



## **Home-Start Renfrewshire & Inverclyde (hereafter Home-Start)**

### **Personal Safety Policy**

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of Home-Start that all staff and volunteers will always give priority to their own personal safety in respect to how they carry out their Home-Start roles and responsibilities. Given this statement, Home-Start undertakes the following:

#### **Volunteers**

- Volunteers will only visit a family following an initial visit by a co-ordinator.
- Volunteers will not be placed with families where there is a known danger to personal safety. Questions will be asked at the referral stage to establish if there are any known hazards to personal safety e.g. dangerous dogs, violent partner
- Volunteers will only visit families where all adult members of the household consent to Home-Start involvement
- Volunteers will only visit families who have specifically and willingly requested a Home-Start volunteer
- Volunteers will be immediately withdrawn from visiting a Home-Start family if a potentially dangerous situation develops or is feared to develop
- Volunteers will be fully supported with any personal safety concerns.

#### **Travel – Staff and Volunteers**

Travelling to and from Home-Start families and other events creates an area of potential risk to personal safety. It is important that staff and volunteers:

- Ensure someone knows and can easily determine their whereabouts and their expected time of return to home or office.
- Try to use the same “known” travel routes where possible, avoiding isolated areas if they can.
- Keep activities confined to daylight hours wherever possible
- Stay alert and get help as quickly as possible if concerns about safety develop. Car doors should be locked and driven to a police station or garage forecourt. Do not leave the car unless absolutely necessary.

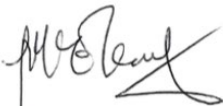
- If on foot, try to walk with someone else and be as visible as possible. Be aware of possible places of safety to head for if trouble develops.
- Keep body language confident and assertive, move purposefully and avoid heroics.
- Always take a common-sense approach and pay attention to the gut reaction

### Home-Visiting

Being in family or volunteer homes creates another area of potential danger to personal safety. Staff and volunteers should always:

- Be assertive about any personal safety issues arising in a home. Ask for the householder's co-operation in their personal safety, e.g. keeping a dog in another room during a visit.
- Read the signs as early as possible. If a potentially dangerous situation is developing, they should leave as quickly as possible. They should not attempt to referee a domestic conflict situation.
- Contact the relevant emergency services if necessary.
- Consider if there are any child protection implications and follow child protection procedures.
- Report any incidents immediately to the co-ordinator, seeking support and guidance for your own needs.
- Consider, with the co-ordinator, the feasibility of any continued contact with the family or volunteer.

None of the above guidelines are meant to override common sense or instinctual reactions. The personal safety of the employee or volunteer must always be the primary consideration.

<b>This policy adopted:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>
<b>Date by which policy to be reviewed (Annually)</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b>
<b>Signed (Co-Chair)</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>James McEleny</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>