

Safeguarding Children Policy

1. Introduction

[insert name of organisation] believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to practice which protects them. In safeguarding a 'child or young person' refers to anyone who has not reached their 18th birthday.

[insert name of organisation] recognises that:

- the welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- all children and young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

The purpose of this policy is:

- to provide protection for the children and young people who receive *[insert name of organisation]* services, including the children of adult service users
- to provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding children and young people

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of *[insert name of organisation]*.

[If your organisation has no paid staff or sessional workers, and operates only using volunteers, you may delete all references to staff within this model policy]

[insert name of organisation] seeks to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children/young people, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children/young people appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

2. Link with other policies

[In this section, refer to any other policies that your organisation has that link with Safeguarding, for example Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Recruitment, Whistleblowing, Data Protection etc. If your organisation is small and there are no other linked policies, please delete this section.]

3. Safeguarding Children Legislation

The practices and procedures within this policy are based on the relevant legislation and government guidance. It is covered by:

- [The Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children Act 2004](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Department for Education \(DfE\) \(2023\) Working together to safeguard children 2023: a guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children](#)
- [Department for Education \(DfE\) \(2015\) What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners](#)
- [Department for Education \(DfE\) \(2020\) Keeping children safe in out-of-school settings: code of practice](#)
- [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers \(May 2024\)](#)

4. Nominated safeguarding lead person

The nominated person, *[insert name of nominated person and contact details]*, should be notified immediately by any staff or volunteers who have concerns about:

- a child or young person (see section 4)
- a person who works with children (see section 5)

Concerns should be raised if

- a child has been harmed, or may have been,
- a criminal offence has possibly been committed against or related to a child or young person;
or
- someone has behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or young people.

The nominated person will provide advice and support to staff/volunteers unsure about how to proceed with a particular case, and take line management responsibility for the safe delivery, quality and effectiveness of *[insert name of organisation]* services. The nominated person is responsible for ensuring *[insert name of organisation]* is aware of developments in safeguarding best practice, advising on changes to policy and practice (in line with Local Safeguarding Partnership policies) and coordinating safeguarding audits and reporting.

One of *[insert name of organisation]* Trustees is nominated to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's safeguarding arrangements. This includes ensuring that staff have sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

5. How to raise concerns about a child or young person

- a) If someone is at immediate risk of harm, dial 999 for the police
- b) Contact *[insert name of nominated person and contact details]* by phone or email as soon as possible. A decision will be made which includes whether to make a referral, who will make the referral, and how information about the concern will be securely recorded, stored and, if appropriate shared.
- c) To report a concern or to get advice:

- NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000
- Bedford Borough Council: 01234 718700
- Central Bedfordshire Council: 0300 300 8585
- Luton Borough Council: 01582 547653
- Out of office hours: 0300 300 8123 (For all local authority areas)

6. How to report an allegation made against staff or volunteers

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or young people who has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child/young person;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child/young person; or
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children/young people.

Any allegation against people who work with children or young people should be reported immediately to *[insert name of nominated person and contact details]*. The relevant local authority should be informed within one working day (Local Authority Designated Officer LADO).

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will provide advice and guidance on how to deal with allegations against people who work with children/young people and will also ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place to effectively liaise with the police and other agencies to monitor the progress of cases and ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process. Support and advice will be available to individuals against whom allegations have been made.

If *[insert name of organisation]* removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

7. Independent resources for children and young people

Children and young people can speak to an independent person outside of *[insert name of organisation]* through making contact with either of the following:

- Childline on 0800 1111
- NSPCC helpline: 0800 328 0904

8. Information sharing

Sharing information is an intrinsic part of safeguarding children and young people. The decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people at risk of abuse or neglect. No practitioner should assume that someone else will pass on information which may be critical to keeping a child or young person safe.

The seven golden rules to sharing information are (as outlined in [Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers \(May 2024\)](#)):

1. All children have a right to be protected from abuse and neglect. Protecting a child from such harm takes priority over protecting their privacy, or the privacy rights of the person(s) failing to protect them.
2. When you have a safeguarding concern, wherever it is practicable and safe to do so, engage with the child and/or their carer(s), and explain who you intend to share information with, what information you will be sharing and why.
3. You do not need consent to share personal information about a child and/or members of their family if a child is at risk or there is a perceived risk of harm.
4. Seek advice promptly whenever you are uncertain or do not fully understand how the legal framework supports information sharing in a particular case.
5. When sharing information, ensure you and the person or agency/organisation that receives the information take steps to protect the identities of any individuals (e.g., the child, a carer, a neighbour, or a colleague) who might suffer harm if their details became known to an abuser or one of their associates. Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
6. Only share relevant and accurate information with individuals or agencies/organisations that have a role in safeguarding the child and/or providing their family with support and only share the information they need to support the provision of their services.
7. Record the reasons for your information sharing decision, irrespective of whether or not you decide to share information.

Any exchange of information must be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the Caldicott Principles.

In *[insert name of organisation]* work, the starting point for information sharing is to follow the steps in Sections 4 or 5 of this policy.

If children and young people have access to the internet or use mobile phones during time spent with *[insert name of organisation]* projects, computers will be placed where everyone can see them and use of the internet will be supervised when used by children and young people.

[insert name of organisation] will keep secure records of any work undertaken under this policy including all concerns received and all referrals made, and the responses made to these concerns and referrals. We will keep a record of the decision – whether it is to share information or not - and the reasons for it. If we decide to share, then we will record what we have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

9. Being alert to signs of abuse and neglect and taking action

All staff and volunteers should be alert to the signs and triggers of child abuse and neglect. Indicators of abuse and neglect may be difficult to spot. Children and young people may disclose abuse but, in some cases, the indicators may be more subtle and appear over time. Everyone should be aware of the potential for children to be sexually exploited for money, power or status and individuals should adopt an open and inquiring mind to what could be underlying reasons for behaviour changes in children of all ages.

[insert name of organisation] will ensure all staff and volunteers are aware of;

- the signs of abuse and neglect,
- how to handle a disclosure

through induction, training and supervision.

10. Code of behaviour

This section outlines the behaviour expected of *[insert name of organisation]* staff, volunteers, peer leaders and staff from other organisations who engage with children and young people through *[insert name of organisation]* and its activities.

This code has been developed to provide advice which will not only help to protect children and young people but will also help identify any practices which could be mistakenly interpreted and perhaps lead to false allegations of abuse being made against individuals. Following this good practice code will also help to protect *[insert name of organisation]* by reducing the possibility of anyone using their role within the organisation to gain access to children and young people in order to abuse them.

When working with children and young people for *[insert name of organisation]* all staff and volunteers are considered to be acting in a position of trust. It is therefore important that staff and volunteers are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people and must act in an appropriate manner at all times and follow the code of conduct.

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to the nominated person, *[insert name of nominated person]*. Staff who breach this code of conduct may be subject to *[insert name of organisation]* disciplinary procedures.

Any breach of this code involving a volunteer or member of staff from another agency may result in them being asked to leave the project. Serious breaches of this code may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the Police or Children's Services Department.

Adults must:

- treat all children and young people with respect
- treat children and young people fairly, without prejudice and always avoid favouritism
- value and take seriously children's and young people's contributions
- provide an example of good conduct for others to follow
- ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy/encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and relates to the work of the project
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse

Adults must not:

Sample policy supplied by Community and Voluntary Service Bedfordshire, 43 Bromham Road, Bedford, MK40 2AA for adaption by organisations to suit their own needs.

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or young people
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- rely on their good name or that of *[insert name of organisation]* to protect them
- believe "it could never happen here / in my organisation"
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach
- make promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality
- allow allegations to go unreported
- let children and young people have their personal contact details (personal mobile number, social media details or address)

Name:

Position *[Most senior Person in the organisation]:*

Signed: _____

Policy approved: [insert date]

Next review date: