



Unique Voice CIC
St Bonaventure's Business Centre
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Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Aim

Unique Voice considers that the welfare of the child is paramount and it is the duty of members, staff and volunteers under HM Government's Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 to implement this policy, and to ensure that it has in place appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and young people and protect them from abuse

The policy should coincide and works in conjunction with the setting/school Unique Voice are working within. If for any reason the Unique Voice policy contradicts that of the school you are working in, then the school/ setting's policy overrides that of Unique Voice. The following policy has been written to a universal scale to avoid this happening but should you encounter problems please alert a senior member of the Unique Voice team.

Safeguarding is a term which is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention. Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. We commit to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children 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
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

We will work with children, young people, their families and other agencies 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, we will take appropriate action to address those concerns, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies.

We recognise that safeguarding children is vital. We know that having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of staff, volunteers, parents/carers, management and the general public.

For the purposes of child protection legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to the age of 18 years.



We believe children have a right to play and be safe. We take steps to promote their safety.

The design and delivery of Unique Voice programmes provides excellent opportunities for us to identify concerns, including both current and historic disclosures of harm. Attendance at our sessions is intermittent and entirely voluntary. We often do not have information from any other organisation about our families so we do not always have the full context surrounding a concern. In order to ensure that effective safeguarding happens, it is vital that we share information appropriately with partners who have this context, and who are able to offer ongoing support through their relationship with the young person.

We believe in building relationships with all of our families and are working towards being a trauma informed organisation. All of our safeguarding team have undertaken trauma informed practice training and we have a relationship policy that encourages connection before correction. All of our staff and volunteers practice co-regulation and mindfulness is a core practice in all of our programmes.

Safeguarding - Staff Roles

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL).



DSL: Krystal Keeley (Director) who has undergone Advanced Child Protection Training for Safeguarding Leads & Specialist Practitioners. Refresher training will be undertaken on a three yearly basis.

Contact information:

Office: 0117 428 6240 / Mobile: 07875 841769

Email: krystal@uniquevoice.org



DDSL: Claire Farnham (Director) who has undergone Advanced Child Protection Training for Safeguarding Leads & Specialist Practitioners. Refresher training will be undertaken on a three yearly basis.

Contact information:

Office: 0117 428 6240 / Mobile: 07748821092

Email claire@uniquevoice.org

DDSL: Esther Lambert (Independent Safeguarding Consultant) who has undergone Advanced Child Protection Training for Safeguarding Leads & Specialist Practitioners.

Contact information:

Mobile: 07570 368459

Email: esther@uniquevoice.org

** Esther Lambert can be nominated as DSL for certain programmes, all team members will be informed when this is in place and details will be provided.*

This contact information will be available at all settings and programmes run by Unique Voice.

Unique Voice C.I.C

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The DSL will take lead responsibility including managing referrals, working with local authorities in cases of suspected abuse, liaising with LADO where there are concerns about the conduct or allegation matters involving a staff member.

In addition the DSL will ensure that all team members, including administration staff will receive annual training, either through external training providers or through informed in-house training at an appropriate level.

The DDSLs will work closely with the DSL in all safeguarding issues and will act as Duty DSL when the DSL is not available. All staff will be informed who the Duty DSL is and will be provided with contact details.

Safeguarding Advisors:

Safeguarding Advisors have completed additional safeguarding training and are available to share their knowledge and experience with all staff. They can support staff to develop their confidence regarding knowledge of Unique Voice policies and procedures, and the appropriate actions to take.

Safeguarding Advisors can support the DSL/DDSL with contacting other relevant organisations, including local authorities if they are directed to do so once the DSL/DDSL has assessed the level of the concern to establish the appropriate response.

They are not responsible for making decisions about whether the threshold for safeguarding referrals is met, this remains the responsibility of the DSL/DDSL.

Safeguarding Advisors are identified to staff to increase the support available to them, however they are not obliged to contact them prior to contacting DSL/DDSL, or prior to taking action themselves.

SA: Megan Taylor (Business Manager) who has undergone Advanced Practitioner Training in Safeguarding. Refresher training will be undertaken on a three yearly basis.

Contact information Office: 0117 428 6240

Email: meg@uniquevoice.org

SA: Kitty Bazalgette (Project Coordinator) who has undergone Advanced Practitioner Training in Safeguarding. Refresher training will be undertaken on a three yearly basis.

Contact information Office: 0117 428 6240

Email: kitty@uniquevoice.org

SA: Talulah Pollenne (Creative Lead) who has undergone Advanced Practitioner Training in Safeguarding. Refresher training will be undertaken on a three yearly basis.

Contact information Office: 0117 428 6240

Email talulah@uniquevoice.org



Staff remain responsible for recording any concerns about children on CPOMS when they have discussed them with the DSL/DDSL/Safeguarding Advisors.

Safeguarding Champions

All staff and volunteers who work with Unique Voice are considered Safeguarding Champions. This reflects our commitment to ensuring that all adults can be the trusted adult that a young person might need.

We want all staff to feel empowered to take action to safeguard and protect children in line with Unique Voice policies and procedures, and to be a trusted adult to any child that might need them.

Safeguarding Champions complete safeguarding children training as part of their induction, attend annual in-house refresher training and keep up to date with Unique Voice policies and procedures.

All Safeguarding Champions will uphold our values through:

Compassion: seeking to understand the lived experiences of Unique Voice families, offering opportunities to speak about those experiences, supporting young people through co-regulation, signposting families to sources of support, advice and guidance and enabling young people to process their feelings through safe and creative activities.

Creativity: recognising that our children and young people are all unique individuals who will express themselves differently. Offering opportunities for our children to engage with creative activities in ways that work for them. Recognising that children and young people often do not disclose verbally so we provide creative opportunities for them to tell us what they are worried about.

Curiosity: taking a non-judgemental, curious approach to finding out what is important to our families. Asking questions when we are not sure what a child or young person means. Asking courageous questions when we are concerned about a child or young person, in order to identify whether we need to take action to protect them from harm. Not making assumptions, regularly checking in with our young people about what might have changed for them.

Collaboration: working with our families to offer safe, supportive spaces for them to share worries and concerns, and celebrate successes together. We work with each other, sharing information that people need to know for safety purposes, sharing examples of best practice, and supporting each other to reflect on how we can all improve our safeguarding procedures. We ask for help and support from others whenever we need to. We work with external partners, making referrals when needed, sharing information when appropriate and legal to do so.



Change: recognising that every individual can change, and we encourage our families to recognise when change is needed to ensure that children and young people are safe. We support children and young people to become change makers, identifying changes for themselves, their families and their communities, and encouraging them to take action to make positive changes. We reflect on our practice and embrace opportunities to make positive changes in how we work to safeguard and protect young people. We encourage challenge to our policies, procedures and individual behaviours so that we can improve our safeguarding practice. We will challenge others sensitively and professionally when we identify concerns about safeguarding policy, practice or decisions.

The UV Team

All staff are recruited in line with the Unique Voice Safer Recruitment Policy which has been written in conjunction with training received from the Safer Recruitment Consortium; Keeping children safe: Safer recruitment for professionals in the children's workforce (non education). All staff are required to complete an application form detailing a full employment history, provide verified identification, appropriate references (which are followed up in writing and personal verification), sign a disclosure of any criminal record prior to interview, sign a health check to confirm fitness to work, and have an appropriate level DBS certificate registered on the Update Service or undergo a new DBS check at the appropriate level.

Safeguarding awareness training forms part of regular training programmes; this, together with disclosed external safeguarding training is recorded on staff training records to ensure that all staff receive a minimum of one annual training session. Included in the training is an awareness of the procedures and the correct channels to report suspected abuse; how Unique Voice and the DSL will support staff who may have anxieties regarding safeguarding concerns.

