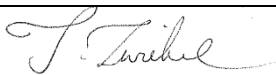


Sunbeams

VOLUNTEER AND MENTORING POLICY

Document Control Sheet

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| Approved By | Jessica Zwiebel, Safeguarding Officer and Trustee |
| Signature |  |

Revision History

| Version | Date | Author | Description of Change | Approved By |
|---------|----------|--------|--|-------------------|
| 1.0 | Sep 2014 | Admin | Initial release outlining volunteer roles, expectations, and mentoring procedures. | Board of Trustees |
| 2.0 | Sep 2015 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 3.0 | Sep 2016 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 4.0 | Sep 2017 | Admin | Minor update to volunteer induction requirements. | Board of Trustees |
| 5.0 | Sep 2018 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 6.0 | Sep 2019 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 7.0 | Sep 2020 | Admin | Small clarification on supervision and mentoring ratios. | Board of Trustees |
| 8.0 | Sep 2021 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 9.0 | Sep 2022 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 10.0 | Sep 2023 | Admin | Minor update to volunteer safeguarding requirements. | Board of Trustees |
| 11.0 | Jan 2024 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 12.0 | Apr 2024 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 13.0 | Sep 2024 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 14.0 | Jan 2025 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 15.0 | Apr 2025 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 16.0 | Jul 2025 | Admin | Review | Board of Trustees |
| 17.0 | Sep 2025 | Admin | Comprehensive review; strengthened volunteer standards, supervision, and mentoring procedures. | Board of Trustees |

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all volunteering and mentoring activity at Sunbeams is carried out safely, consistently, and in accordance with the organisation's safeguarding, equality, and quality standards.

Sunbeams' volunteer mentors provide vital early intervention support to girls and young women aged 8–16 within the Orthodox Jewish community of Hackney and Haringey. This policy sets out how volunteers are recruited, trained, supervised, supported, and, where necessary, debriefed or reassigned.

It applies to all mentors, volunteers, and staff who support or coordinate mentoring and group programmes.

2. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy operates within the framework of:

- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Charity Commission Guidance CC30: Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees (2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Charities Act 2011

All volunteering and mentoring activity at Sunbeams must comply with the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy, and Confidentiality Policy.

3. Policy Statement

Sunbeams are committed to providing safe, high-quality, and empowering mentoring opportunities that promote the wellbeing, confidence, and emotional resilience of young people.

Volunteers and mentors are a valued part of Sunbeams' community, and their contribution is essential to achieving the charity's mission of early intervention and preventative mental health support.

Sunbeams will ensure that:

- All mentors and volunteers are carefully recruited, trained, and supervised.
- Safeguarding and professional boundaries are always upheld.
- Support and supervision are regular, reflective, and trauma informed.

- Volunteers feel valued, informed, and confident in their roles.
- Young people's dignity, privacy, and safety are always prioritised.

4. Mentoring and Volunteering Principles

Sunbeams' approach to volunteering and mentoring is grounded in the following principles:

- **Safety:** Every young person has the right to a safe and positive mentoring experience.
- **Consistency:** Mentoring should be regular, reliable, and goal oriented.
- **Respect:** Both mentor and mentee relationships are built on mutual trust and respect.
- **Empowerment:** Mentoring supports young people to develop self-esteem, resilience, and independence.
- **Confidentiality:** Information shared within mentoring is treated with sensitivity and discretion, following safeguarding and confidentiality protocols.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** All programmes respect Orthodox Jewish customs, language, and community values.
- **Reflection and Growth:** Mentors engage in supervision and self-reflection to ensure best practice.

5. Volunteer and Mentor Recruitment

Sunbeams follow a robust safer recruitment process (see Safer Recruitment Policy) to ensure that only suitable individuals are appointed to work with young people.

5.1 Recruitment Process

1. **Application:**
Prospective mentors and volunteers complete a Sunbeams application form outlining experience, motivation, and availability.
2. **Interview:**
Shortlisted applicants are interviewed by trained staff to assess values, safeguarding understanding, and cultural compatibility.
3. **References:**
Two references are required, ideally including one professional or community reference.
4. **DBS Checks:**
All mentors and volunteers must hold a current Enhanced DBS certificate (child workforce).

5. Training and Induction:
Successful applicants complete Sunbeams' induction and safeguarding training before commencing any work with mentees.

6. Training and Induction

All new mentors receive structured induction and role-specific training that includes:

- Introduction to Sunbeams' ethos and safeguarding framework.
- Professional boundaries and confidentiality.
- Lone working and offsite safety.
- Recording and reporting concerns.
- Equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Supervision and self-care.

