1. Introduction

The Becalm Foundation is dedicated to the safety and well-being of all individuals, especially children and young people, who participate in our activities and services. This safeguarding policy outlines our commitment to safeguarding, protecting children and young people from harm, and promoting their welfare during their engagement with The Becalm Foundation in schools and youth work settings.

2. Designated Safeguarding Lead

Louis Pugh is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the Becalm Foundation. The DSL will take the lead responsibility for child protection and safeguarding matters within our organisation. Louis Pugh will receive appropriate training and will be up-to-date with safeguarding issues and legislation. Their role includes:

- Acting as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns related to children and young people.
- Providing advice and support to staff, volunteers, and directors on safeguarding matters.
- Liaising with schools, youth organisations, external agencies, and local authorities as necessary.

If there is a safeguarding concern surrounding Louis Pugh, please contact the LADO, on LADO@reading.gov.uk

3. Legal Framework

Our safeguarding practices are underpinned by relevant legislation and guidance, including but not limited to:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Education Act 2002
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

4. Safer Recruitment

The Becalm Foundation is committed to safe recruitment practices to ensure that all staff and volunteers working with children and young people are suitable and safe. This includes:

- Conducting enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for all staff and volunteers involved in regulated activity with children and young people.
- Checking references and verifying qualifications where applicable.
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive safeguarding training.

5. Becalm's Programmes and Activities

This section applies to Connect one-to-one mentoring, Connect – LAC, ASPIRE school workshops and Becalm's after-school and community activities. Safeguarding arrangements must be agreed with the host school or venue before delivery begins.

One-to-one mentoring and professional boundaries

Sessions will take place in an agreed, appropriate setting, with the host organisation aware of the location and timing. Staff will follow agreed visibility, supervision and escalation arrangements while respecting young people's dignity and privacy.

Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries and must not use personal social media accounts or unapproved channels to contact children or young people. Any boundary concerns must be reported promptly.

Looked-after and previously looked-after children

Support will be sensitive to each child's individual needs and circumstances, with consistent, trauma-informed practice and appropriate professional boundaries. Care status must not be treated as defining a child's needs or experiences.

Where appropriate, Becalm will coordinate with the designated teacher, social worker, Virtual School and other relevant professionals. Information about care arrangements will be shared only where lawful, necessary and proportionate.

After-school clubs and community activities

A proportionate risk assessment will cover the venue, activities, staffing, supervision, accessibility, equipment and participants' individual needs. Supervision arrangements will reflect the group and activity rather than relying on a single fixed ratio.

Before each activity, arrangements will be clear for registration, attendance, arrival, authorised collection, late collection, missing children, emergencies and incident reporting. Staff must know the safeguarding contacts and escalation route.

Working with schools and partner organisations

Before delivery, Becalm and the host school or partner will agree who receives safeguarding reports, how concerns are recorded and shared, and who follows up actions. Staff must follow the host school's safeguarding procedures as well as Becalm's own policy.

6. Training and Awareness

We will provide regular safeguarding training to all staff, volunteers, and directors to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and to ensure that they can identify and respond to concerns appropriately. Training will cover topics such as recognising signs of abuse, reporting procedures, and understanding The Becalm Foundation's safeguarding policy.

7. Recognising and Responding to Concerns

All individuals associated with The Becalm Foundation have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children and young people. If anyone has concerns about a young person's well-being or suspects abuse, they must:

- Report the concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding lead (Louis Pugh) or the appropriate person in their absence.
- Record the details of the concern and actions taken in a confidential manner.

Listen calmly to a disclosure, avoid leading questions, do not investigate personally and do not promise secrecy. Explain that information may need to be shared to keep the child safe.

Record concerns as soon as practicable, using the child's own words where possible, including the date, time, facts, people informed and actions taken. Keep safeguarding records securely and separately from routine programme notes.

Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, contact emergency services or the appropriate statutory safeguarding service without waiting for internal approval. Report the action taken to the DSL as soon as it is safe to do so.

If the DSL is unavailable, staff must contact the host school's DSL or relevant statutory safeguarding service without delay. Alternatively contact the LADO.

8. Confidentiality

Information regarding safeguarding concerns will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and shared only on a need-to-know basis. Information will be disclosed in line with legal requirements and best practice guidelines.

Confidentiality must not prevent necessary safeguarding referrals or lawful information sharing. Information will be accessible only to those who need it for safeguarding purposes and retained in line with Becalm's data protection and retention arrangements.

9. Information Sharing

The Becalm Foundation will work collaboratively with schools, youth organisations, local authorities, and other relevant agencies to safeguard the welfare of young people. Information sharing will be carried out in accordance with legal requirements and best practices.

Safeguarding information will be shared promptly where necessary, lawful and proportionate. Consent should be considered where appropriate, but it is not always required for safeguarding information sharing. Decisions and reasons for sharing or not sharing must be recorded.

10. Safe Working Practices

We will implement safe working practices to minimize potential risks to children and young people. This includes:

- Maintaining appropriate staff-to-child/youth ratios during activities.
- Providing a safe and secure environment for all activities.
- Conducting risk assessments for events and outings.

Staff must follow the agreed arrangements for safe one-to-one work, attendance and collection, and know how to raise concerns arising during school, after-school or community delivery.

11. Online Safety

The Becalm Foundation recognises the importance of online safety for young people. We will educate young people, parents/guardians, staff, and volunteers about online risks and implement measures to ensure safe internet use during our activities.

Staff and volunteers must use approved communication methods only, maintain professional online boundaries and report concerning online contact or behaviour through the safeguarding procedure.

12. Whistleblowing

The Becalm Foundation encourages a culture of openness and transparency. Any individual associated with the organisation who has concerns about safeguarding practices or the conduct of staff, volunteers, or directors should feel confident in reporting their concerns without fear of reprisals.

Allegations that an adult working with children may have harmed a child, may pose a risk of harm, or may be unsuitable to work with children must be reported promptly to the designated senior person responsible for allegations. Where the relevant threshold may be met, advice must be sought from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) before conducting an internal investigation.

Where a concern involves the DSL or the person normally receiving allegations, it must be reported to an alternative senior person who is not implicated. You can contact the LADO on LADO@reading.gov.uk.

Concerns about adult conduct that do not meet the allegations threshold should still be recorded, considered and addressed in line with Becalm's code of conduct and appropriate low-level concerns procedure.

13. Review and Monitoring

This safeguarding policy, along with the youth work policies, will be reviewed annually or sooner if there are any changes in legislation or best practices. The Becalm Foundation will also monitor its implementation to ensure its effectiveness in safeguarding children and young people.

14. Reporting

This policy, along with the youth work policies, will be made available to all staff, volunteers, and directors and will also be accessible to parents/guardians, schools, and youth organisations upon request.

By implementing this safeguarding policy and specific youth work policies, The Becalm Foundation, under the leadership of Louis Pugh as the Designated Safeguarding Lead, is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all children and young people participating in our activities within schools and youth work settings.

Director: Louis Pugh Signature: L PUGH Date: 05/11/26

Director: Martin Lee Signature: M LEE Date: 05/11/26

Director: Jeremy Stokes Signature: J STOKES Date: 05/11/26