Staff will be made aware that Unique Voice has separate Whistleblowing and Low Level Concerns policies which identifies the level of concerns and the process for highlighting any internal safeguarding concerns.

Our commitment to creating a safe environment includes:

- Child protection policy and procedure (includes receiving disclosure information)
- Safe recruitment procedure (including suitability)
- Staff and volunteers are inducted and supervised
- Staff and volunteers' code of conduct
- Photography, video, mobile phone and e-safety policies
- Staff training
- Health and Safety policy and procedures
- First Aid training requirements
- Fire Procedures
- Risk assessments
- Secure premises
- Managing Behaviour (Relationships Policy)



- Child registration information
- Procedures for children's safe arrival and departure
- Deployment of staff
- Procedures for meeting the needs of disabled children and others with specific needs
- Listening to concerns from children, parents and carers
- Collecting, monitoring, reviewing, safe storage and transfer of safeguarding and child protection files in line with Bristol Safeguarding Children's Boards' guidance.

Working with children

We believe in equipping children with a range of skills, information and confidence that will help them to protect themselves in the community. Staff will act as role models and listen to children.

We will discuss in an age appropriate way:

- Choices
- Setting rules
- Values
- Expressing feelings
- Rights of a child
- Healthy relationships
- Friendships
- Appropriate touch
- Keeping safe online
- Recognising and assessing risk
- Problem solving and decision making
- How and where to get help when needed

Implementation and Monitoring

- The Management Committee/Registered Person will appoint a Child Protection Officer/ DSL who will take responsibility or ensure there is a member of staff to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding children within the setting and liaising with local statutory children's services as appropriate. The DSL must attend training, which must be updated at least every 3 years. Where the post is held by more than one individual, the Child Protection Officer will receive reports from the DSL of any occasions when there are concerns or issues of Child Protection.
- All staff and volunteers are to undertake in-house child protection training, which must be updated every 3 years.
- The Child Protection policy must be part of the induction for all staff and volunteers;
- All staff and volunteers are aware of how to support children to understand and recognise risk;
- The setting will review this policy annually, to ensure it is up to date and is being implemented correctly;
- If the DSL is uncertain about concerns about a child, they should contact Family Help.



- Staff working directly with young people where Unique Voice has overall control (e.g. WAC, Holiday Clubs etc) will record all incidents and concerns (at any level) on CPOMS, a secure central database which allows monitoring of each child in our care. DSL/Senior Management are alerted to all new entries and where appropriate, information may be shared from participating schools where there is found to be significant concern for an individual child.

Definitions of Abuse

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child.

The 1989 Children Act recognises four categories of abuse:

- **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, 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** – 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 the 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. Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children (see Peer on peer abuse).
- **Emotional Abuse** – the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child 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 in so far 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 capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing a child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), 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, though it may occur alone.



- **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 abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - A. Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment)
 - B. Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
 - C. Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers)
 - D. Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

Safeguarding issues

Historical Abuse

There may be occasions when a child will disclose abuse (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. The reason for this is that the abuser may still represent a risk to children now.

Domestic Abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been intimate family partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: psychological; physical; sexual; financial and emotional.

Exposure to domestic abuse and/or violence can have a serious, long lasting impact on children. Children experiencing this may demonstrate many of the symptoms listed in section B. Staff will need to treat them sensitively, record their concerns and consider informing First Response.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM has been a criminal offence in the UK since 1985. In 2003 it also became a criminal offence for UK nationals or permanent residents to take their child abroad to have female genital mutilation (Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003) Anyone found guilty of the offence faces a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison.

Section 73 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 amended the Female Genital Mutilation Act to include FGM protection orders (FGMPOs). An FGM protection order is a civil measure which can be applied for through a family court. The FGM protection order offers the means of protecting actual or potential victims from FGM under civil law.

It is helpful if you can have conversations at the earliest opportunity with parents and carers and provide information in leaflets and posters about FGM from this [website](#).



All agencies have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children in terms of preventing girls from FGM and identifying children who have already survived the procedure. It is important that staff are aware of what FGM is and the signs to look out for in girls at risk of the practice. For more information please go to the BSCB FGM Safeguarding Guidance: <https://bristolsafeguarding.org/professional-resources/female-genital-mutilation/>

Being able to identify girls who are at risk needs a sensitive approach.

The Bristol Safeguarding Children Board has created an FGM referral risk assessment for professionals to consider the risks of girls from FGM.

<https://bristolsafeguarding.org/media/27269/fgm-referral-risk-assessment-2018.pdf>

If used, a record of the outcome must be kept.

Consider whether any other indicators exist that suggest FGM may take place or has already taken place, for example:

- The child has changed in behaviour after a prolonged absence from the setting;
- The child has health problems, particularly bladder or menstrual problems;
- The child has difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may appear to be uncomfortable.

If a girl is at immediate risk of FGM taking place, it is a significant child protection issue and must be reported to the police and/or First Response.

You have a statutory duty to report if a girl under 18 informs you they have had FGM or if you see it. If FGM has taken place it is a significant child protection issue and must be documented and reported to First Response and/or the police.

When FGM has taken place, the Children's Social Care team will liaise with the health services so that a statutory safeguarding assessment takes place and to look at how the girl and family will be supported to access appropriate health care if needed. Legal action may be considered.

At any time you may seek advice from BAND, Families in Focus or First Response

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

The Prevent Duty/Radicalisation

It is essential that staff members are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and to know what to do when they are identified. Staff will be trained to recognise possible signs. In line with our Online Safety Policy, appropriate controls for digital content will be in place.

Our setting can also build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values of: democracy; the rule of law; individual liberty; mutual respect for and tolerance of



those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith or by discussing human rights so enabling children to challenge extremist views.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist or extremist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. It is important to take action if staff observe behaviour of concern. The Police Prevent Team can give advice, contact 01278 647466 or ring 101 and ask for the Prevent team, explaining you are calling about extremism or radicalisation.

Any concerns about a child will be referred through First Response or the police. The concern may then be dealt with through usual safeguarding procedures or referred to the Channel process. For information regarding the Channel process, an email address is in the appendix, along with other contacts.

In addition if you think a child is at risk of extremism, you must contact the Counter Extremism Group via email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk or Tel: 020 7340 7264

Missing Child / Unauthorised Absence

Children going missing from the setting (through not attending when expected), particularly if this is repeated, or if a child is unexpectedly removed from a setting, can act as a vital sign for a range of safeguarding possibilities. This may include abuse and neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation and criminal exploitation. It may indicate mental health problems, risk of substance abuse, risk of travelling to conflict zones, risk of female genital mutilation, risk of forced marriage, family crisis or other issues that could affect the health and well-being of a child.

Although the children are not in compulsory education, we believe that we have a responsibility to follow up on unauthorised absences to ensure that the child and family are safe and well, which forms part of our safeguarding commitment. Particular care will be taken where there are known vulnerabilities and also when the family might otherwise be isolated (e.g.: summer holidays).

To manage this appropriately we have a separate policy regarding children going missing from childcare or Unauthorised Absence.

In addition, safeguarding action may be needed to protect children against:

(Please note that some of these terms are used to describe the same/similar harms and there are often overlaps: e.g. a child might get groomed or coerced into a gang where there is the risk of being a victim of serious violence and that gang might be involved in county lines drug selling.)

