



**Gabriela Safe Haven Policy Document – Southeast and East Asian Women’s Association (SEEAWA)  
Policy Document - Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure**

<b>Policy Name:</b>	Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure
<b>Date Created:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	12 months
<b>Trustee Champion:</b>	Sarah Yeh

<p><b>Who is covered by the policy:</b></p>	<p>This policy and procedure document applies to all Gabriela trustees and volunteers, including staff to be hired, committee members to be formed, senior management to be appointed, and/or students on work placements.</p> <p>This document will be reviewed annually.</p> <p>All trustees and volunteers, staff, committee members, senior management, and/or students on work placements should read and familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy and procedure document, and explore relevant resources referenced in the policy &amp; procedure document.</p> <p><b>The Nominated Safeguarding Person/s (Role and Responsibilities)</b></p> <p>It is the responsibility of the Nominated Safeguarding Person and his/her Deputies to support all staff and volunteers in understanding this policy and procedure document and applying it in their everyday work and ensuring safe working practice guidance which all staff/volunteers have read and understood.</p> <p>The Nominated Safeguarding Person is the lead person to whom all safeguarding concerns and suspicions should be reported and from whom advise should be sought on all safeguarding matters.</p> <p>Our current NSP are listed below:</p> <p>Sarah Reid</p> <p>sarahreid@seeawa.org.uk</p>
<p><b>What is covered in the policy:</b></p>	<p>This policy applies to all trustees and volunteers, staff, committee members, senior management, and/or students on work placements or anyone working on behalf of Gabriela working directly with children and young people.</p> <p>Children, young people, parents/carers are informed of the policy. The policy applies to anyone with whom we are in contact in the course of our work, who is a child or a young person.</p> <p>Where the policy or procedure refers to a ‘child’ or ‘young person’ we mean anyone who has not yet reached the age of 18 years and up to 25 with learning disabilities.</p>

	<p>This policy is reviewed, endorsed and approved by the board of trustees annually, or when legislation changes.</p>
<p><b><i>The policy: (what we do, when &amp; where)</i></b></p>	<p><b>Child Protection Policy Statement of Commitment</b></p> <p>Gabriela believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility and duty of care to safeguard the welfare of children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To protect children and young people who receive Gabriela’s services.</li> <li>● To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection; Gabriela believes that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind.</li> </ul> <p>Gabriela has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe. We are committed to practice in a way that protects children/young people.</p> <p>Gabriela recognises that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.</li> <li>● All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.</li> <li>● Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people’s welfare.</li> </ul> <p>Gabriela will seek to keep children and young people safe by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Valuing children/young people, listening to and respecting them.</li> <li>● Adopting child protection practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers.</li> <li>● Developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures.</li> <li>● Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.</li> <li>● Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.</li> <li>● Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers - sharing concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.</li> </ul>

- Have a child protection policy on display so that users of the service are aware of our duty of care.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive the appropriate level of safeguarding training for their roles.

**The purpose of this policy** is to ensure that actions of staff and volunteers delivering services on behalf of Gabriela are transparent and promote and safeguard the welfare of all children/ young people that they encounter and are aware of their duty of care to children/young people.

This policy and procedure sets out how Gabriela implements safeguarding for children/ young people, with whom we come into contact in the course of our work.

Gabriela is committed to devising and implementing policies so that everyone within the organisation accepts their responsibilities for safeguarding children/young people at risk from abuse.

This means following procedures to protect them and reporting any concerns about their welfare to the appropriate authorities.

This policy and procedure helps us to achieve this by:

- Supporting us to safeguard children, young people in practice, by defining abuse and informing us what to do.
- Ensuring we all work to the same policy and procedure.
- Making sure we are accountable for what we do.
- Being clear what roles and responsibilities we all have in safeguarding.
- Saying what staff can expect from the organisation to help them work effectively.

This policy is informed by and supports our organisational purpose.

