



# Hereford Yoga CIC

## Child Protection Policy - May 2024

### **1. Opening Statement and purpose**

Hereford Yoga CIC acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and 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).

The policy recognises that the welfare and interests of children are paramount in all circumstances and outlines the duties and responsibility of staff, volunteers and directors working on behalf of HYCIC in relation to safeguarding children to ensure that:

*regardless of age, gender, religion or beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio- economic background, all children have a positive and enjoyable experience of yoga at HYCIC in a safe and child-centred environment.*

### **2. Context and structure of policy**

The policy has been written following the guidelines of the Herefordshire Safeguarding framework. As advised by the framework, it also recognises the specific context of HYCIC in that:

- HYCIC provides services specifically for children
- Training in yoga may involve touching children to adjust their posture to maintain safety or perfect learning of yoga asanas

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

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### **3. Scope of policy and definitions**

Whenever we say parents in this document, we mean parents and carers and whenever we say child, we mean children and young people aged 0 to 19 years old (up to 25 years old for young people with special needs).

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.

In the Department for Education (DfE) document: Working together to Safeguard Children, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

To address these priorities and recognize the specific context of HYCIC, 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*

**4. 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:

- being a first point of contact for any child protection-related concerns
- sharing information with the staff team
- organising staff induction and training for safeguarding
- accessing information and liaising with outside agencies to make sure information is up to date
- collating information when there are concerns about a child and contacting the appropriate professionals to make a referral or to seek further advice.

The Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead will be appropriately trained, and update/refresh training and knowledge every two years.

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

Parents of children 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” of the studio will be made aware where to find our policies on our website.

All Parents are advised that:

*If we have a concern about a child, we will share these concerns with parents/carers. However, if sharing these concerns puts the child at risk of significant or further harm we will seek advice from Herefordshire Council staff within the MASH team.*

All board members and teachers will be oriented on induction towards this policy and made aware of this policy as well as Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures. This session will include addressing 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 and teachers will be reminded of the importance of Safeguarding and the compatibility of excellence in safeguarding practice with the wider mission and values of the Company.

### **6. Vetting and access to Children**

Our primary responsibility is the welfare of all the children in our care. The Company therefore follows local child protection procedures developed by the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and ensures that all adults working with, and looking after, children have the skills and knowledge to put the procedures into practice.

All board members and teachers where they may be left alone with children will be vetted every three years via the Disclosure and Barring Service. All board members and teachers will ensure that any adults not known to be vetted will not be left alone with children.

### **7. A Culture of Prevention at HYCIC**

Iyengar Yoga is a practice associated with developing self-confidence, body awareness, internal security, bounded relationships and self-assertion. Appropriate teaching of Iyengar yoga is therefore inherently protective of children. Accordingly, HYCIC has clear aligned policies and procedures to ensure only appropriately qualified and accredited Iyengar teachers are engaged by the Company.

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; parents of children are encouraged to form relationships with the teachers and take an interest in the work of the Company and their children’s progress and wellbeing; parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns that may arise and will also be made aware of the safeguarding policy and complaints process.

### **8. Referring a child**

Children, parents, 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 if they prefer to do so.

Referrals will be made using the most up to date form on the Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership Website.

Referrals will contain:

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

### **9. Allegations “against a member of staff”**

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.

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If the concern involves a Safeguarding Lead, then the other lead could be contacted, or advice sought from Herefordshire’s Safeguarding provision using the contacts listed at the end of this policy. Any upheld allegations will be dealt with according to Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership procedures and the law, including notification of the DBS.

### **10. Prevent duty**

Exposing or involving children 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.

### **11. Whistleblowing**

Anyone connected to the centre who has ANY CONCERNS ABOUT MISCONDUCT of board members and teachers is encouraged to raise them with the Safeguarding Leads or

any 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.

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

Routine records of children will record statutory information required, such as name, DOB, address, gender, parents (or designated adults with parental responsibility).

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 children are highlighted and considered in the context of safeguarding guidance (NB All accidents and incidents are reported to the Board).

Board members and teachers will be reminded of the importance of listening carefully to any allegations raised by children, of taking them seriously, and of not asking any leading questions as this can jeopardise criminal investigation.

## **13. 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 children with others particularly investigative agencies and social services.

If any child, parent or other adult confides in a member of staff and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the member of staff tells the confider sensitively that they have a responsibility to refer cases of alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies. Within that context, the confider 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 child is the priority.

Where a disclosure has been made, board members and teachers must let the confider 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 children taken into account as far as possible within the wider framework of safeguarding legislation and processes.

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

The use of cameras is not permitted in Hereford Yoga Studio or HYCIC 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.

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 to protect children.

## **15. 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 Hereford Safeguarding Children Partnership, 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 telephone numbers

Hereford Yoga CIC

- Safeguarding Lead and Chair Kate Jones 07711577563
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead Claire Jenkins 07759 633929

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Phone: (01432) 260800

(01905) 768020 (out of hours)

Email: [admin.sbu@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin.sbu@herefordshire.gov.uk)

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 101 or complete an online report

### **Select key guidance documents**

What to do if you're worried a child is being abused

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419604/What to do if you re worried a child is being abused.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/>