



## Early Education & Childcare

### Child Protection Policy

#### Aims:

- To ensure staff remain vigilant and are aware of the appropriate response in the event of concern regarding a child's safety.
- To ensure the BS3 Community Early Education & Childcare team follow the South West Child Protection Procedures and meet the statutory requirements set by the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To communicate the procedures which are in place for child protection to staff, parents/carers and any other relevant parties.

#### Definitions of Abuse

The 1989 Children Act recognises four categories of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** - actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces illness in a child.
- **Sexual Abuse** - actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The child may be dependent or developmentally immature. Sexual abuse also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images.
- **Emotional Abuse** - severe or persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection likely to cause adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development, including failure to thrive.

#### Historical Abuse

There may be occasions when a child will disclose abuse (either sexual, physical, emotional or neglect) which occurred in the past. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current child abuse. Reasons for this include the possibility that the abuser may still represent a risk to children now.

## **Domestic Abuse**

Staff may be working with children experiencing violence at home. Children experiencing this may demonstrate many of the signs below. Practitioners will need to treat this sensitively, record their concerns and consider informing First Response.

## **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**

Female circumcision is illegal in the UK and it is an offence to take UK nationals abroad to aid, abet or carry out FGM. All agencies have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children from being abused through FGM. If there is concern that a girl is at risk of FGM, then this is a child protection issue and should be documented and reported to First Response and or the police.

For more information on this topic, see the online South West Child Protection Procedures or the contact the NSPCC. Contact details in the appendix.

## **The Prevent Duty**

The Prevent Duty requires that practitioners are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. The BS3 Community designated lead for Child Protection is responsible for attending relevant briefings and supporting others to understand this responsibility.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology, as with managing other safeguarding risks, practitioners will be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. In the event of any behavior of concern, clear records will be kept and any concerns will be referred through First Response in the first instance.

An email address for the local Channel process co-ordination is included at the end of this policy. The Channel process is aimed at supporting individuals at risk of being drawn into extremism. In addition, if you think a child is at risk of extremism you must contact the Counter Extremism Group, whose contact details are at the end of this policy.

## **Confidentiality and Appropriate Disclosure of Information**

Confidentiality is crucial to all our relationships, but the welfare of the child is paramount. The law does not allow anyone to keep concerns relating to abuse to themselves. Therefore, confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the child.

All information that has been collected on any child will be kept locked and secure and access will be limited to the appropriate staff, management and relevant agencies.

In the event of an investigation it is essential that no information on child protection concerns relating to a child are disclosed inappropriately. Any such leaks could have serious consequences for both the child concerned and any investigation.

In the event of any uncertainties about what information may be shared, advice should be taken from Bristol's Information Sharing protocol.

- Whilst parents / carers have the right to see any records kept on their child, this might not always be appropriate and should not put the child or yourself at risk.

- It is very important that only those who need to know, actually know, to avoid rumour and gossip that could affect the child, parent / carer and the group.

### **Transfer of a Child Protection Safeguarding file from One Education Setting to Another**

- The Designated Lead must inform the receiving setting that the child has a child protection file and must do so within 5 school days of being notified of the transfer.
- The Designated Lead should pass the original copy of the child protection/ safeguarding file to the receiving setting; this should be delivered separately to the child's main file and be delivered either by hand or by recorded delivery. The parents/carers of the child must never be used to transfer the child protection file. The transfer must happen within five school days from notification and the setting should record that the transfer has been made.
- Confidentiality should be maintained and the Designated Lead should ensure that the transfer process is as safe as possible.
- If a new child joins the centre, then their previous setting should be asked if the child has a child protection/ safeguarding file.
- If so, once the transfer of the file has been made, the Designated Lead should record that the file has been received (receipt) and keep this record for 6 years.
- Copies of transferred files will be kept for a minimum of 6 years and/or until the child reaches their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Please refer to the BSCB document "Guidance on the Transfer of a Child Protection Safeguarding file to another education setting", for full details of what should be in a file, how to transfer it and what records should be retained.

