be the subject of crime or at risk of harm to themselves or another*), they will contact the DSL, who will either support the parent/carer to inform the police, or directly contact the police to inform them.

If staff or volunteers believe that a child or vulnerable adult is being sexually exploited or trafficked, this will be reported to the designated Safeguarding Lead for referral to be considered to children's social care. If the DSL has concerns that an individual may be a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking then a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism as soon as possible:

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/national-referral-mechanism>

8.4. Online safety

Hodan staff and volunteers engaged in providing Digital Literacy Skills instruction to children and vulnerable adults will work to build awareness around staying safe online. This includes keeping their passwords safe, identifying suspicious e-mails and attachments, recognising online bullying ('cyber-bullying') and harassment, taking appropriate action to protect themselves and others online, recognising suspicious links and pop-ups, avoiding fraud and scams, checking privacy settings on social media, and protecting their online reputation. These important aspects of online safety are covered in the Hodan Digital Literacy Skills Framework.

If staff and volunteers become aware of any incidents of grooming or cyber-bullying, they will pass on information to the police if they feel that it is appropriate to do so.

8.5. People with specific learning differences and disabilities

All staff will be made aware of the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect, and other risks, in this group of children and vulnerable adults. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the person's disability without further exploration;
- The potential for people with SpLD and disabilities being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

8.6. Covid-19

Hodan staff should be aware of the ongoing threat from Covid-19, including novel variants, and be alert for any updates to government guidelines (www.gov.uk/coronavirus) which may be revised regularly and at short notice). Continued caution is advised in order to prevent the virus from spreading and to safeguard staff, volunteers, Management Committee members and service users.

Hodan staff and volunteers should pay particular attention to measures to protect people who have a higher vulnerability to coronavirus because of health conditions or medical treatment. This may mean, for example, establishing secure communication channels that can reduce or eliminate the need for people to undertake activity that contributes to COVID-19 transmission: considering not only the actual advice-giving interaction but also related activities.

In providing advice and information about the virus, Hodan staff and volunteers should understand the limits of their own capacity and remit and should not attempt to take on any

role that would be more appropriately performed by a medical professional. They should limit themselves to sharing official guidance produced by the Government and Advice UK, where applicable. In the event of any health concerns they should immediately signpost to NHS 111 or, in a medical emergency, call 999.

If isolation or lockdown measures are reintroduced, staff and volunteers should be aware of the increased risk of domestic abuse, including child abuse, intimate partner violence and adolescent-against-parent violence, especially where job losses or health concerns add to pre-existing pressure. They should be aware of how they communicate with service users to minimise any additional risks, especially where the child(ren) or vulnerable adult(s) in question may have a limited command of English.

9. Guidance on Definitions of Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to the child or vulnerable adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or vulnerable adult, such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development or wellbeing. It may involve, but is not limited to, the following types of behaviour:

Conveying that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person

Not giving them opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or “making fun” of what they say or how they communicate

Imposing age-inappropriate or developmentally inappropriate expectations on them, e.g. interactions beyond a child’s developmental ability, overprotection, limitation of exploration or learning, prevention of normal social interaction

Seeing or hearing ill-treatment of another

Serious bullying (including cyberbullying)

Causing them to frequently feel frightened or in danger

Exploitation or corruption

The term ‘psychological abuse’ is often used interchangeably with emotional abuse, but can also include other abusive behaviours, such as 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.

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not they are aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, sexual images, or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

Note: Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Domestic abuse can manifest itself in many ways including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional or based on honour. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as occurring between 2 people (aged 16 and over) who are ‘personally connected to each other’ and the behaviour is deemed ‘abusive’.

Financial abuse may take the form of theft, fraud, scams (including internet scamming), coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements (including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions), and/or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits. Some of the potential signs or indicators may be:

- a change in living conditions
- a lack of heating, clothing or food
- an unexpected or sudden inability to pay bills
- unexpected or sudden changes in financial accounts, documents or unexpected change in behaviour, a loss of trust in professionals should the person be experiencing any of the above from people they know

Financial abuse is not only material: it can impact on a person's mental health and wellbeing as it may be perceived as a loss of control over an important aspect of their life. It may lead to social isolation and loneliness and may have an impact on the person's relationships with others, particularly if the perpetrator is someone they trust. In some instances, it can also result in financial hardship where the victim faces difficulty meeting everyday living or care costs. In seeking to detect or prevent financial abuse, practitioners may want to be conscious of people who may be at more risk than others, such as older people, people with learning disabilities or neurodiverse conditions, and people with existing debt.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. It may occur in pregnancy as a result of parental substance abuse.

Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing (including exclusion from home or abandonment), failing to protect a child or vulnerable adult from physical or emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers) or the failure to ensure access to appropriate health, care, support, or educational services. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs. The withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating, can also be described as neglect and/or acts of omission.

Self-neglect applies only to adult safeguarding and is used to describe a wide range of behaviours which relate to neglect to care for one's own personal hygiene, health or surroundings. The person themselves may not recognise the impact of their behaviour or may not use the same terminology to describe their own situation. Ultimately, self-neglect becomes a cause for concern where there are serious risks identified to an individual's health, wellbeing or lifestyle. Self-neglect may take the form of a neglect of nutrition or hydration, or behaviours such as hoarding.

10. Guidance on the Early Help Process

Providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Early help can also prevent further problems arising; for example, if it is provided as part of a support plan where a child has returned home to their family from care, or in families where there are emerging parental mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.

Effective early help relies upon local organisations and agencies working together to identify children and families who would benefit from early help, undertake an assessment of the need for early help, and provide targeted early help services to address the assessed needs of a child and their family which focuses on activity to improve the outcomes for the child.

Practitioners should, in particular, be alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- is disabled and has specific additional needs
- has special educational needs
- is a young carer
- is showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups
- is frequently missing/goes missing from care or from home
- is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking or exploitation
- is at risk of being radicalised or exploited
- is in a family circumstance presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse
- is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves
- has returned home to their family from care
- is privately fostered (i.e. they are being provided with care and accommodation, for longer than 28 days, by a person who is not a parent, a person with parental responsibility or a relative in their own home)

If a Hodan staff member or volunteer feels that a child would benefit from an early help assessment, they should report this to the DSL in the first instance. The DSL should then identify a lead practitioner who can undertake the assessment, provide help to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and co-ordinate the delivery of support services. A GP, family support worker, school nurse, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs co-ordinator could undertake the lead practitioner role. Decisions about who should be the lead practitioner should be taken on a case-by-case basis and should be informed by the child and their family.

11. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Customer Care Charter, Complaints Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, Grievance Policy and Procedures, Health and Safety Policy, Recruitment and Selection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Training and Development Policy, Induction Policy, Volunteer Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

12. Safeguarding incident report form

Part A: To be completed by the person raising the safeguarding concern	
Your name	Your position
Place of work	Contact phone number
Details of the affected person (child or vulnerable adult)	
Name	
Home address and telephone number	

Date of birth
Other relevant details about the affected person: <i>Eg family circumstances, physical and mental health, any communication difficulties.</i>
Parent/guardian/carer's details
Details of the allegations/suspicious
Are you recording: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure made directly to you by the affected person? • Disclosure or suspicions from a third party? • Your suspicions or concerns?
Date and time of disclosure
Date and time of incident
Details of the allegation/suspicious. <i>State exactly what you were told and/or what you observed. Make a clear distinction between fact, opinion, and hearsay.</i>
A description of any visible bruising or other injuries, behavioural signs, indirect signs, etc.
Witnesses to the incident, if applicable

Safeguarding Incident Report Form / Page 2

The affected person's own account, if any can be given, of what has happened and how any bruising or injuries occurred.
Has anyone been alleged to be the abuser?
Signature of the person raising the safeguarding concern:

Part B: To be completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (LTS) if the allegation / suspicion relates to the DSL

Have any of the affected person's parents or carers been contacted?
If so, please give details.

Has anyone else been consulted? If so, please give details.

Any other action taken:

Further action required (*Please state the action to be taken, by whom, and by when*):

Signature of DSL / LTS:

Date

13. Review

The policy and arrangements will be reviewed at least annually, or earlier if necessary, in the light of experience, changing circumstances, changes in legislation or non-statutory guidelines, and/or trends in best practice within the voluntary sector. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the Director, as the organisation's Quality Representative and Designated Safeguarding Lead, but assistance may be sought from an appropriate external consultant or from a second-tier organisation such as Advice UK if required.

Policy name	Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy, Procedures and Guidance
Last reviewed	13 September 2023
Reviewed by	Mohamed Farah and Ashley Brockwell
Any significant changes from previous version	<p>Section 1.1: Add 'Rethinking Safeguarding Practice' (2022), FCA guidance on 'Fair Treatment of Customers in Vulnerable Circumstances' (2023), and the 2022 update of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'</p> <p>Section 1.3: Add section on characteristics of vulnerability</p> <p>Section 2: Add 'constantly asking ourselves how we can do more to understand the needs of service users' (in 'Building a culture of learning...')</p> <p>Section 3: Add 'Ensuring that providers of information, advice and guidance explicitly recognize characteristics of vulnerability, flag them where appropriate in Advice Pro, and deliver appropriate services that respond flexibly to the needs of service users'</p> <p>Section 6.3: Add paragraph on characteristics of vulnerability ('An important outcome of this training...')</p> <p>Section 6.4: Add text to first paragraph – 'Staff and volunteers should ensure that all communications and information about Hodan's services are understandable for service users. Where possible, they should offer multiple channels to give users a choice.'</p> <p>Section 11: Add 'Induction Policy' in related policies list</p>
Next review due	September 2024

D4.2: Recruitment and Selection Policy & Procedures

1. Introduction and Context

Hodan is committed to supporting and promoting the learning, skills and career development of its staff and volunteers. One way these aims can be achieved is to offer staff and volunteers the opportunity to apply internally for posts within the organisation, both new and vacant, prior to recruiting via an external process. In this way, staff and volunteers are enabled to develop and grow, personally and professionally, within the organisation. In addition, Hodan benefits as a result of improved staff retention, loyalty and satisfaction. It may also avoid losing the accumulated knowledge and expertise of staff that pursue their careers outside Hodan due to lack of opportunity internally.

However, to ensure that recruitment advances the strategic objectives of Hodan, all applications - whether internal or external - will be judged on their own merits in relation to the job description and person specification. No position will be offered to an internal applicant who does not fully meet the required criteria of the person specification.

Hodan will make an effort to ensure that its hiring procedures serve the purpose of recruiting the best employees for each open position. However, we acknowledge that they are inevitably not always accurate in predicting performance or determining appropriate cultural fit. The probation period for new employees gives both employee and employer enough time to find out if their employment relation will eventually work out to the benefit of both.

2. Policy

All vacancies, whether new, vacated, permanent or fixed term, will be initially offered for internal application by any staff member or volunteer currently in post, subject to the staff member having successfully completed their probationary period.

In the event that no suitably qualified applicant comes forward from within the organisation, the post will immediately go to external process. The panel's decision will be final.

Recruitment decisions will be made on the basis of aptitude and ability alone. In accordance with its own Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Hodan will not discriminate against any applicant for a job or placement (whether internal or external) because they (a) have a protected characteristic; (b) are perceived to have a protected characteristic; or (c) are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic, as defined by the 2010 Equality Act.

The recruitment process will be fair to all applicants.

Wherever possible, Hodan will make efforts to recruit from the local community and to ensure that the policy reflects the diversity of the community it serves. This will be achieved by taking measures such as advertising in local community centres, through local networks,

and through partnerships with other service providers, as well as by paying close attention to the wording of advertisements. In accordance with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, we will strongly encourage applications from members of any groups that are represented in the service user population but underrepresented among existing staff and volunteers.

The policy will be reviewed / evaluated annually by the Director (in collaboration with appropriate external consultants if necessary). This will include evaluating whether or not it has had any negative impact on the diversity of the workforce. Any concerns will be referred to the Management Committee for further discussion and action.

