
SAFEGUARDING POLICY

BPC is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children and young people and vulnerable adults. We recognise our responsibilities to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect them from harm, abuse and neglect.

BPC acknowledges its duty to act appropriately with regards to any allegations towards a member of staff or volunteer, or towards any disclosures or suspicion of abuse. BPC recognises its duty of care to safeguard children as detailed under the Children Acts' 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

BPC believes that:

- The welfare of all children and young people is paramount
- All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, ethnicity, religious or spiritual beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse
- All allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to in a swift and appropriate manner

BPC will ensure that:

- All children and young people will be treated equally and with respect and dignity
- The welfare of each child will always be of highest priority
- Bullying (in any form) is neither accepted nor condoned
- Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour
- There is a clear line of accountability with regards to safeguarding concerns
- Staff and volunteers will be kept updated with regards to changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and young people
- Staff and volunteers will undertake relevant and appropriate development and training in relation to safeguarding children
- All staff and volunteers within the organisation are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding and their duty to the children and young people in their care, and that they fully understand the correct process for reporting concerns

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989 and 2004: and in line with the following:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015

Roles & Responsibilities:

All staff and volunteers working within BPC must:

- Understand the different categories of abuse and neglect, and how to recognise the signs.
- Recognise that some parents/carers may require additional support in raising their children, for example as a result of mental health issues, substance misuse or domestic abuse.
- Understand their responsibility to report any concerns that a child is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected. This includes reporting any concern they may have regarding another staff member or volunteer's behaviour towards a child or children.
- Understand the line of accountability for reporting safeguarding concerns, and be fully aware of the organisation's safeguarding lead and their role within the organisation.
- If appropriate; liaise with other agencies, contribute to safeguarding assessments and attend child protection meetings / core groups / conferences.

Recognising the Signs of Abuse

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 institution or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Children can be abused by an adult, or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse: A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms or, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Emotional Abuse: The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

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It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse: Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex), or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Child Sexual Exploitation: This is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Neglect: The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers): or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Child Criminal Exploitation: As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity: (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Extremism: Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as “the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for death of members of our armed forces as extremist.”

County Lines: As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of ‘deal line’. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons.

Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead provides a direct point of contact for any staff member or volunteer who has a child protection concern, record any concerns in a clear (and secure) manner, and ensure that the appropriate action is taken. The Safeguarding Lead should also ensure that the Child Protection Policy is being fully adhered to.

The Safeguarding Lead for Berryfields Parish Council is Anthea Cass. She can be contacted on 01296 925750.

If the Safeguarding Lead is not available staff and volunteers should report to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead who is Angelika Opoka. She can be contacted on 01296 925750.

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If neither the Safeguarding Lead nor Deputy Safeguarding Lead is available, advice should be immediately sought from: The First Response Team on 01296 383962.

(outside of office hours call: 0800 999 7677) Or complete the online form:

Report a concern about a child - Start - buckinghamshire.gov.uk (buckscc.gov.uk)

What to do if you are concerned about a child

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to raise any concerns regarding the welfare and safety of children, including if a child or young person discloses abuse which has happened / is happening to them.

Staff and volunteers must contact their Safeguarding Lead in the first instance. The Safeguarding Lead will help to determine the correct course of action based on the level of need, and where appropriate can assist with making a referral to The First Response Team. The Safeguarding Lead, should take action in line with the BSCP procedure. Detailed information can be found at www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk

Disclosure of abuse: If a child or young person discloses to you that abuse or inappropriate behaviour has / is taking place, you should:

- Listen to the child. Allow them to tell you what has happened in their own way, and at their own pace. Do not interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- Remain calm. Be reassuring and supportive but try not to respond emotionally.
- Do not ask leading questions. Only ask questions if you are seeking clarification about something they have said. Use TED; Tell, Explain, Describe.
- When you are able to, make an accurate record of what you have been told, taking care to note any times, dates or locations mentioned. Use the child's own words where possible. Do not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names used by the child.
- Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone and you are glad they told you. Reassure the child that they have not done anything wrong.
- Do not promise to keep their disclosure a secret, but reassure the child that you will only share the information with the right people who will be able to help them. Explain what you will do next.
- At your earliest opportunity, speak to your Safeguarding Lead regarding the disclosure. If your Safeguarding Lead and deputy Safeguarding Lead are not available, ring First Response for advice.

If there is immediate risk of harm to a child DO NOT DELAY, ring 999

DOING NOTHING IS NOT AN OPTION!

Allegations or concerns regarding a member of staff or volunteer within Berryfields Parish Council. Disclosures of abusive or inappropriate behaviour towards children may be made in relation to staff members or volunteers working within your organisation. Alternatively, staff members or volunteers may have concerns regarding behaviour they have witnessed from another member of staff or volunteer towards children.

The named lead for managing allegations is Laurilee Green. Laurilee.Green@berryfieldspc.org

In response to any allegation, the named lead should respond in line with the BSCP Procedure for Managing Allegations and where appropriate must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01296 382070.

If the concern relates directly to the named person for managing allegations, you will need to approach the LADO directly for advice.

Transfer of Risk: Should an individual staff member or volunteer be involved in child protection, other safeguarding procedures or Police investigations in relation to abuse or neglect, they must inform their manager or employer. In these circumstances, the organisation will need to assess whether there is any potential for risk to transfer to the workplace and the individual's own work with children or young people.

Safer Recruitment

BPC is committed to following safer recruitment practices in line with the Buckinghamshire Safer Recruitment Toolkit. Further information is at www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk

Training

BPC is committed to allow staff and volunteers to access appropriate training. The BSCP has produced a Safeguarding Children Training Pathway for employers, which outlines an appropriate pathway for safeguarding training.

All staff and volunteers working with children and young people must undertake basic safeguarding awareness training, which should be updated on a three yearly basis.

Training information and course details are available on the BSCP website.

Recording and Record Retention

When a disclosure of abuse, or an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, has been made, a written record will be made. Records must be stored in a confidential and secure manner. When a staff member is disclosed to, and shares that information with the Safeguarding Lead, it is the Safeguarding Lead's responsibility to ensure that the information is recorded and stored in a confidential way.

Records of the concern and subsequent actions taken must be kept for a minimum of 6 years. This record should not be shared with any other staff members or volunteers.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, a comprehensive, confidential summary of the allegation should be kept on their personnel file. This record should be kept by the organisation until normal retirement age, or 10 years after the allegation if longer. This record should include a clear outcome, including when cases have been investigated and found to be without substance. All allegations should be included in employer references, clearly stating the outcomes to any investigation.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Child protection concerns, disclosures from children or safeguarding allegations made against another staff member or volunteer must not be discussed across the workforce as a whole. This information should be shared solely with the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead (or with First Response / the LADO as appropriate)

Personal information which is shared by the child or young person on a 1:1 level, such as sexual orientation or gender identification, should not be disclosed to the workforce as a whole.

If staff and volunteers wish to discuss situations in order to gain a wider perspective from colleagues, this should be done on an anonymous basis with names and other identifying information relating to the child and their family remaining strictly confidential.

Consent: When responding to a concern about a child, making a referral to First Response or contacting the LADO, the safeguarding lead should consult the thresholds document to clarify whether consent from the child / family is required. In any situation where a child is at risk of harm, consent is not required.

Information Sharing: Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. It is also an intrinsic part of any frontline practitioner's job when working with children and young people. Decisions about how much information to share, with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals' lives. It could ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevent a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet. At the other end of the spectrum it could be the difference between life and death. Poor or non-existent information sharing is a factor repeatedly flagged up as an issue in Serious Case Reviews carried out following the death of, or serious harm to, a child as a result of abuse or neglect.

The following information is available on the BSCP website.

www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk

- BSCP Multi Agency Information Sharing Code of Practice
- HM Government Information Sharing Guidance (2015)
- Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

Escalation and Challenge

Staff should feel confident that they can raise any concerns they have about actions or decisions relating to safeguarding that are made by other professionals or agencies. You should refer to the BSCP Escalation, Challenge and Conflict Resolution Procedure which provides a clear process for concerns to be raised.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing occurs when an employee or worker raises a concern about a dangerous or illegal activity that they are aware of through their work that may affect others, e.g. customers, members of the public, or their employer. Concerns could cover a variety of areas, including safeguarding concerns about children and young people.

e-Safety

No employee or trustee of BPC should make contact with a child by using email or other online or mobile phone facility. All contact should be made with the child's designated parent or carer.

Any staff member or volunteer working with children and young people should be aware of the potential risks connected to the use of technology, from cyber bullying, to sexting, distribution of images and even the potential for radicalisation. Information regarding these topics, and others, can be found on the BSCP e-safety & Prevent pages.

Photography and images of children

A signed consent form must be obtained from a parent or carer before photos are taken of a child and this consent must specifically allow display of the photo on our website or promotional material or those of our funders.

The child's and family's identity must be kept confidential and no details of name or address can be used on material which is for public view.

Conduct of Berryfields Parish Council's activities to ensure effectiveness of above policies

In carrying out its parish council activities BPC is not performing Regulated Activity as defined by legislation.

In performing its daily activities the following code of conduct must be followed:

Contact with children by BPC staff, volunteers and trustees:

- Visits to children must only be on an occasional basis and a parent or carer must be present. Notes of the visit must be kept on file.
- All children who attend the village hall activities/events must be accompanied by an adult (parent/carer/ or group leader).
- BPC staff, councillors and volunteers must not be alone with children and must not approach or have physical contact with unaccompanied children.

Website and Promotional Material

- A signed consent form must be obtained from a parent or carer before photos are taken of a child and this consent must specifically allow display of the photo on our website or promotional material or those of our funders.
- The child's and family's identity must be kept confidential and no details of name or address can be used on material which is for public view.

Supervision and Training of Staff

All BPC staff and volunteers are to be made aware of the contents of this document on commencement of their employment or voluntary service.

It is necessary to ensure staff and volunteers are aware that the way they deal with children is open and transparent and that they are working in an environment where any concerns can be passed on.

Staff and volunteers should try and ensure that they are not alone with children and that another staff member or volunteer is present.

The ethos of any provision should be to demonstrate safe practices and to ensure this is a fundamental part of their own work and that where possible they increase children's and young people's awareness of the need to keep safe.

Contact Details

Buckinghamshire Council – Child Protection – Concerns about a child

Call: 01296 383962 or out of hours 0800 999 7677

Report a concern at this link:

Report a concern about a child - Start - buckinghamshire.gov.uk (bucksc.gov.uk)

Email: ascfirstresponse@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Contact Number : 01296 383204

Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership – www.buckssafeguarding.org.uk

Concerns about staff working with children

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) call: 01296 382070.

Police – Call :101 or 999

Document History

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