**The principles this policy is based on are:**

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount.
- The welfare of families will be promoted.
- The rights, wishes and feelings of children /young people and their families will be respected and listened too.
- All children/young people will be treated fairly in being able to access services which meet their needs, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- We will take all reasonable steps to protect service users from harm, discrimination and abuse.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and families are best supported and protected when there is a coordinated response from all relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Paid staff and volunteers should make sure that they are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect, that they question the behaviour of children and parents/carers and don't necessarily take what they are told at face value. They should make sure they know where to turn to if they need to ask for help, and refer to children's social care or to the police, if they suspect that a child is at risk of harm or is immediate danger.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recognising the signs of abuse:</b></p> <p>In Gabriela we want all staff and volunteers to be aware of the need to be alert to the potential abuse of children/young people especially those covering domestic violence. Gabriela understands that it is important that we recognise and act upon concerns which are listed in the Definitions section of the policy, but draws attention to more specifically;</p> <p><b>Domestic Violence</b> - Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so called 'honour killings'.</p> <p>The term domestic violence is used to include any form of physical, sexual or emotional abuse between people in a close relationship. It can take a number of forms such as physical assault, sexual abuse, rape, threats and intimidation. It may be accompanied by other kinds of intimidation such as degradation, mental and verbal abuse, humiliation, deprivation, systematic criticism and belittling.</p>
<p><b>Relevant Legislation and/or Key Definitions:</b></p>	<p><b>Definitions of Abuse:</b></p> <p><b>Abuse</b> - a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons. It can take the form of physical, psychological, financial or sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development or dignity of a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Abuse can be a single act or repeated acts and can be unintentional or deliberate. Abuse often involves criminal acts.</p> <p><b>Discriminatory abuse</b> – abuse motivated by a vulnerable person's age, race, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or other personal characteristic.</p>

**Financial or material abuse** - including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

**Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a vulnerable person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Examples include failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, failure to protect them from physical or psychological harm or danger;  
 failure to ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a vulnerable person's basic emotional needs.

**Physical abuse** – includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.

**Psychological abuse** - includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks. Examples include not giving a vulnerable person 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 a vulnerable person, which may include interactions that are beyond a vulnerable person's developmental capability. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), or the exploitation or corruption of a vulnerable person.

**Sexual abuse** - involves forcing, enticing or coercing someone to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the vulnerable person 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 a vulnerable person 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 can be carried out by adults or other children.

**Child** – Gabriela regards a child as anyone under the age of 18 years, irrespective of the age of majority in the country in which the child lives or in their home country. It is widely recognised that children are generally more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation due to factors such as age, gender, social and economic status, developmental stage, and dependence on others.

	<p><b>Vulnerable person/people</b> – for the purposes of this policy this is an umbrella term which covers children, young people and vulnerable adults.</p> <p><b>Vulnerable adult</b> - a person, 18 years and above, who by reason of disability, age, gender, social and economic status, or illness, the context they are in, may be unable to take care of or to protect him or herself against abuse, harm or exploitation.</p> <p><b>Youth or young people</b> - individuals aged 15 to 25 (15 to 35 in some countries) – Gabriela recognises that this group spans the categories of ‘children and ‘adults’ but regards young people as having particular safeguarding needs and requiring distinct consideration aside from younger children and older adults.</p> <p><b>Legislation</b>  The Care Act (2014)  Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006)  Mental Capacity Act (2005)  Equality Act (2010)  The Children Act (1989)  Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)</p>
<p><b>Other relevant Gabriela Policies:</b></p>	<p>This policy and procedure document should be used in conjunction with:</p> <p>Digital Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>Ending VAWG Policy,</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety Policy,</p> <p>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and</p> <p>Data Protection Policy.</p>

**Gabriela’s Safeguarding Procedures:**

It is the responsibility of trustees and volunteers, staff, committee members, senior management, and/or students on work placements to know, understand Gabriela’s Safeguarding policy & procedures.

To achieve good practice in our setting we will ensure the following areas are clear and put into practice:

## 1) Safer Recruitment & Selection

All staff/volunteers will go through the following process prior to delivering/ supporting activities/services to children/young people.

We have a policy and procedure which ensures that all potential paid staff and volunteers:

- Complete an application form or a letter of application. This includes: address, evidence of relevant qualifications, the reasons why they want to work with children and young people, paid work and voluntary work experience and all criminal convictions.
- Provide two pieces of identification which confirm both identity and address.
- Undergo an interview (formal or informal) involving at least two interviewers.
- Provide at least two references which are followed up before a post is offered. One reference is from the last employer or an organisation that has knowledge of the applicant's work or volunteering with children or young people. If the applicant has not worked with children or young people before, then they should confirm this and give an alternative referee.
- Consent to a Disclosure and Barring Service check (formally CRB check) at the appropriate level (standard or enhanced). Agree to sign up to the DBS update service.

