

North Bristol Children's Centres Safeguarding and Child Protection Summary

North Bristol Children's Centres (NBCC) fully recognises its duty to safeguard and protect children from abuse as defined in the Children Act 2004 and the Education Act 2002. The overall intention and purpose behind the policy is underpinned by the fundamental principle of the Children's Act 1989 and 2004:

'The welfare of the child is paramount'

This policy applies to all staff, governors, students and volunteers working in our Centres. We all share an objective to help keep children safe by:

- Providing a safe environment in which children and families can learn and develop.
- Supporting children's development in ways which will foster a sense of self-esteem and independence.
- Identifying and responding to children in need of support and/or protection.
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff, students and volunteers to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills to keep them safe.
- Implementing our procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.

We recognise that because of our contact with children and parents, staff are well placed to observe any signs of abuse. We will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an ethos where all children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure all children have effective means of communication with more than one adult.
- Plan opportunities for all children to develop the skills they need to stay safe from abuse.
- Give children the opportunities to share thoughts and feelings in an atmosphere of trust, acceptance and tolerance.

Roles and Responsibilities

All adults with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

We have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and three Deputies (DDSL's) and a nominated governor responsible for child protection. All staff, students, volunteers and governors know the name of the DSL responsible for child protection and their role.

The DSL, DDSL's and nominated governor for child protection receive training every two years. All new staff will receive induction training and all staff will have refresher training every three years.

All staff, students and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the DSL.

We will support staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the DSL.

All staff who work with children will have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019)

Procedures

Where it is believed that a child is suffering from, or is at risk of, significant harm, we will follow the procedures set out on the South West Child Protection website www.swcpp.org.uk

If deemed appropriate, referrals will be made to First Response.

NBCC's recognises that it does not have responsibility to investigate cases of suspected child abuse.

We will cooperate with relevant external agencies in any enquiries regarding child protection matters, including representation at child protection conferences, core groups and multi-agency planning meetings.

Parents will be advised of the intention to refer to First Response and their views and cooperation sought, unless we have good reason to believe that to do so would place a child at greater risk of harm.

All staff make it clear to any child disclosing information that they cannot guarantee confidentiality, but they will pass the information on to the people that can help them.

Information concerning children at risk will be shared with all members of staff on a 'need to know' basis. The DSL will make a judgement in each individual case about who needs and has a right to access particular information.

Liaison and sharing of Safeguarding, Child Protection or growing concerns for a child/ren or family with other agencies involved would take place as required and in line with our consent to work with the family. Recording of this is the responsibility of each person in their local records, neither will be expected to record on another's case recording system

Allegations against staff

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If a child makes an allegation against a member of staff the Headteacher and Family and Community Manager should be informed immediately. They will then discuss the allegation with the Local Authority Designated Officer, Nicola Laird (LADO) at the earliest opportunity and prior to taking any action. Telephone contact: 0117 9037795.

If the allegation concerns the behaviour of the Headteacher or Family and Community Manager the Chair of Governors should be immediately informed.

Safe Recruitment Practice

All staff will have enhanced DBS checks. Checks will be accurately recorded on a single central record. At least one person on every interview panel will be trained in safe recruitment practices.

E-Safety

See DPR Policy and Code of Conduct

Disagreements with other professionals

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (formerly known as BSCB) have produced an escalation policy which advises on how to manage disagreements with other professionals.

Definitions

What is Child Protection?

'The process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or at risk of suffering significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect.'

What is Safeguarding?

'The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.'

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.