

# ekaH Foundation Policy











## **Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy**

The EkaH Foundation are committed to both safeguarding and promoting the well being of all children, young people and adults with whom it has contact.

We recognise that :

Everyone involved in the care of children, young people and adults at risk has a responsibility for the protection of those individuals from harm. It is also essential that we honour the trust of those who allow us to care for their children, young people and adults at risk.

We understand there is a duty placed on public agencies under the Human Rights Act (1998) to intervene to protect the rights of citizens. Also the Children Act (1989) makes it clear that the welfare of the child is paramount and that everyone involved in the care of children has a responsibility to protect those children from harm.

In order to protect everyone from potential and actual abuse we make it essential for all staff and volunteers to have an understanding of the issues involved and that appropriate procedures are in place that are shared and understood.

The EkaH Foundation safeguarding policy arises from the following principles:

The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount; Everyone, regardless of age, gender, disability or ethnic origin has a right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation It is not our responsibility as members of EkaH Foundation to decide whether or not abuse is occurring, but it is our responsibility to act on any concerns and do something about it.

### **Objectives**

The key objectives of this policy are to:

Set out the responsibilities that the EkaH Foundation, its staff, volunteers, and trustees have in safeguarding children and adults. Provide staff, volunteers, trustees and directors with an overview of child protection and safeguarding. Provide a clear procedure that will be implemented where a safeguarding issue arises.

### **Definitions**

A child is a child before their birth (i.e during pregnancy) and until their 18th birthday.

An adult at risk is any adult needing community care services due to a mental or other disability, age, illness, who are unable to protect of themselves against harm or exploitation.

### **Identifying abuse**

The term abuse is used to describe the ways in which a person can be harmed or mistreated.

Child abuse is split into four categories: Physical, neglect, sexual and emotional. Abuse of adults is split into seven categories, including the afore mentioned and including, financial, institutional and discriminatory.

### Physical abuse

This may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, squeezing, suffocating, drowning, burning or scolding, or biting the child or adult. Giving a child alcohol is also a form of physical abuse. Giving a child or adult at risk (against their free and informed consent) drugs, poison or over medicating using prescribed medications. Parents fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing illness in a child.

### Neglect

Neglect is a persistent failure to meet a child's or an adult's basic physical and psychological needs. This may include failure to meet basic needs such as providing food, shelter, warm clothing or medical attention. Neglect can occur before the birth of a child, for example, substance misuse in pregnancy, also failure to provide appropriate supervision (including leaving children with (appropriate - inappropriate) carers)

### Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Activities may involve penetrative or non penetrative acts or non contact activities such as forcing a child or adult at risk to look at or take part in the production of pornographic materials. For children it can also include encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Sexual abuse includes grooming a child in preparation for abuse, for example, via the internet.

### Emotional Abuse

For children emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child, such as to cause severe adverse effects on that child's emotional development. This may involve a lack of love and affection, telling a child they are worthless, serious bullying or being constantly shouted at. Emotional abuse also occurs when the child is only valued insofar as they meet the needs of another person. Also when the child is overprotected and unable to explore and learn on their own, or when they witness the ill treatment or abuse of another, for example domestic violence or animal cruelty. Other examples include serious bullying, including: cyber bullying, making fun of what the child says and how they communicate.

For adults at risk, emotional or psychological abuse can include threats of harm or abandonment, blaming or controlling behaviour, or enforced isolation.

### Financial Abuse

This type of abuse is mainly for adult at risk, unless you feel a child is also at risk you should report this in the usual way. Financial abuse is when an adult is exploited for financial gain. This includes: theft, fraud, pressure regarding wills or inheritance, exploitation, the misuse of property, possessions or benefits.

### Institutional Abuse

Again this is mainly regarding adults at risk, however if you feel a child is being exploited in this way you should report this in the usual way and consider contacting the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Institutional abuse occurs when the routines, systems and regimes of an institution results in inadequate standards of care or poor practise which affects the whole setting. It denies, restricts or curtails the privacy policy, choice independence, or fulfilment of adults at risk. It also includes decisions that are made in the best interests of staff rather than the adult at risk.