The Director will keep abreast of changes in the law regarding eligibility for work in the UK, with particular reference to the UK's exit from the European Union, and will conduct all the necessary checks as detailed below.

3. Procedures

3.1. Advertising and applying

In the first instance, the vacancy will be advertised internally to all staff and volunteers. The immediate details of the post will be circulated (as would be detailed in an advertisement) with further details; job description, person specification and application form/supporting statement form being available on request from the office administrator. The vacancy will have a closing date no less than 7 days from circulation of the vacancy details.

The Director will be responsible for ensuring that job descriptions and person specifications are non-discriminatory and comply with the 2010 Equality Act. Any complaints or queries in this regard will be referred to the Trustees. Where a post requires a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, this will be clearly stated in the advertisement.

If no applications have been received at the closing date the vacancy will be advertised externally through such channels and methods as shall be agreed by the Management Committee.

Current volunteers and staff who have worked for more than six months (regardless of number of hours/days per week) at Hodan and wish to apply for a vacancy will **not** be required to complete a standard *Application Form*, provided that up-to-date personnel information is held on file. They will however be required to complete a *Supporting Statement* to an agreed format. Names and addresses of external referees will not be required. An internal reference will be required from their current line manager.

Current volunteers and staff who have worked less than 6 months (regardless of number of hours/days per week) at Hodan, along with all external applicants, will be required to complete a standard *application form*, including names and addresses of two referees one of which will be their line manager/supervisor, unless they have previously completed an application form for the same post.

3.2. Checking eligibility to work in the UK

The Director is ultimately responsible for ensuring that no applicant is offered a position unless and until they have submitted valid proof of their eligibility to work in the United Kingdom in accordance with the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006. This may be done either (i) by using the Home Office Online Right to Work service, (ii) by carrying out a digital identity check through an Identification Document Validation Technology service provider, or (ii) by asking to see the applicant's original documents.

- **The online right to work checking service** provides real-time information direct from the Home Office about certain applicants' right to work in the UK, including the types of work they are allowed to do and how long they can work in the UK for if there's a time limit. To [access the service](#), the Director must ask the applicant for their date of birth and right to work share code. If the worker has a current Biometric Residence Permit or Biometric Residence Card or has been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme or the points-based immigration system, the Director should request permission to view the applicant's details on the online right to work checking service while doing a video call.
- If the applicant does not have a share code, the Director may conduct a **manual right-to-work check** by viewing, checking, copying and filing original documents, or (for UK or Irish citizens) may, if preferred, use the services of an **Identity Document Validation Technology service provider**.

If eligibility for work in the UK cannot be established using any of the above means, the Director must contact the Home Office Employer Checking Service directly.

The Director is responsible for carefully checking the current legislation relating to eligibility to work in the UK, including which documents are required in which circumstances, by referring to the current right to work checklist from the Home Office on gov.uk. Current guidance is available at on the UK Government website: [An employer's guide to right to work checks: 6 April 2022 \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

It is important to note that an EU passport or identity card alone is no longer valid proof of an individual's right to work in the UK, although Irish citizens can still prove their right to work in the UK by showing a valid Irish passport or passport identity card.

3.3. Criminal records checks

As per the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, an individual who has had a conviction for an offence may be rehabilitated and allowed to treat the conviction as if it had never occurred. A conviction will become 'spent' where the person has not, after a period of time, committed another serious offence. Employers may not, under the Act, ask prospective employees if they have 'spent' convictions during the recruitment process. However there are exemptions to the Act and it does not apply to certain posts or professions, including those concerned with providing elderly, sick or disabled people with health or social services.

Pre-employment criminal records checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be required for posts (including volunteer positions) that involve or could potentially involve working with children or vulnerable adults. This is the responsibility of the Director and must be conducted in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Procedure set out in detail in the Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures, which must be consulted prior to embarking on any recruitment of staff or volunteers.

