1. About Green Roots Connections

Green Roots Connections is a **charitable organization** registered with **company House.No.1701795,t**hat creates inclusive, safe and supportive spaces for neurodivergent and disabled young people. We offer a range of social events, peer-led activities and therapeutic workshops designed to reduce isolation, build confidence and promote wellbeing. Our work is rooted in lived experience and a commitment to accessibility, respect and safeguarding.

2. Policy Statement

Green Roots Connections is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people attending our events. We recognise our duty of care and responsibility to protect children from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. This policy applies to all staff, therapists, volunteers, contractors and board members associated with our organisation.

3. Purpose of the Policy

This policy outlines our commitment to:

- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.
- Fostering a culture of openness, accountability and trust
- Responding promptly and appropriately to all safeguarding concerns.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and consistently uphold them.

4. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by relevant UK legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- **Children Acts 1989 and 2004**: Providing the foundation for the protection of children and their welfare.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)**: Offering guidance on how agencies and professionals should work together to safeguard children.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)**: Outlining safeguarding and child protection duties for schools and education settings.
- **The Children and Social Work Act (2017)**: Enhancing the framework for safeguarding and supporting children in care and those at risk.
- **GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018)**: Ensuring the safe handling of personal data in compliance with privacy laws.
- **The Prevent Duty (2015)**: Requiring institutions to have due regard to preventing individuals from being drawn into terrorism.

This policy ensures our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in line with these statutory requirements.

5. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Green Roots Connections is:
Name: Mrs Aisha Hussein
Role: Director / Safeguarding Lead
Email: info@greenrootsconnections.uk **Phone:** 07929591941
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):
Name: Rashmi Chandrappa
Role: Deputy Safeguarding Lead
Email: admin@greenrootsconnections.uk**Phone:** 07507554548

The DSL is responsible for leading on safeguarding matters and ensuring implementation of this policy. In their absence, the Deputy DSL will act with full authority in responding to safeguarding concerns.

6. Types of Abuse

We are vigilant to all forms of abuse, including:

- **Physical Abuse**: Inflicting physical harm on a child, such as hitting, shaking, or burning. This also includes Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII), where carers deliberately cause or exaggerate health issues to create a false impression of illness.
- **Emotional Abuse**: Persistent emotional mistreatment that can severely affect a child's emotional development, such as belittling, rejection, or excessive criticism.
- **Sexual Abuse**: Involving or encouraging a child to engage in sexual activities, with or without physical contact. This includes all forms of online sexual abuse.
- **Neglect**: Failing to meet a child's basic needs, such as providing adequate food, shelter, medical care, supervision, or emotional support.
- **Radicalisation**: Exposure to extremist ideologies that may lead a child to adopt or support terrorism. We adhere to the Prevent Duty guidance to identify and support children at risk of radicalisation.
- **Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking**: Including forced labour, exploitation, or control through threats or deception. We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of modern slavery and human trafficking.

Our staff and volunteers are trained to recognise these forms of abuse and respond appropriately, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.

7. Safer Recruitment

To ensure safe and responsible staffing, all individuals working with children must undergo the following:

- Enhanced DBS checks to assess suitability for working with vulnerable individuals.
- Verification of the right to work in the UK to ensure legal employment.
- Professional references to confirm qualifications, experience and character.
- Comprehensive induction and safeguarding training to ensure understanding of roles, responsibilities, and child protection procedures.

These measures are in place to maintain a safe and secure environment for all children and to ensure the highest standards of care and support.

8. Recognising and Reporting Concerns

All staff and volunteers receive training to recognise the signs of abuse, exploitation, and neglect. They are required to report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If a child is in immediate danger, staff and volunteers must contact emergency services (999) without delay, ensuring the safety of the child is prioritised. Following this, the DSL should be informed as soon as possible, and the appropriate safeguarding protocols will be followed. This ensures a swift and coordinated response to protect the child and address any concerns raised.

9. Responding to Disclosures

When a child discloses abuse, it is essential to:

- Remain calm and listen attentively, offering the child your full attention
- Avoid asking leading questions or expressing shock, maintaining a neutral and supportive response.
- Reassure the child that their disclosure is being taken seriously and that they are believed.
- Record the disclosure accurately, using the child's exact words, without interpretation.
- Report the disclosure to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay, following the appropriate safeguarding protocols.

10. Whistleblowing

We encourage all staff and volunteers to raise safeguarding concerns, including those about colleagues, without fear of reprisal or negative consequences. To support this, a confidential whistleblowing procedure is in place, ensuring that individuals can report concerns safely and anonymously if needed. This procedure is designed to protect those who raise concerns from any form of retaliation, and we are committed to investigating all reports promptly and thoroughly. We also provide regular training and communication to reinforce the importance of safeguarding and the responsibility of everyone to speak up when necessary, ensuring a culture of transparency, accountability and protection for all.

11. Staff Training

All staff and volunteers undertake safeguarding training appropriate to their role, with updates provided at least every two years to ensure their knowledge and practices remain current. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) receives enhanced safeguarding training biennially, with a focus on advanced techniques for identifying and responding to potential

safeguarding concerns. This training includes recognising signs of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as well as understanding the specific needs of vulnerable individuals, including neurodivergent and disabled children. Additionally, all staff and volunteers are encouraged to foster an environment that prioritises the wellbeing, safety and dignity of every participant, in line with our comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures.

12. Supervision and Ratios

We maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios at all events to ensure a safe and supportive environment. Children and young people are always supervised by trained staff and parents/carers. Where needed, we provide additional support tailored to individual access needs, including for those who are neurodivergent or disabled, to promote inclusion, autonomy and wellbeing. This is in alignment with our Inclusion and Accessibility Policy, which ensures that all participants receive the support they need to fully engage and benefit from our services.

13. Online Safety

When hosting online events involving children and young people:

- Secure platforms such as Zoom are used to ensure privacy and safety.
- Parental or carer consent is obtained in advance for all participants.
- Clear behaviour expectations are communicated to all attendees before the session.
- Staff and volunteers receive training in online safeguarding and digital safety protocols.

14. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Personal information is handled sensitively and in line with the GDPR and Data Protection Act (2018). Information is only shared with those who need to know to protect the child, in accordance with our Data Protection Policy, Confidentiality Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

15. Photographs and Media

No photographs or media featuring children will be shared online or in publications without both verbal and written parental or carer consent. This is in line with our Data Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy and Safeguarding Policy, which outline how we handle images and personal information responsibly and ethically.

16. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers

Allegations involving staff or volunteers must be reported immediately to the DSL. Where necessary, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be notified. Staff are supported throughout the process and confidentiality is maintained.

17. Parental Involvement

We work in partnership with parents and carers, keeping them informed of safeguarding expectations, consent requirements and event procedures where appropriate.

18. Behaviour Management

We prioritise positive, strengths-based approaches to behaviour. All children are supported with empathy and understanding, recognising that behaviour is a form of communication. If challenges arise, responses

compassionate, consistent and rooted in safeguarding, emotional safety and individual needs.

19. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every six months or sooner if there is a change in legislation, guidance or best practice.

Policy adopted on: January 2026

Next review due: July 2026