## Discriminatory Abuse

This is behaviour that makes or sees a distinction between people, and uses it as a basis for prejudice or unfair treatment. This can include: racism, sexism, homophobia, disabilism and not respecting individuals rights to worship.

## How we will keep children safe and respond to concerns

### Prevention

The EkaH Foundation follows the safer recruitment policy for all staff and volunteers.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will undertake appropriate child safeguarding training. The training will be refreshed every two years. In addition to this they will keep up to date with developments relevant to their role.

Regular supervision is carried out with all staff and volunteers.

Safeguarding policies and information is regularly shared by the Designated Safeguarding Lead in team meetings.

Information on our safeguarding policy and procedures is made available to all who access our service.

### What to do if abuse is suspected

If any member of the EkaH Foundation suspects that abuse is taking place they should immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead – Sri Ramana Devi on 07792788627 who will decide whether or not to take the matter further.

A log of concern will be kept.

If it is felt that further investigation is required to keep a child safe then this will be referred to Lancashire County Council Children's Social Care team. In the event of a referral being made, all relevant information will be shared, including log of previous concerns, supervision notes or any conversations with the child and parents.

If it is felt that further investigation is required in order to keep an adult at risk safe then the matter must be referred to Lancashire County Council Adult's Social Care Team.

In the event that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is not available or contactable, then the deputy Spencer Lloyd-Pack will be contacted. If this is also not possible this should not delay any action being taken to protect a child or adult at risk. Any member of the EkaH Foundation may contact – Lancashire County Council Social Care Team's to raise their concerns directly.

**If there are any concerns about the immediate safety of a child or adult at risk then the police must be contacted on 999 without delay.**



Designated Safeguarding Lead	Sri Ramana Devi	07792788627
Deputy Safeguarding Lead	Spencer Lloyd-Pack	07930462897
Lancashire County Council Children's Social Care Team		0300 123 6720
Lancashire County Council Adult's Social Care Team		0300 123 6721
Local Authority Safeguarding Officer	Briony Martin	0300 123 6720

### **Allegations against staff or volunteers**

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practise. There are appropriate whistleblowing procedure in place, see whistleblowing policy.

Any suspicion that a child or adult at risk has been abused by a member of staff or volunteer must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will consider the necessary safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will refer the allegation to the Local Authority Safeguarding Officer who may involve the police.

For allegations of abuse of children the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Lancashire County Council Social Care Team will liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer – who is Briony Martin on 0300 123 6720

The parents or carers of the child or adult at risk will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from Lancashire County Council Social Care Team's.

If the Designated Safeguarding Lead is the subject of the suspicion or allegation, the concern must be made directly to Lancashire County Council and their Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer.

### **Internal enquiries and suspensions**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will make an immediate decision about whether any individual suspected of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further investigation with police and social care.

Where an individual is suspended it is advisable that other employees make no contact with them until enquiries have concluded.

Irrespective of findings of social care or police, the EkaH Foundation will assess all individual cases to decide whether a member of staff or volunteer can be reinstated. The welfare of the child remains paramount at all times.

### **Partnership with children**

We will ensure children under our care are made aware of who they can talk to. They will be informed of our responsibility for their safety and their right to be listened to.

## Partnership with parents and carers

We share a purpose to educate and keep their children safe from harm.

We will share with parents any concerns we may have about their child, unless to do so may place the child at risk of harm.

We will in most circumstances endeavour to discuss all concerns with parents or carers about their child. However, there may be exceptional circumstances when we have to discuss concerns with professionals without parental knowledge. We value our relationship with parents and carers and will endeavour to keep this relationship positive.

## Partnerships with others

The EkaH Foundation recognises its responsibility to share information with other agencies to ensure the safeguarding of children.

## Record Keeping

Records will be kept relating to safeguarding concerns securely and confidentially in an agreed place. Records will be factual, accurate and clearly written or typed, with a legible date, time and signature.

All members of staff and volunteers will receive a copy of this policy and undergo the appropriate training as part of their induction to the organisation. See table below for training requirements.

