

# Safeguarding Policy



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## Background:

Young People & Children First, known as Bridge for Young People (BfYP) are committed to a practice, which protects children from harm. Trustees, staff and volunteers in this organisation accept and recognise our responsibilities to develop awareness of issues which cause children and vulnerable young adult's harm. We take seriously our responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in our care. "The welfare of the child is paramount". (Children Act 1989) 'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this policy and procedure as: protecting children (& young people) from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children's health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes. The Care Act 2014 defines safeguarding as 'protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding involves putting processes in place to ensure that vulnerable people are not subject to harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation.'

For the purposes of this policy and procedure 'we refer to children to mean up to the age of 18 years and young people to mean from the age of 18 years.

## Aim & Objectives:

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by -

- Adopting safeguarding guidelines through a code of behaviour for trustees, staff and volunteers
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children/young people, parents, Trustees, staff, and volunteers where appropriate
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and involving parents and children/young people appropriately.
- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of trustees, staff and volunteers ensuring we practice Safer Recruitment processes in line with national legislation by using at least one suitably trained recruiter on all interview panels.
- Providing effective guidance for trustees, staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training and by following agreed procedures, ensuring staff are trained and supported to respond appropriately and sensitively to child protection concerns. Raising the awareness of child protection or adult safeguarding issues and helping to equip

# Safeguarding Policy



children and young people with the skills needed to keep them safe.

Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse and offering support to residents who may be at risk of, or vulnerable to violent and non-violent extremist or terrorist narratives. We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at least every two years.

## Procedure:

### STATEMENT OF INTENT

It is the policy of BfYP to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people by protecting them as far as is possible against all forms of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual harm.

This organisation is committed to creating a safe environment in which young people can feel comfortable, safe, and secure while engaged in any BfYP programme, training event or workshop. Personnel (whether paid or not) should at all times show respect and understanding for every individual's rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the ethos and values of BfYP.

This policy links with Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership child protection procedures and the West Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership.

Website: [www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk)

Email: [safeguarding\\_adults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding_adults@westberks.gov.uk).

We recognise that for our residents, high self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and clear lines of communication with a trusted adult helps to prevent abuse and extremism.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; therefore, everyone who meets our residents, and their families has a role to play in safeguarding them. Our staff and volunteers are particularly important as they are able to identify concerns early and provide help for residents.

Our staff and trustees form part of the wider safeguarding system for children and vulnerable adults. In order to fulfill their safeguarding responsibilities, professionals should make sure that their approach is child and young person-centred and they should consider what is in the best interests of the resident.

Everyone who comes into contact with our residents has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

All staff, trustees and volunteers should adhere to BfYP Code of Conduct, see Code of Conduct Policy.

# Safeguarding Policy



## SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT SAFEGUARDING AND GOOD PRACTICE WITH, CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, TRUSTEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Good communication is essential in any organisation. In BfYP every effort will be made to ensure that, should individuals have concerns; they will be listened to and taken seriously.

It is the responsibility of the trustee Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and staff DSL to ensure that personal data is shared, managed, and stored in a safe way that is compliant with data protection regulations. See also BfYP Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy and Code of Conduct Policy.

Children and Young People have a right to information, especially any information that could make life better and safer for them. BfYP will act to ensure they have information about how, and with whom, they can share their concerns, complaints, and anxieties.

When sharing information BfYP personnel will be sensitive to the level of understanding and maturity, as well as to the level of responsibility, of the people with whom they are sharing.

Parents or persons with Parental Responsibility are always ultimately responsible for their child/young person's welfare, and they should be assured that their children/young people are involved with a credible organisation.

## TRUSTEES, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS RESPONSIBILITIES

As an organisation, which offers support and guidance to children and young people aged 16-25, it is imperative that each member of BfYP is aware of their responsibilities under child protection legislation and statutory guidance and has a working knowledge of BfYP procedures. Each volunteer will be offered training in safeguarding as recommended by the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership and the West Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership.

Website: [www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk)

Email: [safeguarding\\_adults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding_adults@westberks.gov.uk).

The paid managers of the service will:

Ensure that the safeguarding policy and procedures are in place and are reviewed regularly to ensure residents are kept safe.

- a. Ensure that all staff have completed and signed that they have undertaken both child and vulnerable adult safeguarding protection training every year.
- b. Ensure that residents know that there are adults within the charity they can approach if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c. Establish and maintain an environment where residents feel safe and secure and are encouraged to talk and are listened to. Staff respond with clear boundaries about what is safe and acceptable, and they seek to understand the triggers for residents' behaviour. Staff are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.
- d. Ensure all staff can identify residents with emerging problems, liaising with the charity's staff DSL and sharing information with other professionals to support early identification and assessment. **BfYP Designated Safeguarding trustee is Anna Savage. Designated staff Safeguarding Lead is the Support Services Manager Sarah**

# Safeguarding Policy



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- e. Ensure positive behaviour is promoted consistently and that staff use effective de-escalation techniques.
- f. Have a responsibility and be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect so they can identify young people who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.
- g. All staff must be aware of the main categories of abuse: Physical, Emotional, Sexual and Neglect. In addition, all staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.
- h. Staff should be aware that behaviour linked to the likes of drug taking, alcohol abuse, truancy and sexting put young people in danger. All staff should be aware safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via peer-on-peer abuse. All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as required.
- i. Ensure that any risks associated with children offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, self-harming, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), going missing, being vulnerable to radicalisation or being sexually exploited are known by the adults who support them and share with the local authority children's social care service, CAAS or other relevant agencies.
- j. There are plans and help in place that reduce the risk of harm, self-harm or actual harm and there is evidence that the impact of these risks is being minimised. These risks are kept under regular review and there is regular and effective liaison with other agencies where appropriate.
- k. The risk of suicide and self-harm is monitored and risk assessed regularly. Full support is provided via regular liaison with both the Child and Adult Mental Health Services and the young person's GP. All support staff are trained in Suicide Prevention and are Mental Health First Aiders. All incidents are logged, reported and monitored. Action plans and risk assessments are updated regularly.
- l. Ensure all staff members are aware of the systems within BfYP which support safeguarding, and these should be explained to them as part of their induction. Adults understand the risks posed by adults or other residents who use technology, including the internet, to bully, groom, radicalise or abuse children or residents.
- m. Staff have well-developed strategies in place to keep residents safe and to support them to develop their own understanding of these risks and in learning how to keep themselves and others safe.

## Other Bodies

A copy of our Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be made available to any other appropriate body.

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE**

In cases where an allegation is made, or someone in BfYP has concerns, they must be reported immediately to their line manager and the charity's Staff DSL, Support Services Manager.

Where the concern is an allegation about a member of staff, the Registered Manager, the Nominated Individual or another type of child protection issue affecting children and young people in our homes, the matter should be referred to Berkshire West Safeguarding Children

# Safeguarding Policy



Partnership or West Berkshire Safeguarding Adult Partnership within 24 hours by the DSL.

Website [www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk)

Email: [safeguarding\\_adults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding_adults@westberks.gov.uk).

If the CEO is also the Registered Manager or Nominated Individual, any allegation against them will be investigated by the Chair of Trustees.

Ensure all concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reason for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about the recording requirements staff should discuss with DSL. Written records are made in a timely way and held/sent securely where adults working with children are concerned about their safety or welfare.

Those records are shared appropriately and, where necessary, without consent (please refer to West Berkshire Council's Information Sharing Flowchart for full guidance on information sharing. Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership

Website [www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk)

Email: [safeguarding\\_adults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding_adults@westberks.gov.uk).

Ensure a record of referral is retained and there is evidence that any agreed action following the referral has been taken promptly to protect the child/young person from further harm. There is evidence, where applicable, that staff have an understanding of when to make referrals when there are issues concerning sexual exploitation, radicalisation and/or extremism or that they have sought additional advice and support.

The types of things to be recorded are as far as practical:

Name of child or young person

- Age
- Home Address (if known)
- Date of Birth (if known)
- Name/s and address of parent/s or person/s with parental responsibility

Telephone numbers if available

- Is the person making the report expressing their own concerns, or passing on those of somebody else? If so, record details
- What has prompted the concerns?
- Include dates and times of any specific incidents.
- Has the child or young person been spoken to? If so, what was said?
- Has anybody been alleged to be the abuser? If so, record details
- Who has this been passed on to, in order that appropriate action is taken? e.g. school, designated officer, social services etc
- Has anyone else been consulted? If so, record details.

If the concern is about a vulnerable adult, then a referral must be made to West Berkshire Safeguarding Adults service, [safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk) .

## DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING PERSONS

BfYP will ensure we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Safeguarding within both

# Safeguarding Policy



the staff team and a Designated Safeguarding Trustee who have been trained to Level 3 and understand their responsibilities with respect to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the safeguarding of all residents; for designated members of staff this training should take place every year.

**Currently the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the Staff team is: Support Services Manager Sarah Calvert and Anna Savage the Trustee DSL.**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be able to play an effective role in pursuing concerns and protecting children and ensure that all staff and other adults working within the charity are clear about the procedures where they are concerned about the safety of a child or young person.

## RECORD-KEEPING

All records, information and confidential notes relating to allegations against Charity personnel should be kept in a separate file in a locked drawer or filing cabinet. Records related to residents must be kept securely within their casefile.

## DEALING WITH A DISCLOSURE BY A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

Should a young person disclose to you directly this should be dealt with sensitively but carefully, the following list will help guide the conversation.

Never guarantee absolute confidentiality, as safeguarding will always have precedence over any other issues.

- Listen to the young person, rather than question directly.
- Offer reassurance without making promises and take what the child / young person says seriously.
- Allow the child / young person, to speak without interruption.
- Accept what is said - it is not your role to investigate or question.
- Do not overreact.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgment.
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you must pass the information on
- Explain what you have to do and whom you have to tell.
- Record the discussion accurately, as soon as possible after the event.
- Use the child's/young person's words or explanations - do not translate into your own words, in case you have misconstrued what the child/young person was trying to say.
- Contact Support Manager for advice/guidance.
- The Support Manager may then discuss the concern/suspicion with the relevant organisation, and, if appropriate, make a direct referral
- If the Support Manager is not available, or it is inappropriate to approach them, the volunteer/member of staff with the concern should inform the trustee DSL, but if unable, should make contact with the relevant organisation themselves.
- Record any discussions or actions taken within 24 hours.

## MISSING RESIDENTS



# Safeguarding Policy



Any resident who goes missing must be reported to the Support Manager and CEO immediately. Please refer to BfYP Missing Person Policy.

## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse where children under 18 (and sometimes adults with particular vulnerabilities such as learning difficulties) are sexually exploited for money, power or status. It can involve violent, humiliating and degrading sexual assaults. In some cases, young people are persuaded or forced into exchanging sexual activity for money, drugs, gifts, affection or status.

Consent cannot be given, even where a child may believe they are voluntarily engaging in sexual activity with the person who is exploiting them. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact and can happen online. A significant number of children who are victims of sexual exploitation go missing from home, care, and education at some point. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions.

- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation.
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends.
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant.
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being.
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol.
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late.
- Children who regularly miss school or education or do not take part in education or employment.

If there are concerns for a young person, staff should discuss these with their manager and if needed, to the Support Manager/CEO.

Further advice/referral may need to be considered via Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership.

Website [www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk](http://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk)

Email: safeguarding [adults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:adults@westberks.gov.uk).

The link above provides detailed information from the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (formerly LSCB) on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) - together with referral form.

