**Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**
**NE Cycling CIC**

**1. Policy Statement**
At NE Cycling CIC, safeguarding the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is paramount. We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment where all participants can engage in our cycling-based alternative education provision without fear of harm, neglect, abuse, or exploitation. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, subcontractors, and anyone involved in delivering our services.

**2. Purpose of the Policy**
The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to:

* Protect children, young people, and vulnerable adults who participate in NE Cycling CIC’s services.
* Provide staff and volunteers with the necessary guidance and procedures to safeguard participants from harm.
* Ensure that safeguarding concerns are identified, reported, and responded to appropriately.

**3. Legal Framework**
This policy is guided by UK legislation and statutory guidance, including:

* The Children Act 1989 and 2004
* The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
* Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
* The Care Act 2014

**4. Roles and Responsibilities**

**4.1. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**
The DSL is responsible for overseeing safeguarding practices at NE Cycling CIC. The DSL’s responsibilities include:

* Receiving and managing safeguarding concerns and incidents.
* Liaising with local safeguarding partners, including Hartlepool Borough Council, where appropriate.
* Ensuring staff receive appropriate safeguarding training.
* Ensuring compliance with safeguarding legislation and guidance.

**4.2. Staff and Volunteers**
All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

* Completing safeguarding training as part of their induction and refresher courses.
* Following this safeguarding policy and reporting any safeguarding concerns to the DSL.
* Promoting the welfare and safety of participants at all times.

**5. Safeguarding Training**
All staff must complete safeguarding training during their induction and receive refresher training regularly. This training covers:

* Recognising signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other safeguarding concerns.
* Reporting procedures and responsibilities.
* Best practices for working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

NE Cycling CIC maintains a record of all safeguarding training to ensure that staff and volunteers remain up to date with current safeguarding procedures.

**6. Recruitment and DBS Checks**
All staff, volunteers, and subcontractors must hold a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate before commencing work with NE Cycling CIC. DBS checks are renewed regularly to ensure continued compliance. All staff are also required to complete safeguarding training and have appropriate qualifications (coaching or teaching) as relevant to their role.

**7. Recognising and Responding to Safeguarding Concerns**
Safeguarding concerns may arise from direct observation or from information shared by participants or others. Concerns may include:

* Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.
* Neglect or inadequate care.
* Bullying or harassment.
* Exploitation or radicalisation.

**Procedures for Responding to Concerns:**

1. **Immediate Action**: Any staff member who suspects or becomes aware of a safeguarding concern must immediately report the matter to the DSL.
2. **Record Keeping**: A written record of the concern must be made, including relevant details (dates, times, individuals involved). This record will be stored securely and treated confidentially.
3. **Reporting**: The DSL will review the concern and decide on the appropriate action, including whether to refer the matter to external safeguarding partners, such as Hartlepool Borough Council or the police.
4. **Support for the Individual**: NE Cycling CIC will ensure that the individual involved in the safeguarding concern is supported throughout the process. This may involve liaising with external services or professionals.

**8. Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff**
If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, NE Cycling CIC will follow the procedures outlined in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ and notify the appropriate authorities if necessary. The staff member may be suspended pending an investigation. Support will be offered to all parties involved during the process.

**9. Confidentiality and Information Sharing**
All safeguarding concerns and investigations will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. NE Cycling CIC will only share information on a need-to-know basis, in line with safeguarding protocols and data protection legislation. Information may be shared with external agencies if it is deemed necessary to protect the welfare of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.

**10. Safe Practice and Supervision**
NE Cycling CIC has established safe practice procedures to minimise risks during activities:

* All students must wear helmets during cycling sessions.
* Sessions involving road cycling are preceded by risk assessments and safety briefings.
* Staff are trained to manage group dynamics and provide additional support to participants with SEND.
* Subcontractors, if used, must hold a valid DBS certificate and will be fully supervised by NE Cycling CIC staff if they do not meet our qualification requirements.

**11. Monitoring and Review**
This safeguarding policy will be reviewed annually or in response to significant changes in legislation or guidance. Any updates will be communicated to all staff and volunteers.

**12. Contact Information**
For safeguarding concerns, please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead:
[DSL’s Name]
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

NE Cycling CIC is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all participants and ensuring that our staff are well-trained and supported to maintain a safe, inclusive environment. By working together, we can ensure that our cycling-based alternative provision is a positive and safe experience for all.