



## **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (including vulnerable adults up to the age of 25)**

*The terms 'employees' and 'staff' should be taken to include volunteers and those in unpaid governance positions throughout this policy.*

### **Statement**

Berkshire Youth has a duty to work to prevent children and young people from suffering harm. This includes a responsibility for promoting their welfare, and referring them to Children's Social Care where children and young people are in circumstances where they are being or are likely to be harmed. In the case of young people there is a specific responsibility to address the risks posed by the behaviour and actions of the young person themselves and to understand and respond to the causes of that behaviour.

Berkshire Youth has developed this policy to reflect these responsibilities as they are laid out in the Children Act 2004, particularly section 11 and in the government's guidance on interagency working, Working Together 2018

This document which will be reviewed annually to ensure it reflects current law, guidance, national and local policy and procedures.

The policy has been developed as a statement of Berkshire Youth's particular responsibilities and should be used, as appropriate, in conjunction with:

Pan Berkshire Multiagency Safeguarding Children Procedures; guidance and standards, and local assessment arrangements. In particular, Children Act (1989), Protection of Children Act (1999), Sexual Offences Act (2003), Children Act (2004), Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006), Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2008), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and Human Rights Act (1998), [Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees](#) and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Staff and Volunteers have a duty to be alert to the welfare of children and young people who they come across in the course of their work or in other situations and to take action to protect and safeguard them

Safeguarding Children and young people policy should be read in conjunction with and referenced by all policies of Berkshire Youth with particular reference to:

Child protection policy, Health and safety policy, Complaints policy, Harassment and Bullying policy, Data Protection policy, Confidentiality policy, IT policy and Lone Working

**Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.**

Berkshire Youth believes that all children and young people deserve the opportunity to achieve their full potential and that they should be enabled to:

- Be as physically and mentally healthy as possible;
- Gain the maximum benefit possible from good quality education opportunities;
- Live in a safe environment and be protected from harm; experience emotional well being;
- Feel loved and valued, and be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships;
- Become competent in looking after themselves and coping with everyday living;
- Have a positive image of themselves, and a secure sense of identity including cultural and racial identity;
- Develop good interpersonal skills and confidence in social situations

If they are denied the opportunity to achieve their potential in this way, children are at risk not only of an impoverished childhood, but they are more likely to experience disadvantage and social exclusion in adulthood

**“The support and protection of children cannot be achieved by a single agency ...Every Service has to play its part. All staff must have placed upon them the clear expectation that their primary responsibility is to the child and his or her family”**

Lord Laming in the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, paragraphs 17.92 and 17.93

### **Policy Statement**

Berkshire Youth recognises the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in all aspects of our work, throughout the organisation and in partnership with other agencies.

Berkshire Youth will ensure that business plans and processes fully cover safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people

### **Statements of Responsibility**

This document constitutes Berkshire Youth's primary statement with regard to staff responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people. Where services are contracted to other agencies it is the responsibility of the contract manager to ensure appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place, prior agreement on responsibility will be determined when entering into any joint partnership or lead working by Berkshire Youth's appointed staff member

### **Accountability within the organisation for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people**

Berkshire Youth has a clear line management structure which includes responsibilities for ensuring quality of service delivery. Through supervision line managers should strive to create an open culture where workers are able to share their concerns about each other in a challenging but honest way to create a safe environment where staff and young people benefit. Line managers should routinely observe workers working with young people.

Employees are accountable for safeguarding practices through this line management structure. Advice and consultation with regard to safeguarding issues and advice and guidance with regard to specific cases will be provided through Berkshire Youth's Safeguarding Lead and Line Managers for Berkshire Youth. Support and guidance for practitioners and their managers will be provided through supervision and

performance management process

Berkshire Youth will operate an escalation process to ensure that unresolved concerns about the quality of response to safeguarding concerns referred to other agencies are addressed at the highest level necessary in the organisation until they are resolved.

At every opportunity Berkshire Youth will review its process and procedure through line managers meeting, individual reviews and completion of a reporting/whistle blowing form.

### **Training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is a responsibility shared by all. All members of staff have an individual responsibility for ensuring that young people are always in a safe, healthy and supportive environment when using Berkshire Youth services.

All staff working with children and young people, their managers and those with specific responsibilities will receive appropriate training to be reviewed every three years or in line with nationally recommended good practice. Staff should receive regular safeguarding updates when necessary and at least annually.

All new employees will receive copies of the safeguarding policy during their induction. The supervision and performance management process allows for the setting of individual actions and targets in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people. Safeguarding is a standing item on all supervision agenda's and staff meetings

### **Recruitment & Vetting Procedures**

Recruitment and vetting arrangements for existing staff and recruits will comply with current Government guidance including the new arrangements for vetting and barring staff. Responsibility for safe recruitment practices (see Screening Staff and Volunteers Policy for further details) including application and interviews, references, checking ID, induction, vetting and barring processes and the reporting and management of allegations will be held jointly with the senior management team and the line manager for the staff member. