

<p><b>Policy No 01</b></p>	
<p><b>Safeguarding Report &amp; Investigation Procedure</b></p>	
<p><b>General Objectives of the Policy</b></p>	<p>As an organisation, Evolve affirms that everyone it comes into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Evolve will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.</p> <p>The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance for dealing with reports of breach of Evolve's Safeguarding Policy.</p>
<p><b>Policy Principles</b></p>	<p><b>OVERVIEW</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Concerns and reports may be received from a number of sources. All concerns and reports will be taken seriously and addressed immediately. Any concerns or reports will be sent to the Safeguarding Officer who will identify how they should be managed in line with the Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>2. The Safeguarding Officer, along with other members of the Evolve's Management Committee will gather evidence and interview relevant parties in order to establish the probable facts. Local contacts with child protection agencies and law enforcement should be identified in advance to enable referrals to outside agencies when needed. Any decision to refer a concern to an outside agency will be made in accordance with the legal framework of the country.</li> <li>3. Where concerns exist about the conduct of Evolve team members in relation to any potential breach of the Safeguarding Policy towards any team member, child or adult at risk, this will be investigated under this procedure by consideration of referral to statutory authorities for criminal investigation under the law of the country in which they work; and/or by Evolve in accordance with its Safeguarding Policy. This may result in a warning or</li> </ol>

termination and/or referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

4. Be aware that if a legitimate concern about a suspected safeguarding issue is raised, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no action will be taken against the reporter. However, appropriate sanctions will be applied in cases which are both false and malicious safeguarding accusations.
5. Once the incident is closed, Evolve will then make recommendations on improving the policies and practices that may have enabled the breach of safeguarding to occur, as well as on how to rebuild community trust, and on what help should be provided to minimise the harm to victims.

#### ***DEFINITIONS***

6. Evolve defines a **team member** as any member of staff, contractor, volunteer or other person carrying out work on behalf of Evolve.
7. Evolve defines a **survivor** as a person who has been abused or exploited, and is used in preference to 'victim' as it implies strength, resilience and the capacity to survive.
8. Evolve defines a **child** as anyone under the age of 18 years' old.
9. Evolve defines an **adult at risk** as an individual aged eighteen or over, who has needs for care and support; and is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and 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.

#### ***CONFIDENTIALITY***

10. In any safeguarding reporting and investigation process, safety is paramount, and confidentiality must be protected at all stages. Identifying information about the persons

involved will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only. All disclosures will be treated in confidence. Any Evolve team member that raises safeguarding concerns will be protected as far as possible from victimisation or any other detrimental treatment if they come forward with serious concerns, provided that they have followed the whistle-blowing procedure, and provided that concerns are raised in good faith.

11. The subject of the complaint and all witnesses must cooperate fully and openly with internal and statutory investigations and hearings. Their confidentiality will be protected and information, which could identify them, will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

12. Evolve will take strong action against anyone who knowingly broadcasts confidential information about any safeguarding concern or incident.

#### ***REPORTING PROCEDURES***

#### **13. Receiving a Report**

13.1. Reports can reach Evolve through various routes, including a structured format such as a letter, e-mail, text or message on social media, or even in the form of an informal discussion or rumour. If an Evolve team member hears something in an informal discussion that they think may be a safeguarding concern, they should report this to the Safeguarding Officer.

13.2. Where a safeguarding concern is disclosed directly to the Safeguarding Officer, they will receive the report following the principles set out in the Safeguarding Policy, and specifically will:

13.2.1. **RESPOND** appropriately:

- a. Listen carefully to what is being said.
- b. Take what is said seriously.
- c. Only use open questions (open questions begin with words like: who, what, when, where and how. Open questions cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no').
- d. Remain calm.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>e. Consider the person's age and level of understanding.</li><li>f. Check, if face to face, whether they mind you taking notes while they talk so you can make sure you capture the information accurately. At the end you can check with them that you have understood everything correctly.</li><li>g. Offer reassurance that disclosing is the right thing to do.</li><li>h. Establish only as much information as is needed to be able to tell the Safeguarding Officer what is believed to have happened, when and where.</li><li>i. Check out what the person hopes to result from the disclosure.</li><li>j. Tell the child or adult what you are going to do next.</li><li>k. It is important that team members DO NOT do the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>l. Make promises that cannot be kept (e.g. that you won't share the information).</li><li>m. Make assumptions or offer alternative explanations.</li><li>n. Investigate the allegations independently.</li><li>o. Contact the person about whom allegations have been made.</li><li>p. Undertake a physical or medical examination.</li></ul></li></ul> <p>13.2.2. <b>RECORD</b> carefully:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Make some very brief notes at the time, if appropriate, and write them up in detail as soon as possible.</li><li>b. Keep any original notes in case they are required by the statutory authorities.</li><li>c. Record the date, time, place, words used and how they appeared.</li><li>d. Record the actual words used, including any swear words or slang.</li><li>e. Record facts and observable things, not interpretations or assumptions.</li><li>f. Will not speculate or jump to conclusions.</li></ul>
--	---

	<p>13.2.3. The Safeguarding Officer will document the following information, using the following Incident Report format:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Name of person making report</li><li>b. Name(s) of alleged survivor(s) of safeguarding incident(s) if different from above</li><li>c. Name(s) of alleged perpetrator(s)</li><li>d. Description of incident(s)</li><li>e. Dates(s), times(s) and location(s) of incident</li></ol> <p>13.3. Due to the sensitive nature of safeguarding concerns, confidentiality must be maintained during all stages of the reporting process, and information shared on a limited 'need to know' basis only. This includes senior management who might otherwise be appraised of a serious incident.</p> <p>13.4. If the reporting staff member is not satisfied that the organisation is appropriately addressing the report, they have a right to escalate the report to a Trustee. The staff member will be protected against any negative repercussions as a result of any report, in line with Evolve's Whistleblowing Policy.</p> <p><b>14. Initial Assessment</b></p> <p>14.1. The Evolve Safeguarding Officer will formalise the relevant Decision Maker, which will be the Safeguarding Officer except where they may be implicated in the safeguarding concern.</p> <p>14.2. The Decision Maker handling this report will determine whether it is possible to take an investigation forward, whether the reported incident represents an apparent breach of the Safeguarding Policy, whether the incident may involve a team member being responsible for harmful behaviour or harm to others, and whether there is sufficient information to follow up the report.</p> <p>14.3. If the reported incident does not involve a team member, but represents a clear safeguarding risk to a child or at-risk adult externally, the report will be immediately referred to appropriate external authorities, which may include police or social services in the UK,</p>
--	--

	<p>Uganda or any other country depending on the circumstances involved.</p> <p>14.4. If there is insufficient information to follow up the report, or no way to ascertain this information (for example if the person making the report did not leave contact details), the report should be filed by the Safeguarding Officer in case it can be of use in the future, and to help assess any lesson learning.</p> <p>14.5. If the report raises any concerns relating to children under the age of 18, seek expert advice immediately. If at any point in the process of responding to the report (for example during an investigation) it becomes apparent that anyone involved is a child under the age of 18, the Decision Maker should be immediately informed and should seek expert advice before proceeding.</p> <p>14.6. If the decision is made to take the report forward, Evolve will ensure that the Decision Maker has the relevant expertise and capacity to manage a safeguarding case. If they do not have this expertise in-house, seek immediate assistance, through external capacity if necessary.</p> <p>14.7. The Decision Maker will clarify what, how and with whom information will be shared relating to this case. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible, and information shared on a need-to-know basis only. The Decision Maker will decide which information needs to be shared with which stakeholder, acknowledging that stakeholder information needs may vary.</p> <p>14.8. The Decision Maker will check any obligations on informing relevant bodies when a safeguarding report is received, including (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>14.8.1. Funding organisations;</li><li>14.8.2. Umbrella bodies/networks;</li><li>14.8.3. Statutory bodies (such as the Charity Commission in the UK).</li></ul>
--	---

## **15. Case Management**

15.1. The Decision Maker is the Safeguarding Officer who should be a senior staff member, not implicated or involved in the case in any way. If the Decision Maker is implicated or involved, the Decision Maker should be a Trustee.

