



## **Hereford Yoga CIC Safeguarding Adults Protection Policy May 2024**

### **Opening Statement and Purpose**

Hereford Yoga CIC has a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults. The company is committed to ensuring safeguarding practice reflects statutory responsibilities, government guidance and complies with best practice, Iyengar Yoga Association (UK) requirements and the mission and values of Hereford Yoga CIC (HYCIC or the Company). This policy recognises that the welfare and interests of vulnerable adults are paramount in all circumstances and outlines the duties and responsibility of all board members and teachers, working on behalf of Hereford Yoga CIC in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults. This is to ensure that:

*regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, all vulnerable adults have a positive and enjoyable experience of yoga at Hereford Yoga CIC in a safe and supportive environment.*

### **Context and structure of policy**

This policy follows the guidelines of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Framework. As advised by the framework, it also recognises the specific context of HYCIC in that:

- The company provides services suitable for vulnerable adults
- Training in yoga may involve touching vulnerable adults in order to adjust, to maintain safety or perfect learning of yoga asanas

- There is the potential for teachers and trainers of vulnerable adults in any context to develop overly influential, inappropriate, exploitative, or actively abusive relationships with such adults
- That the safe, supportive, and involved relationship between effective teachers and students of yoga may result in disclosures of abuse

### **Scope of policy and definitions**

Vulnerable Adult Definition: *"A person who is 18 years of age or over, and who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself, or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation."* (Law Commission - Who Decides? Making decisions on behalf of mentally incapacitated adults 1997)

### Factors of a Vulnerable Adult:

- ◇ Is elderly and frail due to ill health, physical disability, or cognitive impairment
- ◇ Has a learning disability
- ◇ Has a physical disability and / or a sensory impairment
- ◇ Has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder
- ◇ Has a long-term illness / condition
- ◇ Misuses substances or alcohol
- ◇ Is unable to demonstrate the capacity to make a decision and is in need of care and support.

Whenever we say carers in this document we mean carers, advocates, legal representatives, or responsible staff associated with vulnerable adults who have a duty of care regarding their wellbeing and safety. The guidance in this policy can be considered alongside the parallel Child Protection Policy when the safety of children and very young adults is considered (18-19 years) and up to 25 years old for young people with special needs. Safeguarding adults means:

- ◇ Protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.
- ◇ People and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.
- ◇ People and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action

Recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore at potential risk to their safety or wellbeing. (Care and Support Statutory Guidance Issued under the Care Act 2014). **(Being safe is only one of many things that adults want for themselves and there can be some challenges in balancing safety and freedom in a way which protects and fulfils human rights).** This policy is implemented by the company and its teachers in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act which supports the reasonable assumption of capacitous decision-making by vulnerable adults unless

clear evidence to the contrary is present. Abuse may take the form of physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse/exploitation or neglect as well as exploitation for extremism/terrorism as defined by the Prevent agenda.

To address the priority of safeguarding vulnerable adults in the specific context of the Company, the policy is designed to ensure:

- An emphasis on prevention of the potential for abuse by ensuring tight governance around recruitment of teachers (and where appropriate volunteers)
- The creation and maintenance of an environment inimical to all forms of abuse through its shared values, culture and systematic interventions to prevent the conditions for abuse
- That where abuse is suspected it will be swiftly and effectively reported
- That when suspected abuse is reported it will be swiftly and effectively addressed

### Designated Members of Staff for Safeguarding (DMS)

The Company has two designated “Safeguarding Leads” (Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead) who take primary responsibility for:

- 1/ being a first point of contact for any vulnerable adult protection-related concerns
- 2/ sharing information with the staff team (HYCIC Board and teachers)
- 3/ organising staff induction and training for safeguarding
- 4/ accessing information and liaising with outside agencies to make sure information is up to date
- 5/ collating information when there are concerns about a vulnerable adult and contacting the appropriate professionals to make a referral or to seek further advice
- 6/ The Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead will be appropriately trained, and update/refresh training and knowledge every two years.

### **Awareness and understanding of this policy**

Carers or responsible staff associated with vulnerable adults in contact with the company will be advised of this policy and we will ensure that an updated policy is available on the HYCIC website. Partner organisations contracting sessions “off-site” (away from the studio) will be made aware where to find our policies on our website.

All Carers are advised that if we have a concern about a vulnerable adult, we will seek consent from that individual to share these concerns. However, if sharing these concerns puts the vulnerable adult at risk of significant or further harm, we will seek advice from Herefordshire Council staff, as we would if consent was not forthcoming and the concerns remained.

All Board members and teachers will be oriented on induction towards this policy and made aware of this policy as well as Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) procedures. This will include training on possible signs of abuse (including recording

past or current injuries on a body map), how to share information and concerns, the safeguarding procedures of the Company and how to make referrals. Induction and training sessions will be refreshed every 3 years. The Board will review this policy and have an annual safeguarding update. This review will be reflective and meaningful, and all Board members reminded of the importance of Safeguarding and the compatibility of excellence in safeguarding practice with the wider mission and values of the Company.

### **Vetting and access to vulnerable adults**

Our primary responsibility is the welfare of all the vulnerable adults in our care. The Company therefore follows local adult safeguarding procedures developed by the HSAB and ensures that all adults working with and looking after vulnerable adults have the skills and knowledge to put the procedures into practice. All board members and teachers and others working on behalf of the company in any setting where they may be left alone with vulnerable adults will be vetted every three years via the Disbarring and Disclosure Service. All board members and teachers will ensure that any adults not known to be vetted, will not be left alone with vulnerable adults.

