SINCERESPONSE C.I.C.

Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy

Respect Life. Love Peace. | Company No. 12197595 | 84 Vaughan Way, Leicester, LE1 4SH

Version: November 2026. **Next review:** November 2027, or sooner after any serious incident or change in the law.

1. Purpose and scope

Every child and young person has the right to be safe. SINCERESPONSE C.I.C. runs youth enterprise bootcamps, one-to-one and online mentoring, wellbeing workshops and street outreach for young people in Leicester. This policy explains how we keep children safe, and what everyone must do if they are worried about a child.

A child is anyone under 18. This policy applies to all directors, staff, mentors, coaches and volunteers. The welfare of the child comes first, always, in line with the Children Act 1989 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children. We also follow the procedures of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland safeguarding children partnership. Our separate Safeguarding Adults Policy covers adults at risk, including clients of Sincere Home Support.

2. Who is responsible

Role	Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Leah Thomas. Phone 020 4592 8451 (8am–8pm daily) or contact@sinceresponse.com.
Deputy DSL	Davious Carney, Director. Phone 020 3036 2757 or 020 4592 8451. Used if the DSL is unavailable or the concern is about the DSL.
Emergency	If a child is in immediate danger or a crime is being committed, call 999.
Children's social care	Use the council where the child lives. Leicester City: 0116 454 1004 (24 hours). Leicestershire County: First Response Children's Duty Team, 0116 305 0005 (24 hours).
Police	101 (not an emergency) or 999 (emergency).
Allegations about an adult who works with children	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Leicestershire: leicestershire.gov.uk/lado or CFS-LADO@leics.gov.uk. Leicester City: through Leicester City Council on 0116 454 1004.
Other help	NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000 (adults worried about a child). NSPCC whistleblowing advice line 0800 028 0285. Childline 0800 1111 (free, for young people).

3. What abuse and harm can look like

Abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or neglect. In our work we also watch closely for:

- criminal exploitation, including county lines, knife and weapon carrying, and gang involvement;
- sexual exploitation and abuse online, including grooming and sharing of images;
- bullying and abuse between young people, including "banter" that is really harassment;
- domestic abuse in the home, radicalisation, self-harm, and going missing.

Signs include unexplained injuries, sudden changes in behaviour, new unexplained money or gifts, being frightened of a person or place, being withdrawn, or staying out late with older people. A sign on its own may mean nothing, so always tell the DSL and let them judge.

4. Safer recruitment and training

- Everyone who works or volunteers with young people has an Enhanced DBS check, including the relevant Barred List, before they start. We also check identity and take two references.
- Every new person has a safeguarding briefing before their first session, and reads and signs this policy and the Code of Conduct below.
- Safeguarding training is refreshed at least once a year and recorded.
- Anyone whose DBS position changes, or who is arrested, charged or cautioned, must tell the DSL straight away.

5. Code of conduct: safer working practice

- **No closed doors.** We do not spend time alone with a child where nobody can see or hear. One-to-one mentoring takes place in an open or visible space, or with another adult nearby, and the session is logged.
- **Ratios.** Group sessions have at least two adults present, and more where the activity or the age of the group needs it.
- **Contact with young people.** Staff never give out personal phone numbers or social media, and never message young people privately. We contact young people through their parent or carer, or through the organisation's approved channel.
- **Online mentoring.** Only on the platform and account approved by the DSL, at a scheduled time, with parent or carer consent for under-16s. The young person should be in a suitable space at home, and we do not record a session unless the DSL has agreed it in advance.
- **Gifts, lifts and money.** No gifts, loans or favours. No lifts alone with a child unless it is an emergency, and then the DSL is told at once.
- **Behaviour.** No swearing, alcohol, drugs, vaping or inappropriate jokes, and no physical contact beyond what is appropriate. We use physical intervention only to stop a child hurting themselves or others, using the minimum force needed, and we record it straight away.
- **Photos and filming.** Only with written parent or carer consent, on organisation devices, never on personal phones, and never with names alongside.

6. Parent and carer consent, registers and information

- Each young person has a registration form with parent or carer contact details, emergency contact, how they will get home, and any information we need to look after them safely, signed by a parent or carer.
- We keep an attendance register for every session and know who is collecting each child.
- Outings and new activities are risk assessed beforehand and parents are told.

7. If you are worried about a child, or a child tells you something

1. **Make the child safe.** If they are in immediate danger or need medical help, call 999.
2. **Listen and reassure.** Stay calm. Tell them they did the right thing to tell you. Do not promise to keep it secret, and explain that you may need to tell someone whose job is to keep them safe.
3. **Do not investigate or ask leading questions.** Do not ask "did X do this to you?". Ask only open questions such as "can you tell me more?".
4. **Write it down the same day,** in the child's own words, with date, time and who was present. Sign and date it.
5. **Tell the DSL straight away,** by phone. If the concern is about the DSL, tell the Deputy DSL. If it is about both, contact children's social care or the LADO yourself.
6. **The DSL decides what to do.** If a child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, the DSL refers to the children's social care of the council where the child lives without delay, confirms

it in writing within 24 hours, and calls the police if a crime may have been committed. The DSL records the decision and the reason.

We normally tell parents or carers about our concern, unless doing so would put the child at greater risk. Do not wait for evidence. A worry is enough to tell the DSL. If you think a concern is not being taken seriously, contact children's social care directly or the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line. Reporting in good faith will never lead to any detriment for the person who raises it.

8. Concerns or allegations about an adult

- Report any concern about a member of our team, a volunteer or anyone working with young people straight to the DSL (or the Deputy DSL if it concerns the DSL).
- Do not investigate and do not confront the person. The DSL contacts the LADO within one working day, and follows their advice.
- The person may be taken off contact with young people while this is looked into. Where the law requires or allows it, we refer the matter to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

9. Bullying and harm between young people

We take it seriously and never dismiss it as banter or "just kids". Staff step in, keep everyone safe, and tell the DSL. Both the young person harmed and the young person causing harm are supported, and where needed referred to the right agency.

10. Knife crime, weapons and exploitation

Our work with young people covers violence prevention, so staff are briefed on the signs of exploitation and county lines. If you see or suspect a weapon, do not confront the person. Move others away and call 999. If you suspect a young person is being exploited, tell the DSL the same day. The DSL will refer to children's social care and the police, and may use the National Referral Mechanism where trafficking or modern slavery is suspected.

11. Confidentiality, information sharing and records

Safeguarding records are confidential and kept securely, shared only with people who need them to keep a child safe. Data protection law does not prevent us sharing information to protect a child, and we do not wait for consent where waiting would put a child at risk. Records are kept until the young person is at least 25, or longer if the law or an investigation requires.

12. Review

The DSL reviews this policy every year, and after any serious incident, change in the law or change to our activities. Directors approve each version.