- Bullying, including online bullying (cyberbullying) and prejudice-based bullying
- Racist, disability and homophobic or transphobic abuse
- Gender-based violence/violence against women and girls



- Peer on Peer Abuse (bullying, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, upskirting, sexting and initiation/hazing)
- Child Sexual Exploitation and trafficking Modern slavery/trafficking/children from abroad
- Child Criminal Exploitation and County Lines (Serious violence)
- Gang activity or youth violence
- Risks linked to using technology and social media, including online bullying; the risks of being groomed online for exploitation or radicalisation; and risks of accessing and generating inappropriate content, e.g.: "sexting" and accessing pornography
- Teenage relationship abuse
- Substance abuse
- Poor parenting
- Homelessness
- Forced marriage
- So-called "honour-based" violence HBV (this includes Forced Marriage, FGM and Breast Ironing)

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.

Where the service allows the capability (WAC and Holiday Clubs for example), all incidents will be recorded on CPOMS and the DSL will be alerted to investigate. In such cases, information may be shared with relevant individuals to work together to protect the child involved. Relevant Unique Voice staff will be trained in the use of CPOMS.

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 disclosures could have serious consequences for both the child concerned and any investigation.

If uncertain about what information may be shared, take advice or refer to HM Government's Information Sharing, Advice for practitioners. (Please see Further Information section for a link.)

- 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 any rumour and gossip that could affect the child, parent / carer and the group.



Protecting Children and Young People

Please refer to KBSP Bristol Multi Agency Threshold Guidance, Swindon Safeguarding Partnership or other relevant local authority (further details in South West Child Protection Procedures), to help you identify the response needed.

Recognising Abuse

Recognising abuse is one of the first steps in protecting children and young people and there could be signs or behaviour that make you feel concerned. All staff should be alert to the following situations and types of behaviour in children:

- Becoming excessively aggressive, withdrawn or clingy;
- Seeming to be keeping a secret;
- Significant changes in children's behaviour;
- Deterioration in children's well-being;
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect;
- Any bruising or marks on a non-mobile baby;
- Unreasonable fear of certain people or places;
- Acting out in an inappropriate way, perhaps with adults, other children, toys or objects;
- Children's comments which give cause for concern, e.g.: inconsistent explanations of bruising, injuries or burns;
- Self-harm;
- Sexually explicit language or actions;
- Being upset, withdrawn or angry after using the internet or texting;
- Children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

Vulnerability

Some children may be more vulnerable to abuse for a range of reasons, so staff need to be alert to these:

- Disabled children. Staff should be equally vigilant regarding signs relating to disabled children and not automatically assume that any of the above relates to their impairment.
- Send/children with behaviour issues
- Looked after children/children in care
- Homelessness
- Children with allocated social worker or family support worker
- Young carers
- Parents/carers in prison
- Mental Health

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 you are worried, it is not your responsibility to investigate and decide if it is abuse. It is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it.



What to do if Abuse is Disclosed

The setting is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively. **To manage this appropriately we have a separate Disclosure Policy.**

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, the appropriate action is detailed in Section 2 of the **separate Unique Voice Disclosure Policy**.

What to do if 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 in section 1 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, or;
- Take the child yourself.

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.

Working with Children and Young People

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 Duty DSL using the low level concerns reporting process or the staff allegation process.

If a Staff Allegation is Made, or you Suspect a Member of Staff or Volunteer of Abuse or Inappropriate Behaviour:

The LADO MUST be involved and consulted on ALL staff allegation incidents before an investigation of any type occurs.

If it appears or has been reported (e.g.: by a parent/carer or another child) that a staff member or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with
- children

then these procedures **MUST** be followed:

- Record the concerns and report them to the DSL;
- The DSL should take steps to ensure that during the remainder of the working day that particular member of staff is not left in sole charge of any child or children;
- At the earliest opportunity, the DSL must contact the setting's Child Protection Officer - see list in Appendix A;
- It may be clear in some cases, where a child has been injured and/or there is clear evidence of significant harm or risk of significant harm, an immediate referral must be made to the police, First Response or emergency services. In addition:
- Either the DSL or the Child Protection Officer must then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **WITHIN 1 WORKING DAY** of receiving the report of an allegation.