The Child Exploitation On-line Protection (CEOP) Thinkuknow website

<http://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/> provides information for children and young people on how they can protect themselves online. Parents, carers and teachers can also use the website to understand how they can help to protect children in their care while they are

# Safeguarding Policy



using the internet. PACE (Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation) provides useful online support and guidance.  
<http://www.paceuk.info/support-for-parents/advice-centre/understanding-online-risks/>

## PREVENTING RADICALISATION

Protecting children and young adults from the risk of radicalisation should be seen as part of BfYP wider safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children from other forms of harm and abuse. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in resident's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection.

Staff should use their judgement in identifying residents who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately, which may include making a referral to the local authority.

The following website offers useful guidance:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>.

Staff must consider the following if they have concerns about radicalisation: to assess the risk of young people being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology

- The Prevent duty builds on existing local partnership arrangements held within the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (formerly LSCB)
- The Prevent guidance refers to the importance of Prevent awareness training to equip staff to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas. Managers should consider undertaking training in the light of their assessment of the risk of residents being drawn into terrorism.

## ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the role of the DSL to ensure that all of the child protection procedures are followed within the charity's homes, and to make appropriate, timely contact with the Local Authorities Contact, Advice & Assessment Services (CAAS) and the Prevent Officer at Thames Valley Police, in cases of suspected extremism and radicalisation under the Prevent Strategy, in accordance with BfYP procedures.

Additionally, it is the role of the DSL to ensure all staff employed, including temporary staff and volunteers within BfYP, are aware of the contents of these procedures; to advise staff and to offer support to those requiring this; to ensure they know where to find the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (formerly LSCB) child protection procedures and how to report any concerns they have.

The staff DSL should review the Safeguarding policy once a year and this will be reviewed and authorised by the Board of Trustees.

The staff DSL will be responsible for addressing any barriers to effective inter-agency



# Safeguarding Policy



working and will report to the Designated Trustee (or Chair in their absence) when it has an effect on safeguarding children.

## TRAINING

Training undertaken by both staff, volunteers and trustees is in line with advice from the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (formerly LSCB), Safer Recruitment and all required training is compliant and meets the required standards.

The staff DSL and DSL Trustee will undertake relevant induction and refresher safeguarding and child protection training throughout their tenure. They will complete Safeguarding Training, Level Three once a year.

- All staff will complete Safeguarding Training Level Two once a year.
- All trustees complete Level 2 Universal Safeguarding Training Induction and then every 2 years thereafter.
- At least one member of the recruitment panel is 'Safer Recruitment' trained.

## RECRUITMENT & SELECTION OF TRUSTEES, STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

BfYP operates procedures that ensure highest priority is given to issues relating to Safeguarding by ongoing training, support and monitoring as required. All trustees undergo a DBS check. Any Trustee or volunteer who has direct contact and influence with children or vulnerable adults will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check.

The Charity main office will hold a "Single Central Record". This will be a secure file that holds a record of all staff employment checks, references and police check reference numbers and any allegations records. The CEO and Trustee DSL will ensure that the Single Central Record details of trustees, staff and other volunteers is current, complete and compliant.

The information that must be recorded in respect of staff members is whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed/certificate obtained:

An identity check

- An enhanced DBS check/certificate reference number
- A check of professional qualifications, and a check to establish the person's right to work in the United Kingdom

Where checks are carried out on volunteers, record this on the Single Central Record.

## USEFUL LINKS:

National and Local Government Guidance can be found by entering the headings below into your usual search engine. The Government Website [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) provides a wide range of guidance, which is easily accessed from the search box.

The following are particularly useful for staff:

# Safeguarding Policy



- Working Together to Safeguard Children -March 2015 - Working together to safeguard children
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-secure-childrens-future>
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - What to do if you're worried a child is being abused
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused>
- Aims of The Care Act 2014, to safeguard vulnerable adults, these 6 principles apply to all health and care settings: Empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability. [scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/six-principles](http://scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/six-principles)

[www.youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk](http://www.youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk)



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