Role	Training required
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Designated safeguarding lead training Safer recruitment training
Deputy Safeguarding Officer	Designated safeguarding lead training
Teacher of children	Level 1 & 2 Safeguarding children
Volunteer	Provide in house training as part of induction

Our policies that support this include:

Safer Recruitment policy

Health and Safety policy

Managing allegations about staff or volunteers

Code of conduct for staff and volunteers

Whistleblowing Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Complaints Procedure

Disciplinary Policy

Grievance Policy

This policy has been formally agreed and adopted by the trustee's of EkaH Foundation.  
The policy will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on a yearly basis.

Signed

Name

Position

Revised Date: 3.4.2018

Review date 3.4.2019

## **Safer Recruitment Policy**

This policy includes the Induction process of staff and volunteers. It applies to anyone involved in the recruitment process of inducting staff and volunteers to the EkaH Foundation.

### **Principles**

The EkaH Foundation is committed to:

- Promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and keeping them safe
- Equality, valuing diversity and working inclusion across all its activities
- Having a workforce that represents a variety of backgrounds and cultures, which provides different and relevant skills, knowledge and abilities

### **Aims of the policy**

- To take reasonable steps to prevent unsuitable people joining the organisation
- To ensure candidates are judged to be competent before we make them an offer of a job
- To ensure that new members of staff and volunteers are given a proper induction

### **The EkaH Foundation recognises that:**

- Our workforce is one of our most valuable resources
- Unsuitable individuals sometimes seek opportunities via working or volunteering with children with an intent to harm them
- Children and adults at risk benefit from our efforts to recruit suitable, competent and skilled people from a range of backgrounds
- New staff and volunteers need an efficient induction to enable them to perform their role to the best of their ability
- Staff and volunteers require ongoing support and supervision to enable them to continue to perform their role to the best of their ability

### **The EkaH Foundation safely recruits and inducts its staff and volunteers by:**

- Advertising posts in an appropriate way that ensures we attract quality applicants from a range of backgrounds
- Providing the appropriate information regarding the role for applicants
- Involving more than one person in the selection process
- Where appropriate involving the views of children and adults at risk in the selection process
  
- Obtains two references followed up with a phone call
- Obtains two pieces of identification and original copies of any necessary relevant qualifications
- Carries out DBS checks and any other necessary vetting procedures for each member of staff or volunteer working with children and adults at risk, in line with DBS and other official guidelines
- Provides an appropriate induction for all new staff and volunteers
- Provides all new staff and volunteers with the relevant information on keeping children and adults at risk safe in the organisation
- Appoints staff and volunteers for an agreed trial period with a review before confirming their post
- Follows the recruitment process

The EkaH Foundation are committed to reviewing our policy and good practise annually.

Signed:

Position:

Date:

Review date: 4.4.2019









**Right of Appeal**

If the member of staff or volunteer wishes to appeal against any grievance decision, they must appeal, in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated to them. The alternative director will convene an Appeals Sub committee to hear the appeal and they will be invited to a meeting with the Appeals Sub committee. They will have the right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting.

The initial director dealing with the issue will not form part of the Appeals sub. The Appeals sub committee's decision will be final.

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Date reviewed:10.4.2019

## WhistleBlowing Policy

Employees or volunteers are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the organisation. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or organisation. They may also fear harassment or victimisation. In these circumstances it may be easier to ignore the concern rather than report what may just be a suspicion of malpractice. The Code applies to all staff and volunteers of the organisations and to persons employed by bodies in a contractual relationship providing goods or services.

The organisation is committed to the highest possible standards of openness and accountability, along with being committed to improving the performance of all its functions. The organisation expects its staff and volunteers who have serious concerns about any aspect of the organisations work to raise those concerns. The organisation accepts that employees may prefer to do this in a confidential way that avoids any public disclosure of their identity.

This Code makes it clear that staff and volunteers of the (organisations - organisation) can do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. In April 2011, the Equality Act 2010 was introduced. This Act ensures discriminations (direct and indirect), harassment and victimisation are challenged to ensure equality. This policy is written and reviewed in light of this Act to ensure the organisation is fulfilling its statutory duty.

WhistleBlowing is not the same as making a complaint. A complaint is where the individual is saying they personally have been poorly treated. A whistleblower is usually not directly personally affected by the concerns. The whistleblower raises the concerns so others can address it.

### Aims

The code aims to ensure staff and volunteers are:

Encouraged to feel confident in raising serious concerns and to question and act upon concerns about practice. Provided with a way to raise a concern and be sure of the action to be taken ensured that they will receive a response to their concerns and that they are aware of how to pursue them if they are not satisfied.

Reassured that they will be protected from possible reprisal or victimisation if they have a reasonable belief that they have made any disclosure in good faith.

This Code is intended to deal with concerns not covered within the Staff Complaints Procedure, for example:

- Conduct which is an offence or a breach of a law
- Disclosures relating to miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks, including risks to the public as well as other employees
- Damage to the environment
- The unauthorised use of public funds
- Possible fraud and corruption
- Sexual or physical abuse of pupils in our care
- Other unethical conduct

Any serious concerns you have about any aspect of our organisation and provision, the conduct of staff or volunteers, or others acting on behalf of the organisation, can be reported through this code.

This could be something that:

- Makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards, your experience or the standards you believe the organisation adheres to
- Is against the organisations other policies and procedures
- Falls below established standards of practice or
- Amounts to improper conduct.

### **Harassment or victimisation**

The organisation is committed to maintaining high standards, good ethical practice, and wants to be supportive of its staff and volunteers. It realises the decision to report a concern can be a difficult one to make, however if what you are saying is true then you have nothing to fear as you are doing your duty to your employer and for those who you are providing a service.

The organisation will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation and will take appropriate action to protect you when you raise a concern in good faith.

### **Confidentiality**

Concerns reported will be treated confidentially. Unless you agree your identity will not be disclosed. In the event the concern is regarding alleged criminal activity, you may be asked to help the police or other appropriate enforcement agencies. If the concerns involved a disciplinary procedure you may be asked to give evidence under the disciplinary procedure.

### **Anonymous allegations**

The code encourages people to put their name to the allegations wherever possible, however when we receive anonymous allegations they will be considered with discretion.

The factors taken into account will be:

- The seriousness of the issues raised
- The credibility of the concern
- The likelihood of confirming the allegation from attributable sources.

### **Untrue allegations**

If you make an allegation in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no action will be taken against you. If, however, you make an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken against you.



## **How the matter can be taken further**

The code is aimed at providing you with a safe way within the organisation to raise concerns which be hope you are satisfied with. If you are not satisfied and feel it appropriate to take the concerns further then you can contact other relevant organisations such as:

Inland Revenue  
Audit Com mission  
Charity Commission  
Commission for Social Care Inspection

You can also find further information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

Signed:

Position:

Date:

Review date: 4.4.2019

## **Managing Allegations against staff procedure**

This procedure should be followed when an allegation is made that a member of staff or volunteer has:

- Behaved inappropriately towards a child or adult at risk in a way that has harmed or may have harmed them
- Committed or possibly committed a criminal offence against a child or adult at risk or related to a child or adult at risk
- Behaved in a way towards a child or adult at risk that indicates that they are unsuitable to work with them

### **All staff and volunteers are made aware of the following:**

- Concern or allegation brought to the attention of (CEO - the CEO)
- Stage 1 – concern or allegation brought to the attention of (CEO - the CEO)  
Managers assessment and initial response with the following possible outcomes:
  - No further action
  - Stage 2 - Internal management response, which may lead to:
    - Discussion with Local Authority Safeguarding Officer
  - Discussion with Local authority Safeguarding Officer may then lead to
    - Stage 3 –
      - A section 47 strategy discussion
      - Social care and/or police enquiries
      - Criminal proceedings
  - Internal management response may lead to:
    - Joint evaluation discussion with social care (section 47 enquiry)
    - Organisation taking action and completing a disciplinary investigation
    - Disciplinary hearing which could lead to
      - Dismissal and referral to independent Safeguarding Authority and or regulatory bodies
      - Disciplinary procedures

Signed:

Position:

Date:

Review date: 4.4.2019



To exercise the right to be accompanied, an employee must first make a reasonable request. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances. However it is not normally reasonable for an employee to insist on being accompanied by a companion whose presence would prejudice the hearing.