Please refer to the South West Child Protection Procedures for information for the contact number of the relevant Local Authority.

- The setting must follow the LADO's advice on how to deal with allegations against staff.
Note: Do not start any investigation into the allegation until the LADO has been contacted;
- If the allegation hasn't been made by the parent/carer, the setting should take advice from the LADO on how and when to inform them;
- The setting is required to inform OFSTED of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visit or outing within 14 days. (See Appendix A);



- If the concern is regarding the DSL, the above procedure will be followed but the report will be made directly to LADO, please find the relevant information from South West Child Protection Procedures.

Support to Staff and Volunteers

The Management/Registered Person will fully support all members of staff in following this procedure. Following an allegation or investigation:

- Staff and volunteers who work with issues of child protection may themselves need support in dealing with the emotional distress this can cause. They can talk to the setting's DSL or Child Protection Officer and any of the appropriate agencies listed in Appendix A;
- Staff, volunteers or management members may also be subject to allegations of abusing children in relation to their work for the setting. While support will be offered to these individuals by the setting, we will ensure that the agency dealing with the matter is given all assistance in pursuing any investigation and the Bristol LADO will be informed. The disciplinary procedure may be implemented.

Recruitment and Employment of Staff and Volunteers

We acknowledge that those who pose a threat to children may be attracted to employment that allows them access to children and young people. As part of this policy we will ensure that people working with the children are safe to do so.

- All staff (including the setting's Manager/Leader) and volunteers will be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service on joining the scheme and will be required to register on the Update Service; checks will be made of the Update Service on a minimum of 6 monthly basis or at the beginning of a project.
- All people connected with the setting must declare all convictions/cautions incurred since DBS disclosure which may affect their suitability to work with children;
- All people connected with the setting must declare their disqualification status;
- Two references will be taken up prior to appointment for new staff and volunteers and a medical reference may also be required;
- The selection and interview procedure of the setting will be adhered to. This must include a full employment history, qualifications, interview and verified identification checks;
- Providers must also meet their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which includes a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm;

Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and E-safety

We are aware of the risks associated with the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting. To manage this appropriately we have separate policies regarding the use of these devices and online safety.

In addition we will ensure that all internet compatible devices used in the setting will have appropriate filters and controls.



Staff Behaviour

All staff, volunteers and management members within the setting recognise that they need to conduct themselves in an appropriate, open and transparent way to ensure a safer environment for all.

Low-level concerns

A low-level or lower-level concern is any concern, doubt, or worry that a member of staff or volunteer may have acted in a way that conflicts with the standards, procedures, expectations and values of Unique Voice.

Low level concerns are intrinsic to the promotion of our safeguarding culture. Providing concerns do not meet harmful threshold, low level concerns are dealt with inside our learning culture environment. If they meet potential allegation then the LADO action plan is followed.

The DSL will approach any low-level concern with professional development, conduct and reflective practice in mind by chatting with staff directly and making positive next steps. Low level concerns contribute to our thematic training and are focuses at both the annual safeguarding training, our learning and policy changes.

In addition we will use "Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings," as a tool to develop setting specific guidance on behaviour for staff and volunteers.

Whistleblowing

We have a separate **Whistleblowing Procedure** so serious and or systemic concerns about senior staff or management may be reported to more senior staff/management or to an appropriate external organisation if necessary. Allegations about specific staff members should be dealt with in line with the Staff Allegation section earlier in this document.

Further Information

South West Child Protection Procedures – provide detailed online information on all aspects of child protection, e.g : Staff allegations

<https://swcpp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb4349a7ded0000c79e4e1/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

First Response online Request for Help form- (Please note you cannot print off a copy of this form, so keep a record of the information sent) Do not send any child or family details by unsecured email.