15.2. If the report alleges a serious safeguarding violation, the Decision Maker will consider holding a case conference, to potentially include:

15.2.1. The Decision Maker;

15.2.2. The person who received the report

15.2.3. A trustee

15.2.4. Any external safeguarding adviser (or equivalent);

15.3. The case conference should decide the next steps to take, including any protection concerns and support needs for the survivor and other stakeholders (see below).

15.4. The Decision Maker will ensure that all Trustees are kept updated on any such decisions or discussions taken at the case conference.

## **16. Provision of Support**

16.1. The Decision Maker will provide appropriate support to the survivor(s) of safeguarding incidents, provided as a duty of care even if the report has not yet been investigated. Support could include (but is not limited to):

16.1.1. Psychosocial care or counselling;

16.1.2. Medical assistance;

16.1.3. Protection or security assistance (for example being moved to a safe location).

16.2. All decision making on support should be led and informed by the survivor.

## **17. Assessing Risk**

17.1. For reports relating to serious incidents, the Decision Maker will undertake an immediate risk assessment to determine whether there are any current or potential risks to any stakeholders involved in the case, and develop a mitigation plan if required.

17.2. The Decision Maker will continue to update the risk assessment and plan on a regular basis throughout and after the case as required.

#### **18. Decision on Next Steps**

18.1. The Decision Maker will decide on the relevant next steps, including but not limited to:

18.1.1. No further action (for example if there is insufficient information to follow up, or the report refers to incidents outside the organisation's remit)

18.1.2. Investigation is required to gather further information

18.1.3. Immediate warning or termination if no further information needed

18.1.4. Referral to relevant authorities

18.2. Evolve has a duty of care to protect anyone who comes into contact with any aspect of the programmes from harm. Where the report concerns associated personnel (for example contractors, consultants or suppliers), the Decision Maker will decide on appropriate next steps, for example to terminate a contract with a supplier based on the actions of their staff.

18.3. If an investigation is required and Evolve does not have internal capacity, the Decision Maker will identify resources to conduct the investigation, and determine which budget this will be covered by.

#### **19. Investigation Outcomes**

19.1. The Decision Maker will decide based on the information gathered in the investigation report. Decisions relating to a team member should be made in accordance with **Evolve's Code of Conduct**.

19.2. If at this or any stage in the process criminal activity is suspected, the case should be referred to the relevant authorities, including police or social services in the UK, Uganda or internationally, unless such a report may pose a specific risk to anyone involved in the case. In this case, the Decision Maker together with other senior staff will need to decide how to proceed. This decision should

	<p>be made bearing in mind a risk assessment of potential protection risks to all concerned, including the survivor and the subject of concern.</p> <p><b>20. Conclude the Case</b></p> <p>20.1. The Decision Maker will document all decisions made resulting from the case clearly and confidentially, and submit a report to the Trustees..</p> <p>20.2. The Safeguarding Officer will store all information relating to the case confidentially and securely, and in accordance with Evolve’s Data Protection Policy and any relevant local data protection law.</p> <p>20.3. The Safeguarding Officer will record anonymised data relating to the case to feed into organisational reporting requirements (e.g. serious incident reporting to the Trustees, safeguarding reporting to donors), and to feed into learning for dealing with future cases.</p>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	<p>Safeguarding Officer  The Decision Maker (as appropriate)  The Trustees  All Evolve team members.</p>
<b>Review Date</b>	<p>January 2021</p>
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	<p>Safeguarding Officer</p>