The companion is allowed to address the hearing to put and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed at the meeting and to confer with the employee during the hearing. The companion does not have the right to answer questions on the employee's behalf, address the hearing if the employee does not wish it or prevent the employer from explaining their case.

Employees will not normally be dismissed for a first breach of discipline, except in the case of major or gross misconduct.

If an employee is disciplined, they will receive an explanation of the penalty imposed and they will have the right to appeal against the finding and the penalty.

## **Disciplinary rules**

It is not practical to specify all disciplinary rules or offences, which may result in disciplinary action, as they may vary depending on the nature of the work. In addition to the specific examples of minor misconduct, major misconduct and gross misconduct shown here, a breach of other EkaH Foundation conditions, procedures, policies, etc. will also result in the disciplinary procedure being used to deal with such matters.

### **Rules covering minor misconduct**

(These are examples only and not an exhaustive list)

Employees will be liable to disciplinary action if they are found to have acted in any of the following ways:

- Absenteeism
- Unsatisfactory standards or output of work
- Unauthorised use or negligent damage or loss of EkaH Foundation property
- Failure to report immediately any damage to property or premises caused by the employee
- If the employee's work involves driving on EkaH Foundation business, failure to report immediately any type of driving conviction or summons which may lead to their conviction

### **Rules covering major misconduct**

(these are examples only and not an exhaustive list)

Employees will be liable to disciplinary action if they are found to have acted in any of the following ways:

- Being under the influence of alcohol whilst at work (This will cover coming to work in the morning still under the influence and also coming back to work after drinking at lunch time.)



- Being under the influence of alcohol at an event the result of which brings the EkaH Foundation into disrepute
- Inappropriate behaviour, including rudeness, towards members, stakeholders, funders, members of the public or other employees, objectionable or insulting behaviour or bad language
- Deliberately not adhering to the policies and procedures made clear to you by the EkaH Foundation
- Employee's continual failure to devote the whole of their time, attention and abilities to the EkaH Foundation business during their contracted working hours, unless previously agreed by a manager
- Failure to carry out all reasonable instructions or follow EkaH Foundation rules and procedures
- Misuse of the internet in order to download offensive material such as pornography, or material used by the employee for personal financial gain
- Excessive or unreasonable personal use of EkaH Foundation telephones, email, internet, photocopiers and printers and any other equipment
- Bringing EkaH Foundation into disrepute by lying, spreading malicious gossip or negative comments about EkaH Foundation or its management, staff or volunteers

### **Rules covering gross misconduct**

(these are examples only and not an exhaustive list)

You will be liable to summary dismissal if you are found to have acted in any of the following ways:

- Being found to be guilty of a an allegation of safeguarding against children or adults at risk
- Grossly indecent behaviour, deliberate acts of unlawful discrimination or serious acts of harassment
- Dangerous or aggressive behaviour, including fighting or physical assault
- Incapacity at work or poor performance caused by misuse of intoxicants or illicit drugs
- Serious insubordination and/or continuing refusal to carry out legitimate instructions
- Theft or fraud
- Possession or use of illicit drugs.
- Deliberate falsification of any records
- Undertaking private work on the premises and/or in working hours without express permission
- Working in competition with EkaH Foundation
- Taking part in activities which result in adverse publicity to the EkaH Foundation or which bring the EkaH Foundation into disrepute, or which cause the EkaH Foundation to lose faith in the employee's integrity

- Intentional destruction/sabotage of the EkaH Foundation property, or any property on the premises
- Intentional destruction/sabotage of property belonging to a third party but being used by the EkaH Foundation staff e.g. exhibitors stands at conference
- Serious breaches of health and safety rules, including those which endanger the lives of or may cause serious injury to employees or any other person
- Interference with, or misuse of, any equipment for use at work that may cause harm
- Deliberately accessing internet sites containing pornographic, offensive or obscene material
- A serious breach of confidence eg performing some part of the employee's role so badly that complete confidence in ability is lost
- A serious breach of confidentiality eg releasing confidential information into the public domain
- Action which results in the loss of income to the EkaH Foundation

## **Disciplinary process**

### **Informal action**

Minor breaches of performance or conduct will result in an informal discussion with the manager about conduct or standards expected of employees. The manager will ensure that the employee understands what needs to be done and how conduct/performance will be reviewed and over what time period. Although informal, the manager will keep a note of this action. The notes to be agreed by both parties, should the parties fail to agree on the notes then the manager's record will be put on file along with a copy of the staff member's area of disagreement on the notes.

Where informal actions have failed to resolve a problem, or the issue is serious enough to warrant going straight to the disciplinary procedure, managers may invoke the formal disciplinary procedure. Any line manager may initiate the procedure, after discussion with their line manager or another director or if the Director is the initiator, after discussion with the one of the board of Trustees.

### **Alleged criminal offence**

Where a criminal offence is alleged to have taken place within designated working hours on EkaH Foundation premises or in any way connected with EkaH Foundation business, and which has an impact on the employee's suitability to do the job and their relationship with the employer, work colleagues or customers, EkaH Foundation reserves the right to carry out its own disciplinary investigation and action, irrespective of any police investigation and without waiting for the courts to come to a decision.

### **General points**

A general principle applying to all stages of the procedure is that the manager is responsible for taking action and he/she should always inform and discuss this with his/her line manager prior to taking that action.

No manager should attend a disciplinary interview on his/her own, He/she must have a note-taker. Summary notes of all disciplinary meetings will be taken and a copy kept on the employee's personnel file.

NB No formal disciplinary action will be started against a trade union official without informing the union branch concerned first.

### **Investigation process and meetings**

The manager conducting a disciplinary meeting will gather any evidence necessary prior to the meeting.

It may be possible to gather that evidence without talking to the employee concerned for example if the topic of the disciplinary is poor timekeeping or issues about absence; copies of timesheets or absence records can simply be collated without discussing them at an investigation meeting. However, the investigation process might require an investigation meeting with the employee concerned or with other employees prior to a disciplinary meeting. An investigation meeting is necessary when:

- An allegation has been made about an employee's conduct and the manager needs to hear their side of the story before deciding how to proceed.
- The manager needs to gather evidence from the employee to decide what else to investigate prior to the disciplinary meeting. For example who else to talk to about the issue
- The issues under investigation are complex and would benefit from an investigation.

An employee is not entitled to be accompanied at an investigation meeting as it is does not form part of the formal disciplinary process.

### **Process**

•If it is deemed necessary to suspend an employee before the commencement of the disciplinary process the employee will be invited to a meeting and informed about the suspension and the process that will be followed.

•If suspension is not necessary the employee will be invited to a meeting and informed of the intention to invoke the disciplinary process.

•A letter will then be sent to the employee detailing the alleged offence, time and date of the disciplinary hearing and the employee's right to be accompanied. The letter will also enclose any documents that will be discussed during the hearing.

•The hearing will normally be set for 5 working days from the date of the letter.

•At the hearing the employee will be asked to put forward their explanation and to answer any questions that will contribute to the understanding of the facts.

•A decision will not be given at the meeting. The manager hearing the case will reflect on all of the information provided and then make a decision. The result of the hearing will be made known to the employee in writing within five working days after the hearing.





# **Equality and Diversity policy**

## **Policy Statement**

EkaH Foundation is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and working inclusively across the organisation and all of our activities. These principles are upheld in our behaviours and practises.

Overall responsibility for this policy sits with Sri Ramana Devi who will ensure it is reviewed annually in line with changes and requirements of equalities and/or human rights legislation.

The EkaH Foundation opposes all forms of discrimination and intolerance in the workplace and services settings and will take a zero tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and victimisation. Any such behaviour will be treated as a disciplinary offence.

