

Bridgend Centre

Children's Safeguarding Policy

1. Statement of Policy

The Bridgend Centre 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.

For the purposes of this policy a child or young person is someone under the age of 18.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child person is paramount
- All children, 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 or neglect
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare.

2. Scope of this policy

The purpose of the policy is:

- To provide protection for the children and young people who receive services at the Bridgend Centre, including the children of adult members or users.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy applies to all staff, the board of trustees, volunteers, sessional workers or anyone else working on behalf of the Bridgend Centre.

We will seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents & children as appropriate.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

3. What is abuse?

Abuse of a child can take five forms:

- Physical
- Domestic Abuse
- Psychological
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect & Acts of Omission

4. Standards

Bridgend Centre staff and volunteers are required to:

- Demonstrate respect for all service users as individuals in all matters.
- Reflect on their own approach and style, recognising the inherent power their position bestows.
- Undertake relevant training in safeguarding, disclosure and diversity matters where required. Ask a senior member of staff if they have any uncertainties about how to deal with a specific service user.
- Ensure that all service users experience a suitable and supportive environment to encourage service user disclosure of any issues, which might affect the way in which they should be treated.

Service users are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for other users of the Bridgend Centre
- Help prevent inappropriate behaviour by challenging and reporting behaviour that appears to be causing distress to others
- Support an open, constructive environment within which diversity is valued positively

5. Safeguarding Procedure

a) First steps

If you think that child abuse has or may have occurred act immediately. It is the responsibility of the person first becoming aware of a situation where there may be a child subject to, or at risk of, abuse to make safe and deal with the immediate needs of the person. This may mean taking reasonable steps to ensure the child is in no immediate danger and seek medical treatment if required as a matter of urgency.

Do NOT discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator. Do NOT disturb or destroy articles that could be used in evidence.

If the allegation is about a staff member or volunteer of any organisation, ensure that the allegation is properly managed. Tell your safeguarding lead or another manager if your safeguarding lead is unavailable or is implicated in the allegation.

Contact the police if it is thought a crime has just been committed. Telephone 101 or 999 if an emergency.

Record details of the allegation as soon as possible somewhere that can be kept secure.

Include:

- a) The allegation or concerns, including the date and time of the incident.
- b) What the child at risk said about the abuse and how it occurred or what has been reported to you.
- c) The appearance and behaviour of the victim.
- d) Any injuries observed.

b) Bring the concern to the attention of your Safeguarding Lead

It is the responsibility of the Safeguarding Lead to:

- Decide without delay on the most appropriate course of action once the allegation or suspicion of abuse has been raised.
- Deal with any immediate needs.
- Ensure that the victim of the alleged abuse is safe.
- Ensure that any necessary emergency medical treatment is arranged.
- Ensure that no forensic evidence is lost.
- If the alleged perpetrator is an adult at risk, ensure that another member of staff/manager is allocated to attend to their needs and ensure that other service users are not put at risk.
- Clarify the facts stated by the member of staff but do NOT in any circumstances discuss the allegation of abuse with the alleged perpetrator or the child.
- Check that the circumstances fall within the safeguarding children procedure.
- Address issues of consent and confidentiality.
- A formal referral must be made on the same day as the alert is raised when:
 - A crime has been or could have been or could yet be committed
 - There is a suspicion that abuse has taken place
 - The alleged perpetrator is an adult at risk
 - It is believed that the child is at risk of being harmed in the future
 - They are unsure if abuse has taken place
- Where a decision is made NOT to refer, the alert must be recorded, with the reasons for the decision not to refer.

c) The referral stage

This involves bringing the concern regarding alleged abuse or potential abuse formally to the attention of the following authorities as appropriate:

- All referrals should be made to **Cheshire East Consultation Services (ChECs)** on 0300 123 5012 or out of hours 0300 123 5022.
- For more information and details on how to make a child protection referral:
<http://www.cheshireeastlscb.org.uk/professionals/procedures-and-guidance.aspx>
<https://www.proceduresonline.com/pancheshire/cheshire-east/index.html>
- The police if you think a crime may have been committed - Tel: 101 and specify it is a safeguarding issue (999 in an emergency).

The person making the referral should ideally have the following information available; however, the lack of any of this information should not delay the referral:

- The name of the child.
- Date of birth and age.
- Address and telephone number.
- Why the child is considered to be at risk.
- Whether consent has obtained for the referral, and if not the reasons.

6. Recruitment, Selection and Screening of Staff

The organisation must have sound recruitment practices in place to ensure that anyone considered to be a risk to adults or children does not enter the organisation's service. The following precautions will reduce this risk:

- Anyone applying to work for the organisation will be interviewed and asked to provide two references from former employers.
- Anyone applying to volunteer for the organisation will be interviewed and asked to supply one reference.
- If an applicant is unable to provide employer references, they will be asked to provide references from alternative sources, such as volunteer managers, community leaders or other appropriate people.
- Where appropriate and required by regulations, staff, volunteers and contractors who work with children will have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check when they commence employment. Where this has not been undertaken staff members will not be allowed to work with children unless supervised by a member of staff who has a clear DBS check.
 - Re-screening will take place every three years.

7. Supervision

Thorough induction training will be provided to ensure that staff / volunteers are aware of the Bridgend Centre's core values, confidentiality and good practice in working with the public.

Staff and volunteers will be given regular supervision and have their training needs in safeguarding, disclosure and diversity matters assessed.

Regular case checking will take place and any unusual or excessive contact with a child will be investigated.

8. Designated Person

There will be a named designated person and if necessary a deputy-designated person for child protection. In the event of any concerns regarding a child then the designated person or deputy will be informed at the earliest available opportunity. If necessary the designated person will inform the relevant Social Care Department without delay and our Board of Trustees. The designated person will also ensure that the child protection procedures are kept up to date and reviewed.

Named person for child protection

The named contact for the Bridgend Centre is:

Rebecca Lea – Centre Manager

The named person will be aware of and follow the guidelines for the Child Protection and Safeguarding.

We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

9. Accompanying policies

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the following relevant policies:

Safeguarding policy – Adults at Risk

Equality and Diversity policy

Whistleblowing