Parents/carers will be made aware that as an education provider we have a duty to share/pass on child protection/safeguarding information to the next education provider.

### **Procedures**

*N.B. In the event of an emergency situation a member of staff should always call 999.*

#### *Recognising signs*

Being vigilant and able to recognise the signs of abuse is an essential element of safeguarding children. It is important that all practitioners are alert to any signs or behaviours which make them feel concerned. This may include (EYFS 2012:14):

- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Significant changes in behaviour.
- Deterioration in a child's wellbeing.
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect
- A child making comments which lead to concern.
- Any reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, for example in the child's home; and/or
- Inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff, or any other person working with children.

Not all concerns about children or young people relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what you know about the child and their circumstances.

If practitioners are worried, it is not their responsibility to investigate and decide if it is abuse, it is their responsibility to act on these concerns and follow the relevant procedures.

### *Disclosure*

If a child discloses abuse, practitioners should ensure the following occurs:

- They remain calm
- They listen properly to what the child is saying
- They reassure the child
- They record all relevant information in as much detail as possible, including; date, time, exact wording used, responses, all contextualising information and anything else which seems relevant.
- They do not interrogate or ask leading questions.
- Discussions are held with the Southville and Chessel Centres designated person for safeguarding children (see list at the end of the document).

As with any discussions with children, adults should ensure their responses are appropriate to the developmental level and age of the child. It is unusual for children to make false disclosures regarding abuse, therefore if disclosure occurs the information will be shared with the designated person for child protection, who will contact First Response, in line with the South West Child Protection Procedures.

### *Recording*

The Designated Person for Child Protection should ensure any information which causes any amount of concern is recorded in the incident book. If a child arrives at nursery or playscheme with an injury then this should be recorded in the accident file and signed by the parent when they are dropped off, if an injury is noted after a child has been collected for after school club, then this should be followed up with both the class teacher and the parent. NB: staff should not take photos of any injuries, police only should take photos if required. Any discussions or decisions made relating to safeguarding a child/ren should be recorded. Parents have a right to access information held by the setting about their child unless it is deemed that this may lead to an increased risk of significant harm to an adult or child.

Any information relating to children attending the setting should be treated as confidential, inappropriate discussion of child protection concerns could jeopardise children's safety and any future investigations.

Practitioners should consider that recording may be needed for evidence in legal proceedings. Therefore ensure that you record facts as facts. Your opinion should be clearly labelled as such.

### *What to Do if Abuse is Suspected*

- If any signs or symptoms lead you to feel concerned that a child may be being abused or neglected, it is important that you record these (what, when & where) and share these concerns with the Designated Lead.

- Decide a plan of action:
  - Ongoing observation of the child noting any further concerns (record in incident book).
  - Discussion with other staff to gain further information they may have.
  - Discussion with Parents/carers to establish if there might be reasons for the child's behaviour /actions.
  - Keep an open mind and avoid assumptions about the source of the harm.
  - Work with the child and parents/carers to reduce risk, this may be by offering a service through your setting or by referring to additional support externally.
- If you or the Designated Senior is uncertain about whether the concern is reportable, call the Families in Focus Team for advice.
- If you are still concerned about the welfare of the child / young person, this information must be passed on to First Response. Parents / carers should be informed unless you think this could put the child or yourself at risk.
- First Response will assess your call and pass you onto an appropriate agency. This will be Social Care (Level 3 Statutory Response) if it is a Child Protection issue or Families in Focus (Level 2 Escalating, Targeted support/Escalating Needs) if the concern is at a lower level but a multiagency response is needed. First Response may also signpost to other services or even ask you to plan to support the child. (Level 1 Plus Additional support Universal Services).
- If First Response has been contacted and they pass you to Children's' Social Care, they should let you know that they are responding to what you have told them. If you have not heard from the Social Care team, it may be appropriate to contact them to ensure that the details you gave them have been taken into consideration and acted upon.

First Response can be contacted on:

- **First Response – 0117 9036444 (all Bristol)**
- **South West Child Protection Procedures – Getting Help (2014)**

Families in Focus (previously Early Help) can be contacted on:

**Central** 0117 3576460 ; **South** 0117 903 7770

*What To Do If You Think It Is An Emergency:*

If you think a child is in immediate danger you should telephone the police on 999. In all other circumstances you need to refer the matter to First Response and follow the procedure described above.

In a medical emergency your first action may need to be one of the following:

- Telephone for an ambulance, or,
- Ask the parent to take the child to the hospital at once

If you think a child is in immediate danger you should telephone the police on 999. In all other circumstances you need to refer the matter to First Response and follow the procedure described above. The child is the legal responsibility of the parent/carer and they must be involved as soon as practical, unless to do so would put the child at immediate risk of harm. Having taken the necessary emergency action it is important that you make immediate contact with First Response. If it is out of office hours, contact the Emergency duty team.

1. If you are a professional and want advice on whether to Call First Response make a child protection referral **0117 9036444**
2. Where you think a child is at **imminent risk of significant harm** Call First Response **0117 9036444**

## **Staffing**

### *Designated Responsibility*

Each Designated Person and Designated Committee Member for Child Protection will have attended a BSCB approved child protection course. The setting aims to facilitate for 100% of permanent staff to attend such training and organises for full team training, delivered on site by an approved trainer, at least once every 2 years (latest dates Nov 2016, Oct 2018).

It is required that all staff familiarise themselves with the South West Child Protection Procedures guidance as well as this policy. Links to this information are available at the end of this policy document.

### *Suitability*

The organisation will require DBS checks and two references for all staff/volunteers who commence work with children. These are also required for BS3 Community management committee members.

Please also refer to the Recruitment Policy (11) for more detailed information regarding safe recruitment.

### *Recognising inappropriate behaviour in staff, volunteers and other adults*

There is no guaranteed way to identify a person who will harm children. However, there are possible warning signs. These may include:

- Paying an excessive amount of attention to a child or groups of children, providing presents, money or having favourites
- Seeking out vulnerable children, e.g.: disabled children
- Trying to spend time alone with a particular child or group of children on a regular basis
- Making inappropriate sexual comments
- Sharing inappropriate images
- Being vague about where they have worked or when they have been employed
- Encouraging secretiveness

There may be other sources of concern; this is not a conclusive list. If you are concerned about another staff member or volunteer's behaviour you need to pass this on to the designated person for child protection.

### *Allegations*

Any member of staff/student/volunteer who is subject to an allegation of child abuse will be suspended whilst this allegation is investigated. This includes where it is alleged an offence has occurred outside of their role at BS3 Community. In the event of any investigation determining that a member of staff has committed such offence then they will be dismissed immediately.

The Executive Head of Early Education & Childcare (or Associate Head of Early Education and Childcare in their absence) will inform Children's Social Care of any allegation and in addition also contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (within 1 working day) & OFSTED. If a member of staff is dismissed for misconduct in relation to children, or resigns before they would have been dismissed, BS3 Community also has a duty to report this to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Independent Safeguarding Authority ([www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk)).

### **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

*Contact Details (Bristol)*

*Telephone: 0117 903 7795 or Work Mobile: 07795 091020*

<https://bristolsafeguarding.org/media/1284/lado-referral-form-primary.doc>

### **Technology**

New technologies present potential risks for children and young people, including the potential to access inappropriate materials or online communication and activity. The use of all BS3 Community electronic devices is monitored and appropriate filters and controls are in place to prevent inappropriate use.

Where older children are accessing online material, the organisation has a role in implementing strategies to help keep them safe online and in supporting them to develop their own understanding of online risks and how to prevent them (cyberbullying, grooming, radicalisation and online abuse). This may include communicating with parents and/or teachers if they are aware of inappropriate use.