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/make-a-referral-to-first-response>



Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings [Safer Recruitment Consortium 2022](#)

Recruitment and selection of charity trustees requirements are set out in guidance, Finding new trustees,

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/704644/CC30.pdf

Information sharing. Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers. 2024

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/721581/

[Information_sharing_advice_practitioners_safeguarding_services.pdf](#)

[Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership](#)

BSCB "Guidance on the transfer of a child protection safeguarding file to another educational setting" <https://bristolsafeguarding.org/policies-and-guidance/>

Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

EYFS 2023/4 Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements

South West Child Protection Procedures – provide detailed online information on all aspects of child protection – <https://swcpp.trixonline.co.uk/>

[Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)



Appendix A - Useful contacts

Committee Members/Registered Person responsible for Child Protection (Child Protection Officer)

- Krystal Keeley (07875841769)
- Claire Farnham (07748821092)
- Cat Sparkes (07912323741)

Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Krystal Keeley (07875841769)
- Claire Farnham (07748821092)
- Esther Lambert (0773 908 8158)

Referral Agencies - please use the contact information relating to the area in which you are working (if you are unsure of the authority please confirm with the Operations Manager):

BRISTOL:

First Response - 0117 9036444 (all Bristol)

The place to call if you are concerned about a child or young person or think they need some help. Calls to First Response may result in direct referral to a Social Work Team or to Early Help and/or advice and guidance being given about services to help families.

Family Help: North 0117 352 1499; **East / Central** 0117 3576460 ; **South** 0117 903 7770

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

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

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

On-Call Consultant Paediatrician (via BRI Switchboard) 0117 923 0000 – non-mobile babies

SWINDON:

Statutory Services – Contact Swindon

New referrals and referrals on closed cases will be made to Families First: Contact Swindon. E-mail: Contactswindon@swindon.gov.uk

Telephone: **01793 466903** (during normal office hours - 8.30am to 4.40pm, Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.00pm Friday)

Emergency Duty Service (EDS) is available outside office hours on **01793 436699**



For Staff Allegations Contact:

BRISTOL

Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) - Telephone 0117 903 7795, Work mobile: 07795 091020

SWINDON

LADO - Telephone 01793 463854: Email: Lado@swindon.gov.uk

Support and advice

South West Child Protection Procedures (online guidance)

<https://swcpp.trixonline.co.uk/>

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership SSP including access to The Right Help at Right Time guidance

Childline -Tel: 0800 1111 (open 24 hours)

National Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) -Tel: 0800 800 500

NSPCC Whistleblowing hotline - 0800 0280 285

NSPCC FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 or email fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk.

Bristol Against Violence and Abuse (BAVA) email bava@bristol.gov.uk or www.bava.org.uk

Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership: email tbsp.training@bristol.gov.uk

Refuge National Domestic Abuse Helpline: T: 0808 2000 247

Next Link (domestic abuse Bristol): T: 0800 470 0280/0117 925 0680

Employers Initiative on Domestic Abuse: <https://www.eida.org.uk/>

Police Prevent Team: 01278 647466

Channel info: channelsw@avonandsomerset.pnn.police.uk

MONITORING & REVIEW			
Published Date / Date for next review	Review details	SLT signature	Date review completed
April 2023	Amalgamation of Safeguarding Policy V5 & Child Protection Policy V4. Checked & updated all links	K Keeley	
Interim update Feb 2024	V2 incorporates Swindon contact information for referrals & LADO	K Albini	20.02.24
July 2024	Updated with additional DDSL information Updated Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 link Updated all contact/information links	S Scott Peters	16.07.24



MONITORING & REVIEW			
July 2025	Updated with additional DDSL information, reviewed for compliance with KCSIE 2025, links and contact information checked for accuracy. Updated to reflect current local early help offer. Updated with new safeguarding roles and responsibilities for all staff, and policy aligned with UV values.	K Keeley - DSL	18.08.25
December 2025	Update to DDSL information	M.Taylor - Business Manager	15.12.2025
July 2026	Update to DDSL information. Update to Low-Level Concerns section	K Keeley - DSL	22/07/2026