**Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

While Hearing Loss Cornwall do not work directly with children, it is our obligation to be aware of their safeguarding needs and how they should be protected from abuse and harm. For the purposes of safeguarding, anyone up to 18 years old is a child.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Hearing Loss Cornwall, including all paid staff, and the board of trustees and volunteers. Vulnerable adults will be 18+. *Throughout this policy the word children can be substituted with vulnerable adult.*

**We believe that:**

Children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind

We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe

**The purpose of this policy statement is:**

• to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, who receive Hearing Loss Cornwall’s services, from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services

• to provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

* **Potential risks:** We do not work directly with children, but we do provide communication support to care for this need. Hearing Loss Cornwall work with professional communication support workers who are affiliated with their professional body and have undergone the relevant checks. Risk is mitigated by the fact that no-one else will be in the position of being the “sole” team member present at these appointments.
* **Recruitment:** Hearing Loss Cornwall will seek to demonstrate a comprehensive system of vetting and barring staff, ensuring that DBS checks and disclosures are in place.
* **Raising concerns:** Any safeguarding concerns should be taken straight to the Executive Office, who in turn may be required to escalate this further, depending on how urgent a response is necessary and how serious the issue is. Contact will be made immediately through the appropriate authorities ie: Cornwall Council or the police, with reporting to the charity trustees as an additional requirement. Less urgent matters will be addressed direct to the charity’s board of trustees.
* **Responding to concerns:** Whether the individuals concerned are directly in our care or not, if anyone representing Hearing Loss Cornwall overhears a conversation about something suspicious, HLC staff will have a duty to report it
* **Training:** Our team hold regular “in-house” discussions and team briefings and also benefit from advocacy training with inherent guideline and trainings on safeguarding. Our work ethic revolves entirely around seeking best practice, addressing the confidential and medical needs of our users and safeguarding provides the backbone of this service.
* **Policies:** While we do not specifically work directly with children, our mission, policies and best practice all support the need to be aware of the vulnerabilities of those we work with and provide for. See other policies which include anti-bullying and whistle-blowing and also refer to our “Staff Handbook”
* **Handling Information:** Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance is already part of our process

HLC staff/trustees must remain vigilant and alert, at all times, to any signs or symptoms of abuse. Any suspicions should be shared immediately and will be actioned as soon as possible.

**Stay focused, professional and remain alert to any safeguarding issues**

The Executive Officer will be the designated Safeguarding Officer

Chair of Trustees
Signed:

Date: