

## JUSTIFY UK FOUNDATION SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### 1. Safeguarding statement and commitment

Justify UK Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The charity recognises that through its work providing advocacy advice funding and support in relation to access to legal services it may come into contact with individuals and families who are vulnerable. This may include children, young people, children with special educational needs and disabilities and vulnerable adults. Justify has a zero tolerance approach to abuse, neglect or exploitation of any kind. Safeguarding is taken seriously at trustee level and forms part of the charity's core governance responsibilities.

### 2. Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all trustees of Justify UK Foundation and anyone acting on behalf of the charity whether paid or unpaid. This policy covers safeguarding of children defined as anyone under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults including individuals experiencing financial hardship, disability additional needs or significant personal stress. Justify is not a frontline care provider. The charity does not provide personal care, supervision, education or unsupervised activities involving children or vulnerable adults. Safeguarding risks arise primarily through advocacy, advice, communication and the handling of sensitive case information.

### 3. Nature of Justify's work and safeguarding exposure

Justify supports individuals and families who experience injustice but lack the financial means to access legal advice representation or advocacy. Safeguarding risks may arise through communication with vulnerable families, through work relating to children and education including special educational needs, and through the handling of sensitive personal and case information. Safeguarding concerns may arise through disclosure, observation or information shared during this work.

### 4. Governance roles and accountability

The Board of Trustees holds collective and ultimate responsibility for safeguarding within Justify UK Foundation. The Chair of Trustees acts as the Operational Safeguarding Lead. This role includes receiving safeguarding concerns arising through

day to day work, ensuring that concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly, deciding whether immediate protective action or external escalation is required, and maintaining appropriate safeguarding records. An Independent Safeguarding Trustee is appointed by the Board to provide an independent escalation route. This role includes receiving safeguarding concerns where the concern relates to the Chair or where a person does not feel able to raise concerns with the Chair ensuring that appropriate referrals to external agencies are made ensuring that safeguarding matters are reported to the Board where appropriate and supporting trustee compliance with serious incident reporting requirements. All trustees share responsibility for safeguarding oversight review of this policy and ensuring appropriate action is taken when concerns arise.

#### 5. Recognising safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding concerns may include physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, inappropriate behaviour, or breaches of professional boundaries. Concerns may arise through direct disclosure, observation, or professional judgement based on information shared during advocacy or casework.

#### 6. Responding to safeguarding concerns

Anyone acting on behalf of Justify who becomes aware of a safeguarding concern must report it without delay to the Operational Safeguarding Lead or the Independent Safeguarding Trustee where appropriate. Individuals must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves. Where there is reason to believe that a child or vulnerable adult is at immediate risk of harm action must be taken immediately to contact appropriate external agencies including local authority children's or adult safeguarding services or the police. Action to protect individuals must not be delayed while internal discussion or advice is sought.

#### 7. External reporting and serious incident reporting

Trustees have a legal duty to report serious safeguarding incidents to the Charity Commission. A serious incident includes actual or alleged abuse of a child or vulnerable adult connected to the charity's activities a significant failure of safeguarding procedures or situations where the charity's beneficiaries or reputation are placed at serious risk. The Board of Trustees is responsible for deciding whether a serious incident report is required and for ensuring that any such report is submitted promptly in line with Charity Commission guidance. The rationale for decisions will be recorded in trustee records.

## 8. Confidentiality and information sharing

Safeguarding information will be handled sensitively and shared only on a need-to-know basis. Confidentiality will not prevent the sharing of information where there is a concern that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm. Safeguarding concerns override normal confidentiality considerations. No promises of confidentiality should be given where safeguarding concerns arise.

## 9. Safer working practices

Anyone acting on behalf of Justify must maintain appropriate professional boundaries, communicate in a professional and transparent manner, avoid unsupervised or inappropriate contact wherever possible, and keep clear, factual records where safeguarding concerns arise. Justify seeks to avoid placing any individual in a position of sole responsibility for safeguarding decisions wherever reasonably practicable.

## 10. Policy approval and review

This policy is approved by the Board of Trustees of Justify UK Foundation. The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if the charity's activities risks or structure change.