As an organisation that provides services for children, young people and adults, we will ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped to challenge all forms of discrimination. We will proactively identify and remove any barriers and inequalities in access to service provision.

## **Equality**

The EkaH Foundation adheres to the relevant equality legislation – the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a protected characteristic:

- Race
- Gender
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Gender re-assignment
- Age
- Pregnancy and maternity

This list is not comprehensive and we recognise that people can be discriminated against in other ways to. The Equality and diversity policy applies to recruitment, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal.

We will ensure our workplace, employment policies and practices do not unreasonably exclude or disadvantage anyone with a disability, and will comply with the duty to comply with any reasonable adjustments in relation to such persons.

## **Principles**

The EkaH Foundation is committed to:

- Ensuring diversity and human rights are at the core of its values
- Encouraging people with different backgrounds and attitudes to contribute to our organisation so it can draw upon the widest range of experiences











**Volunteering whilst on benefit**

You can still volunteer with us if you are receiving benefits provided that we follow the legal guidelines. We have information from the Jobs and Benefits Department which we can talk through with you regarding the hours you can do and what you can claim for expenses incurred through volunteering.

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Date of review: 11.4.2019

## **Confidentiality Policy**

### **This policy is to:**

- To protect the interests of the public we work with
- To ensure all people we work with have trust and confidence in the charity
- To protect the charity, its trustees, staff and volunteers
- To comply with data protection law

### **We will ensure:**

- Staff and volunteers receiving personal information about members of the public treat this information as confidential.
- Under no circumstances should staff and volunteers share personal information with their own partners, family or friends.
- All personal information will be treated as confidential. Information will only be collected that is necessary and relevant to the work in hand. It will be stored securely, only accessible on a need to know basis to those members of staff and volunteers duly authorised. The retention periods of personal information is covered in the retention section of the Data Protection Policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy

### **Our staff and volunteers:**

- Colleagues are able to share information with their line manager in order to discuss issues and seek advice.
- Colleagues will avoid exchanging personal information or comments about individuals with whom they have a professional relationship.
- Talking about the private life of a colleague is to be avoided at all times, unless the colleague in question has instigated the conversation.
- Colleagues will avoid talking about organisations or individuals in social settings.
- Colleagues will not disclose to anyone, other than their line manager, any information considered sensitive, personal, financial or private without the knowledge or consent of the individual, or an officer, in the case of an organisation.

There may be circumstances where colleagues would want to discuss difficult situations with each other to gain a wider perspective on how to approach a problem. The organisation's consent must be sought before discussing the situation, unless the colleague is convinced beyond doubt that the organisation would not object to this. Alternatively, a discussion may take place with names or identifying information remaining confidential.

Where there is a legal duty on The EkaH Foundation to disclose information, the person to whom the confidentiality is owed will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.

## **Why information is held**

- On an individual basis, (enabling - it enables) us to send out required information about our services
- (On) Voluntary, community organisations and self-help groups so we can work with them and signpost people to them where necessary
- (On) Employees, students, volunteers and (Trustees - Directors) personal details ( so they are contactable and we can keep qualification and training current etc).

Information about students is given to the training organisation and the college, but to no one else.

Information about ethnicity and disability of users is kept for the purposes of monitoring our equal opportunities policy and also for reporting back to funders where appropriate.

## **Access to information**

Information is kept confidential as an organisation and may be passed to colleagues, line managers or (Trustees - Directors) to ensure the best quality service for users.

Where information is sensitive, i.e. it involves disputes or legal issues, it will be confidential to the employee dealing with the case and their line manager. Such information should be clearly labelled 'Confidential' and should state the names of the colleagues entitled to access the information and the name of the individual or group who may request access to the information.

Colleagues will not withhold information from their line manager unless it is purely personal.

The public may have sight of their EkaH Foundation records held in their name or that of their organisation. The request must be in writing to EkaH Foundation giving 14 days notice and be signed

by the individual, or in the case of an organisation's records, by (the Chair - Director) or Executive Officer. Sensitive information will only be made available to the person or organisation named on the file.

Employees, volunteers and students may have sight of their personnel records by giving 14 days' notice in writing to (the Anand - Anand) Ennis-Cole

When photocopying or working on confidential documents, colleagues must ensure people passing do not see them. This also applies to information on computer screens.

## **Storing information**

General non-confidential information about organisations is kept in unlocked filing cabinets and in computer files with open access to all EkaH Foundation colleagues.

Personnel information on employees, volunteers, students and other individuals working within The EkaH Foundation will be kept in lockable filing cabinets by and will be accessible to the appropriate managers.

Files or filing cabinet drawers bearing confidential information should be labelled 'confidential'.

In an emergency situation, the Director may authorise access to files by other people.

## **Duty to disclose information**

Information will only be shared with other agencies only under the following circumstances:

- To ensure the safety and welfare of the person
- Where there is a safeguarding concern, allegation, grievance, or complaint that requires this
- To protect the safety and welfare of a child or other adult who may be at risk.
- If there is a legal duty to disclose information, such as:  
Safeguarding concern for children or adults at risk  
Drug trafficking, money laundering or acts of terrorism will be disclosed to the police.

In addition colleagues believing an illegal act has taken place, or that a user is at risk of harming themselves or others, must report this to the Anand Ennis-Cole who will report it to the appropriate authorities.

- Users should be informed of this disclosure.
- The public are made aware of their right of access to their records.
- The public will be made aware of their right to complain if they feel confidentiality has been breached.
- Breaches of confidentiality will be dealt with through the Charity's compliant, grievance or disciplinary policy.

## **Glossary**

Personal Information: By personal information we mean both:

- (a) The data protection definition which is any information which enables a living person to be identified (eg name, address, phone number, email address, nhs number etc or Special Categories of Personal Data which requires the individual's explicit consent for it to be held by the Charity, eg ethnicity, sexual life, political interests, religious beliefs, trade union affiliations etc.
- (b) Information, written or verbal, about a client that relates to their health, circumstances, family or experiences that is either provided to you for context so that you can provide a personalised service and/or information you glean directly as a result of your contact with the client.

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Date Reviewed:10.4.2019



## **Code of Conduct**

Our code of conduct covers the conduct of staff and volunteers both inside and outside of the organisation, including via external media.

All staff and volunteers of EkaH Foundation are expected to work within the parameters of this code of conduct to maintain our high expectations of a supportive, nurturing and ethical environment.

### **When dealing with colleagues we agree to:**

- Treat each other with respect, trust and courtesy as fellow professionals
- Promote a positive approach to working as a team
- Ensure all staff and volunteers have a voice and feel listened to
- Make every effort to be accepting of change and respond in an appropriate way
- To value each other's differing view points
- To seek a solution rather than (a - to) apportion blame, and work together to solve problems positively and with the best interests of the people we provide a service for at heart
- To share our ideas and resources which may help our colleagues to maintain the best service they can for the organisation
- Value the different talents of each other and work together to utilise these
- Respect confidentiality
- Not make derogatory comments or purposeful hurtful remarks
- Not question decision making in the public domain, but to follow the appropriate procedure outside the public domain
- Avoid personnel disputes and agree to settle conflict immediately in a calm and rational manner

### **When dealing with children, young people and adults at risk we:**

- Maintain their best interests in our decision making
- Keep their safety as paramount importance
- Show genuine interest in them
- Respect and treat them as individuals, including their differing belief systems
- Treat them appropriately for their age and ability
- Model positive behaviour
- Promote an atmosphere of trust and safe environment
- Motivate and inspire at every opportunity
- Celebrate their success, encourage, praise and support them
- Take time to listen to them with respect and confidentially
- Remain calm and display empathy
- Are honest in our communication with them
- Keep appropriate and accurate records where required

### **When working with parents and carer's we:**

- Ensure we work together in the best interests of the child or adult at risk
- Take time to listen to them with respect and confidentially, unless this poses a risk to the child or adult at risk
- Respect parents and carers come from differing backgrounds and their differing belief systems
- Are honest in our communication with them