3.4. Shortlisting and interviewing

The shortlisting / interview panel will comprise a minimum of two (three is preferable) and maximum of four members. The panel will normally include the Director, at least one member of the Management Committee, and an external partner or consultant to bring additional skills/expertise as appropriate.

The interview process will be conducted according to best practice guidelines, as well as in accordance with Hodan's Equality and Diversity Policy. Specifically, the same panel that is responsible for shortlisting candidates should also conduct the interviews; the same questions are asked to all candidates in order to provide a fair comparison; and the competencies described in the person specification that accompanies the job description will be used as the basis for shortlisting and interviewing candidates.

The panel will shortlist and internal applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application as soon as possible, and always within five working days. Interviews will take place not less than ten working days from applicant notification.

In the event of a single internal applicant meeting the selection criteria in full, the internal recruitment procedure will go ahead.

Applicants will be notified of outcomes by the panel chair as soon as possible, and always within five working days of the decision. The chair or other panel member as agreed, will be available to any unsuccessful applicant for a feedback discussion, on receipt of a request from the applicant within ten working days of the decision being notified.

3.5. Taking up post

Successful applicants will normally be required to work their agreed period of notice in their current post before taking up their new post, subject to any negotiation by all involved parties which may agree to it being a shorter period.

Successful applicants will receive an offer letter that will comprise an amendment to their current contract of employment; ensuring current benefits including annual leave entitlement etc are retained. Successful applicants will be appointed at the salary incremental point agreed at offer.

Successful candidates will undertake an Induction for the new post as agreed with their line manager, and in accordance with Hodan's Induction Policy and Procedures.

Previous staff members will **not** be subject to a probationary period in the new post, but two meetings at three-month intervals with their line manager, in addition to ongoing supervision, will be scheduled to identify any key issues, learning needs and action points. Successful applicants who were previously volunteers **will** be subject to a probationary period.

3.6. Probationary period

The probationary period definition for new employees is the time between signing an employment contract and being granted permanent employment status. It is a "trial period", usually lasting for three months in the first instance, during which the employee is being evaluated as a suitable fit to the position and the company. The new employee will be given consistent feedback and coaching to have the chance to learn their new job and improve during the probationary period.

At the end of the probationary period (or possibly before that), the supervisor will determine if the employee should be retained in the organization. This decision will be made by appraising the following criteria:

- Skills, competencies and knowledge of the employee on the job
- The employee's progress on given assignments
- Reliability and trustworthiness
- Collaboration with subordinates, supervisors and peers

The employee's progress will be documented in relation to the above criteria during the probationary period, and the decision to retain them will be at the supervisor's discretion. When an employee has completed their initial probationary period, they may be granted permanent employment status if deemed suitable, or the probationary period may be extended by up to six further months at the supervisor's discretion.

If the employee is deemed unsuitable while on a probationary period, their employment may be terminated without the minimum prior notice mandated by law. The termination of

employment during this period may be for cause or without cause depending on the circumstances and the individual's evaluation.

Termination may occur before the ending of the probationary period. This may happen if the tactical evaluations of the employee are highly unsatisfying or if the employee engages in behaviour that justifies a for-cause dismissal. The employee will be officially notified in writing for the decision to terminate their employment. The document will explicitly state the reason for the termination and the expected date it will take effect.

Employees may still have to be dismissed for various reasons, after the end of the probationary period. In such cases, the company will follow employment law, legal guidelines and its own separation of employment policy.

4. Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures, the Competencies Policy and Framework, and the Induction Policy and Procedures.

5. Policy Review

The policy and arrangements will be reviewed at least annually, or earlier if necessary, in the light of experience, changing circumstances, changes in legislation or non-statutory guidelines, and/or trends in best practice within the voluntary sector. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the Director, as the organisation's Quality Representative, but assistance may be sought from an appropriate external consultant or from a second-tier organisation such as Advice UK if necessary.

Policy name	Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures (was 'Recruitment Policy and Procedures')
Last reviewed	15 September 2023
Reviewed by	Mohamed Farah and Ashley Brockwell
Any significant changes from previous version	None required
Next review due	September 2024