Furthermore, the organisation complies with all other safeguarding regulations:

- We understand that a person who is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults is breaking the law if they work, volunteer, or try to work or volunteer with these groups.
- We understand that an organisation which knowingly employs someone who is barred to work with those groups will also be breaking the law.
- We understand that if our organisation dismisses a member of staff or volunteer because they have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or would have done so if they had not left, we must complete a DBS referral form.
- Gabriela will have an induction process including access to policies, procedures and code of conduct expected to be followed by all those delivering services on behalf of Gabriela to support their work.
- An appraisal system in place to identify any concerns or issues.

## 2) Management & Support of Paid Staff & Volunteers

- All staff and volunteers will be provided with a job description (paid staff) or a role profile (volunteers) outlining their main responsibilities. This includes a requirement to comply with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures and ground rules for appropriate behaviour.



- All staff and volunteers are supported through an induction process in which safeguarding/child protection procedures are explained and training needs identified.
- All paid staff and volunteers complete a role review at the end of their induction period before being confirmed in post. Inductions will be completed within 6 months.
- All paid staff are given supervision at least every 8 weeks by the designated authorized person of the organisation.
- All volunteers are given regular support sessions. (This may include one to one or group support, mentoring or shadowing opportunities).
- Implements disciplinary and grievance procedures for all paid staff and volunteers.
- All paid staff and volunteers attend regular ongoing safeguarding training appropriate to their role.
- All paid staff and volunteers receive an induction, which includes information on all the organisation's policies and procedures.

### **3) Safer working practice:**

We will ensure that adequate staff and/or volunteers are supporting activities that Gabriela runs.

All activities are properly planned and organised. Planning ensures that the activities are age- appropriate, appropriately supervised, take staff ratios into account and use qualified instructors.

- Risk Assessments for activities are carried out prior to delivering activity sessions.
- All activities are risk assessed to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent children and young people being harmed whilst participating in the organisation's activities.
- We will regularly assess and review safety risks which arise from premises, activities, equipment and travel arrangements, as outlined in the organisation's Health and Safety Policy.
- Ground rules are set for appropriate behaviour for children and young people, staff, volunteers, parents/ carers. Systems are in place and implemented if the ground rules are broken.
- We will ensure that images of children, young people and families are only used after written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.

### **4) Providing Safer Activities and Trips**

Necessary arrangements:

- People whose suitability has not been checked, including through a DBS check, must not be allowed to have unsupervised contact with children.

- All paid staff and volunteers undertaking specialist roles, (e.g. taking children and young people off site on trips) are provided with appropriate training.
- Employer's liability and/or public liability insurance has been taken out to ensure that all activities and services and all people taking part, are covered.

#### 5) **Responding to concerns**

If any member of staff/volunteer is concerned about a child/young person they must inform the Nominated Safeguarding lead Person (NSP) or deputy NSP immediately.

- The written record must be clear, precise and a factual account of observations or what has been said.
- The NSP will decide on the most appropriate course of action and whether the concerns should be referred to Children Social Care. If it is decided that a referral needs to be made to children's social care this will be discussed with the parents, unless to do so would place the child at further risk or undermine the collection of evidence, e.g. forensic evidence. All concerns, discussions and decisions will be recorded in writing.
- If a member of staff disagrees with the level of concern and feels that a child has not been protected, then any member of staff can make a direct referral to children's social care

#### **Disclosure by a Child/Young Person:**

Gabriela recognises that a child/young person may seek you out to share information about abuse or neglect, or talk spontaneously, individually or in groups when you are present. In these situations, YOU MUST:

- Listen carefully to the child/ young person. You can seek clarification but DO NOT ask direct questions or start to investigate the matter.
- Give the child/young person time and your full attention.
- Allow the child/young person to give their account; do not stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make an accurate record of the information you have been given, taking care to record the timing, setting and people present. Make a record of the child's/young person's presentation as well as what was said. Do not throw this away as it may later be needed as evidence.
- Use the child's/young person's own words where possible.
- Explain that you cannot promise not to speak to others about the information they have shared - do not offer false confidentiality.

#### **Reassure the child/ young person that:**

- They have done the right thing in telling you.
- They have not done anything wrong.

- Tell the child / young person what you are going to do next and explain that you will need to get help to keep him/her safe.
- DO NOT ask the child /Young person to repeat his or her account of events to anyone.
- You must log and record information regarding concerns on the same day.

It is good practice to be as open and honest as possible with parents/carers about any concerns.