### **A culture of prevention at HYCIC**

Iyengar Yoga is a practice associated with developing self-confidence, body awareness, internal security, boundaried relationships and self-assertion. Appropriate teaching of Iyengar yoga is therefore inherently protective of vulnerable adults. Accordingly, HYCIC has clear aligned policies and procedures to ensure only appropriately qualified and accredited Iyengar teachers are employed. HYCIC actively fosters an open and collaborative community of teachers and discourages closed, exclusive, controlling or otherwise unhealthy relationships to develop between teachers and students of any age. Teacher meetings are held on at least an annual basis. Classes, where possible, are “covered” by other teachers on a regular basis; students are encouraged to attend teaching from other Iyengar practitioners within and outside of the Company; Carers of vulnerable adults are encouraged to form relationships with the teachers and take an interest in the work of the Company and the vulnerable adult’s progress and wellbeing; Carers are encouraged to discuss any concerns that may arise and will also be made aware of the safeguarding policy and complaints process.

### **Referring a Vulnerable Adult**

Vulnerable adults themselves, carers, teachers, directors and members of the public can raise any concerns or potential referrals with either of the Safeguarding Leads or directly make a referral for safeguarding to the Herefordshire Safeguarding Board, if they prefer to do so.

Referrals will be made using the most up to date form on the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) website. Referrals will contain:

- details of the concern/allegation
- name, address, and d.o.b.
- details of setting and who involved
- any other relevant information including ethnicity, specific vulnerability issues etc

Where allegations are made against anyone working on behalf of or closely connected to the Company, The Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead will work together to manage the situation which would usually result in the immediate suspension of the member of staff from any direct contact with children or vulnerable adults. If the concern involves a Safeguarding Lead, then the other lead could be contacted, or advice sought from HSAB, using the contacts listed at the end of this policy. Any upheld allegations will be dealt with according to HSAB procedures and the law, including notification of the DBS.

### **Prevent Duty**

Exposing or involving vulnerable adults in extremist beliefs and/or terrorism is in itself a form of abuse and is covered by this policy. Training associated with this policy will include an awareness of Prevent Duties and the need for specific and timely referral to police when warranted.

### **Whistleblowing**

Anyone connected to the centre who has ANY CONCERNS ABOUT MISCONDUCT of board members or teachers is encouraged to raise them with the Safeguarding Leads or the Director of the company. These concerns do not need to be directly related to safeguarding issues. Concerns so raised will be dealt with in line with Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

### **Records, Reporting and Monitoring of Safety**

Routine records of adults will record statutory information required, such as name, d.o.b, address, gender and carers. Any reports of concerns, disclosures or allegations will be recorded and kept securely in an electronic file with access limited to the Safeguarding Leads. To support monitoring, any accidents or incidents involving vulnerable adults are highlighted and considered in the context of safeguarding guidance (NB All accidents and incidents are reported to the Board). Teachers will be reminded of the importance of listening carefully to any allegations raised by vulnerable adults, of taking them seriously, and of not asking any leading questions as this can jeopardise criminal investigation.

### **Confidentiality**

Safeguarding raises issues of confidentiality which must be clearly understood by all concerned. Board members and teachers have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with others, particularly investigative agencies and social services. If any vulnerable adult or their carer confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the adult sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies. Within that context, the confiding individual must, however, be assured that the matter will be disclosed only to people who need to know about it. Where possible, consent must be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the

priority. Where a disclosure has been made, staff must let the adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take as a result. Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all, and the wishes and feelings of vulnerable adults taken into account as far as possible within the wider framework of safeguarding legislation and processes.

### **Use of mobile phones/cameras**

The use of cameras is not permitted in Hereford Yoga Studio or Hereford Yoga CIC classes and workshops without express consent. Content on the camera is deleted after printing and copying. Camera use is banned in changing areas and toilets. Any safeguarding training will include reference to making and copying unauthorised images on mobile phones, being aware of other persons potential misuse of mobile phones, the need to avoid self-compromise as well as protect vulnerable adults.

### **Monitoring and review of policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually with an in-depth review every three years, or in the following circumstances: changes in legislation and/or government guidance as required by Herefordshire I Safeguarding Adults Board, UK Sport and/or Home Country Sports Councils and the Iyengar Yoga Association, UK or as a result of any other significant change or event.

**Last reviewed May 2024**

### **Appendix: Routine and Emergency Contact details:**

- HYCIC • Safeguarding Lead and Chair (Kate Jones 07711 577563) • Deputy Safeguarding Lead (Claire Jenkins 07759 633929)
- Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board • 01432 260715 (weekdays 9am-5pm) • 0330 123 9309 (after 5pm, weekends and public holidays) • Email: [safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk) • Post: Safeguarding Team, Herefordshire Council, Elgar House, Holmer Road, Hereford HR4 9BD
- Emergencies If someone is injured or in immediate danger: • Telephone: 999 - police, fire, ambulance If there is no emergency but you think a crime may have been committed: • Telephone: West Mercia Police on 101 – referrals can also be made online with West Mercia Police.
- A further useful list of contacts (e.g. domestic violence, modern slavery) can be found here: <https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/partner-resources/useful-contacts>