Completion of induction is mandatory before any match is made. Refresher training is provided annually, and mentors are supported through group reflection sessions each term.

7. Supervision and Support

- All mentors receive regular supervision from a designated supervisor or Programme Manager.
- Supervision provides space for reflection, guidance, and early identification of challenges.
- The ratio of supervision to activity will be proportionate to the mentor's experience and complexity of cases.
- Supervision notes are recorded confidentially and reviewed periodically by the Director.
- Mentors have access to further support from the Safeguarding Lead or Director when required.

8. Boundaries and Professional Conduct

Mentors and volunteers must adhere to the Code of Conduct and uphold Sunbeams' safeguarding standards.

Key expectations include:

- Meetings must take place in approved, public, or pre-assessed locations.
- Communication with mentees should remain professional and purposeful.
- Personal details such as private phone numbers or social media connections must not be shared.
- Mentors must not offer financial gifts, transport, or personal items without approval.

- Physical contact is governed by the Appropriate Physical Contact Policy.
- Any disclosure or concern must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead.

Failure to adhere to these boundaries may result in disciplinary or corrective action.

9. Mentoring Process and Delivery

Sunbeams ensure each mentoring relationship is structured, safe, and goal oriented.

9.1 Matching Process

Matches are made carefully, considering:

- Mentee's age, needs, and personality.
- Mentor's skills, temperament, and interests.
- Cultural and community compatibility.
- Location and availability.
- Any identified safeguarding or risk factors.

Both mentor and mentee must agree to the match before sessions begin.

9.2 Session Delivery

- Sessions are held weekly or fortnightly, in line with mentee needs.
- Meetings may take place at the Sunbeams Centre or pre-approved community locations.
- Attendance is logged and monitored.
- Mentors set clear goals with their mentee, regularly reviewing progress with supervision support.

9.3 Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- Mentors record key session notes (focus areas, attendance, and any concerns).
- Notes are submitted via Sunbeams' secure systems and stored under the Data Protection Policy.
- Any safeguarding concerns override confidentiality and must be reported immediately.

10. Mentee/Mentor Termination and Reassignment

Ending a mentoring relationship requires sensitivity and structure. Sunbeams recognises that closure can be emotionally significant for both mentor and mentee and therefore provides a guided termination process.

10.1 Planned Closure

- At the end of the mentoring cycle (typically 12 months), mentors will prepare mentees for closure through gradual discussion.
- The final session will include a reflective activity or “termination ritual,” allowing both parties to recognise achievements and say goodbye appropriately.
- The Programme Manager or Supervisor supports this process and provides closure guidance.

10.2 Early Termination

If a relationship must end earlier due to:

- Mentor withdrawal or personal circumstances.
- Mentee disengagement or transfer of support.
- Safeguarding or behavioural concerns.

Sunbeams will:

- Ensure both parties are informed sensitively.
- Offer a debrief and emotional support.
- Record the reason for closure in the mentoring log.
- Consider reallocation or reassignment if appropriate.

10.3 Mentor Exit

- Exiting mentors are invited to a final debrief to reflect on learning, experience, and future involvement.
- Mentors returning for new placements will undergo a shortened induction and updated DBS if required.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibilities |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Trustees | Ensure policy compliance and oversee safeguarding risks related to mentoring. |
| Director (Policy Owner) | Oversees implementation, training, and quality assurance of all mentoring programmes. |
| Programme Managers / Coordinators | Manage recruitment, training, supervision, and evaluation of mentors. |
| Safeguarding Lead | Provides advice, oversight, and response to any safeguarding concerns arising within mentoring relationships. |
| Supervisors | Support mentors in reflective practice and professional development. |
| Mentors & Volunteers | Adhere to this policy, safeguarding procedures, and supervision requirements. |

12. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Sunbeams will ensure that:

- All mentor and mentee information is stored securely.
- Personal data is processed lawfully under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Confidentiality is respected except where information must be shared to protect welfare.
- Access to mentoring records is limited to authorised staff.

13. Monitoring and Review

- The Director and Programme Managers monitor mentoring activity, supervision quality, and mentor feedback termly.
- Annual reports to Trustees will summarise recruitment, retention, outcomes, and learning.
- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or practice guidance changes.
- Continuous improvement will be guided by evaluation data, participant feedback, and safeguarding audits.

Signed: _____ Position: Trustee
Date: _____