However, in order to safeguard evidence, you must not discuss your concerns with parents/carers in the following circumstances:

- Where sexual abuse or sexual exploitation is suspected.
- Where organised or multiple abuse is suspected.
- Where fabricated or induced illness is suspected.
- Where contacting parents/carers would place a child, yourself or others at immediate risk.

### **Information Required When Making a Referral Regarding a Child/Young Person:**

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will need to be contacted via the golden number for flow chart dealing with concerns about a child/young person.

- Be prepared to give as much of the following information as possible (in emergency situations all of this information may not be available).
- Unavailability of some information or the Nominated Safeguarding Person should not stop you making a referral. Use the **MASH Referral Record** to do this.
- Your name, telephone number, position and request the same of the person to whom you are speaking.
- Full name and address, telephone number of family, date of birth of child /young person and siblings, any special needs.
- Gender, ethnicity, first language, any special needs.
- Names, dates of birth and relationship of household members and any significant others.
- The names of professionals known to be involved with the child/family and/or vulnerable adult e.g.: GP, Health Visitor, School.
- The nature of the concern and foundation for the concern.
- An opinion on whether the child may need urgent action to make them safe.
- Your view of what appears to be the needs of the child and/or vulnerable adult and their family.
- Whether the consent of a parent with Parental Responsibility has been given to the referral being made.

### **Allegations Against Adults Who Work with Children /Young People**

If you have information which suggests an adult who works with children /young people (in a paid or unpaid capacity) has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a children/young people.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a children/young people.
- Behaved towards a child /young person in a way that indicated s/he is unsuitable to work with children /young people.

You should speak immediately with your manager who has responsibility for managing allegations. The senior manager will consult with/make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) via the MASH Team. If one of those people is implicated in the concerns you should discuss your concerns directly with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) via the MASH Team.

### **Making a Referral**

A referral will involve providing information of concern to the Nominated Safeguarding Lead Person (unless the concern is about the Nominated Safeguarding Person) about an Allegation against a staff/ volunteer.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) will need to be contacted in order for the Local Authority Designated Officer to be informed. The LADO will make enquiries and take appropriate action provide guidance and may request for further information to be submitted.

You may be called for a meeting with the LADO. The LADO may have to speak to the Police to decide if a criminal act has taken place, in serious cases the Police may be informed and may investigate.

You will be informed of the action that will be taken by the LADO.

### **YOU SHOULD NOT:**

- Call a staff meeting and discuss the matter with staff/volunteers. The LADO will guide you on what needs to be done.
- You should not try and bring the perpetrator of the alleged abuse in contact with the victim/parents to discuss concerns.
- Do not delay your response.

Inability to inform parents should not prevent a referral being made. The MASH team will then decide on how and when the parents can be approached and by whom.

**If a child is in immediate danger or is at harm or risk you should refer to the children's social care and/or the police**

- In emergency dial 999
- MASH: 020 8901 2690 between 9 am – 5pm
- Out of Hours 5pm – 9am Emergency Duty Social Worker 020 8424 0999

### **Action To Be Taken Following the Referral:**

Gabriela will ensure that you keep an accurate record of your concern(s) made at the time. Gabriela puts concerns in writing to the social care team following the referral within 48 hours duty

Gabriela will accurately record the action agreed or that no further action is to be taken and the reasons for this decision.

### **Confidentiality**

Gabriela will ensure that any records made in relation to a referral are kept confidentially and in a secure place.

Information in relation to child protection concerns should be shared on a "need to know" basis. However, the sharing of information is vital to child protection and, therefore, the issue of confidentiality is secondary to the need for protection.

### **Challenges & Escalation**

All practitioners need to be robust in constructively challenging colleagues when necessary, to achieve best outcome for children and young people.

### **Whistle Blowing**

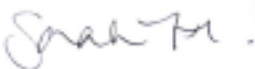
This is the confidential disclosure by any individual of any concern encountered in the workplace related to a perceived wrong doing. Gabriela considers such wrongdoing to include:

- General malpractice, such as immoral, illegal or unethical conduct.
- Conduct where someone's health and safety has been put in danger.
- Gross misconduct.

If individuals have concerns relating to their employment with Gabriela these should be raised under Gabriela grievance policy. Where it is felt that the organisation has not or will not address the concerns appropriately the Government's Whistle-blowing services should be contacted via NSPCC – call 0800 028 0285 or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) .

Signed by Trustees:

Sarah Yeh, Trustee –



Susan Cueva, Trustee -



Date: 25 Sep 2024