



## **Go Dharmic Welfare UK - Policy on Safeguarding – 18.3.26**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Help protect people that interact with, or are affected by, Go Dharmic Welfare UK.
- b. Define the key terms we use when talking about protecting people or safeguarding.
- c. Set out and develop the way Go Dharmic Welfare UK manages safeguarding risks.
- d. Facilitate the safe management of incidents.
- e. To support a positive and effective internal culture towards safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace – this is dealt with under Go Dharmic Welfare’s Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by Go Dharmic Welfare UK or associated personnel.

### **Legislation Governing this Policy:**

Care Act 2014

## **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.

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, particularly sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment from occurring; to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm; and to respond appropriately when harm does occur.

This definition draws from our values and principles and shapes our culture. It pays specific attention to preventing and responding to harm from any potential, actual or attempted abuse of power, trust, or vulnerability, especially for sexual purposes.

Safeguarding applies consistently and without exception across our programmes, partners and staff. It requires proactively identifying, preventing and guarding against all risks of harm, exploitation and abuse and having mature, accountable and transparent systems for response, reporting and learning when risks materialise. Those systems must be survivor-centred and also protect those accused until proven guilty.

Safeguarding puts beneficiaries and affected persons at the centre of all we do.

### **Scope**

- All staff contracted by Go Dharmic Welfare
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to Go Dharmic Welfare UK, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; programme visitors including journalists, celebrities and politicians.

## **Policy Statement**

Go Dharmic Welfare UK (GD) recognises that the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is paramount and that they all, regardless of ability or culture, have equal rights of protection. GD has a duty of care and will do everything it can to provide a safe, caring and secure environment for them whilst they are engaged in GD activities.

GD must ensure that its policy and any associated procedures and training comply with statutory requirements and reflect available guidance on good practice in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, and that safeguarding arrangements are proportionate to the risks involved.

## **Go Dharmic Welfare responsibilities**

Go Dharmic Welfare UK 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 Go Dharmic Welfare. This includes the way in which information about individuals in our programmes is gathered and communicated.
- Implement stringent safeguarding reporting procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel.
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process.

## **Staff responsibilities**

## **Adult safeguarding**

Go Dharmic Welfare UK staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk individuals
- Subject at an risk individual to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect.

## **Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse**

Go Dharmic Welfare UK staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity. This includes any exchange of assistance that is due to beneficiaries of assistance
- Engage in any sexual relationships with beneficiaries of assistance, since they are based on inherently unequal power dynamics.

Additionally, Go Dharmic Welfare UK staff and associated personnel 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 Go Dharmic Welfare UK staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member.

## **Enabling reports**

Go Dharmic Welfare UK 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 Go Dharmic Welfare UK's Disclosure of Malpractice in the Workplace (Whistleblowing) Policy.

Go Dharmic Welfare will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

### **How to report a safeguarding concern (staff / volunteers)**

We work on the basis of: recognise, respond, report, and follow this procedure:

Is anyone at risk of harm right now and / or has a criminal offence been committed?

If YES, call 999 for police / ambulance.

If NO, share your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) as soon as possible.

In both cases, record full information and details in writing. Think about listing the location, time, who has been involved, the type of harm, and any other details you feel relevant. Send this to the DSL as soon as possible.

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or immediate manager. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to their Designated Safeguarding Lead or immediate 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 Trustee Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Types of Report**

An internal incident report

A referral report to social services

A referral report to a Local Authority

A referral report to the Police

A report to the Charity Commission or other organisations

### **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):**

Claire White

07864959386

Email: [claire@godharmic.com](mailto:claire@godharmic.com)

The DSL will receive and deal with any complaints made against GD staff and volunteers in terms of safeguarding.

### **Trustee Designated Safeguarding Lead:**

Dimple Mistry

07771900208

Email: [dimple@godharmic.com](mailto:dimple@godharmic.com)

The Trustee DSL monitors and acts as a secondary safeguard should the DSL be unavailable.

### **Response**

Go Dharmic Welfare will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns

according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

Go Dharmic Welfare will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

Go Dharmic Welfare will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out (such as an internal investigation). 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.

### **Associated policies**

Code of Conduct

Anti Bullying and Harassment policy

Whistleblower policy

Complaints Policy

Procedures for reporting and response to safeguarding concerns

Procedures for safeguarding in staff recruitment

Training Policy

Other policies as appropriate

## **Glossary of Terms**

### **Beneficiary of Assistance**

Someone who directly receives goods or services from Go Dharmic's programme. Note that misuse of power can also apply to the wider community that the Go Dharmic Welfare serves, and also can include exploitation by giving the perception of being in a position of power.

### **Child**

A person below the age of 18

### **Harm**

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

### **Psychological harm**

Emotional or psychological abuse, including (but not limited to) humiliating and degrading treatment such as bad name calling, constant criticism, belittling, persistent shaming, solitary confinement and isolation

### **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)**

The term used by the humanitarian and development community to refer to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of affected populations by staff or associated personnel. The term derives from the United Nations Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (ST/SGB/2003/13)

### **Sexual abuse**

The term 'sexual abuse' means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

### **Sexual exploitation**

The term 'sexual exploitation' means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. This definition includes human trafficking and modern slavery.

## **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.

## **At risk adult**

Sometimes also referred to as a 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.

## **Review**

This policy is due for review every year or following any significant organisational changes.

Next review date: 18<sup>th</sup> March 2027

## **Document Owner and Approval**

Document owner: Hanuman Dass

Final policy sign-off by: Trustee Board

## Definitions

**Child:** In this document, as in the Children Act 1989 and 2004, a Child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'Children and Young People' throughout. The fact that a Child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently, is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital, in prison or in a Young Offenders' Institution, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

**Vulnerable Adult:** The definition of vulnerable adult in "Who Decides?" (Lord Chancellor's Office 1997)" and as used in this document is anyone who is over 18 who:

- Is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and
- Is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself; or
- Is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

**Volunteer:** In this document, as in the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Glossary of Terms 2012, a Volunteer is a person who is engaged in any activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travelling and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit some third party other than or in addition to a close relative. For the purposes of this policy this encompasses but is not limited to Company Based Volunteers, Class Based Volunteers, Local Volunteer Board (LVB) Members and GD Trustees.

**Staff Member:** A Staff Member is anyone employed by GD. For the purposes of this policy this encompasses, but is not limited to, permanent staff, casual staff, Associates and Consultants as well as Secondees/ Interns.

**Position of Trust:** Any person connected with GD who comes into contact with children or vulnerable adults in the performance of their role is in a position of trust and subject to this policy.

## **Recognising Types of Abuse and Neglect**

Abuse can take a number of forms including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and neglect. Examples of such abuse (as noted in the Department of Education publication "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015") are contained in Appendix 4.

All GD staff and volunteers should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

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

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all

types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Child sexual exploitation:** is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships may receive gifts, money or affection in return for performing sexual activities. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they are in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol. They may also be groomed online.

**Neglect:** the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

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**Go Dharmic Welfare UK, 119c Business Design Centre, 52 Upper St, London, N1 0QH.**

**18<sup>th</sup> March 2026.**