### **Use of Mobile Phones & Cameras**

The use of personal mobile phones and cameras within the Southville and Chessel Centres nursery rooms are prohibited. In particular members of staff who work directly with children are requested to store their mobile phones in the designated storage spaces along with their other personal belongings. The expectation is that these devices are not used within OFSTED registered spaces or designated working hours. Lead Practitioners are permitted to use a mobile phone during outings or school collections, for communication purposes only (not for taking photographs). The number of the mobile phone used on an outing should be recorded on an outings form. BS3 Community also has a number of digital cameras and iPads which are monitored and used for assessment purposes. Parental permission is required for photographs, including specific permissions for sharing or displaying these in any format.

## Support & Advice

Dealing with processes for recognising and responding to potential child protection concerns can sometimes be very difficult and emotive for Early Years Practitioners. BS3 Community recognises this and has a commitment to providing appropriate support for employees. In addition to regular supervision, Early Years Practitioners can also request supervision sessions at any point, and will be directly offered additional supervision if they have been/are involved in any form of incident or situation related to child protection. Supervision sessions may also lead to further signposting for support and advice and contact details for a number of relevant agencies are included at the end of this document.

## Safeguarding Children Statement

Safeguarding is a relatively new term which is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding has been defined as:

- All agencies working with children, young people and their families taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised; and
- Where there are concerns about children and young people's welfare, all agencies taking appropriate actions to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

Safeguarding children is of paramount concern to BS3 Community; it is part of the legal requirements of our Ofsted registration, and highly relevant to our objectives and responsibilities as a charity.

Whilst this policy is central to our efforts to safeguard children, this does not sit in isolation as we acknowledge that safeguarding is relevant to all of our policies, procedures and practice.

*Other useful contacts:*

Police Child Protection Team Tel 0117 945 4320

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service> - DBS

Bristol Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO): 0117 903 7795 or 07795 091020

OFSTED – 0300 123 1231

**First Response – 0117 9036444 (all Bristol)**

**Families in Focus - Central 0117 3576460 ; South 0117 903 7770**

Disabled Children Team (all Bristol) - Tel: 0117 9038250

Out of Office Hours Tel: 01454 615 165 (Emergency Duty Team)

Email (all Bristol) [childprotection@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:childprotection@bristol.gov.uk)

Police: Non-emergency – Tel: 101 Emergency – Tel: 999

NSPCC – 0800 800500

Child Line – 0800 1111

Channel info: [channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk](mailto:channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk)

Counter Extremism Group: [counter.extremism@education.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:counter.extremism@education.qsi.gov.uk)

Tel: 0207 340 7264

**Trustee responsible for Child Protection (Child Protection Officer)**

Name: Celia Phipps

**Designated Lead Practitioners responsible for Child Protection**

Southville Centre Names: Martine Burke (Leighton)

After School Club: Lynn Bell

Chessel Centre Name: Abbey Henley (Ruby)

**Deputy Leads for Child Protection**

Southville Centre Names: Emma Morris (Stackpool)

After School Club: Tim Clark

Chessel Centre Name: Joanna Smith (Pearl)

*Training & Development*

A yearly Child Protection audit is completed and sent to Bristol City Council. This identifies training development needs and aspirations.

The named person for Child Protection attends relevant training each year, with an aim that all other staff access training every 2 years.

A yearly child protection update is provided for all Practitioners.

[jeanette.plumb@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:jeanette.plumb@bristol.gov.uk) – BSCB Level One Training

[mandyparrytraining@gmail.com](mailto:mandyparrytraining@gmail.com)

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

October 2018 reviewed

**Related documentation:**

- BS3 Community Recruitment Policy
- EYFS Statutory Requirements page 13-14, 3.1-3.8
- Working together to Safeguard Children 2018
- BSCB Threshold Guidance 2018
- Whistleblowing policy
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales
- South West Child Protection Procedures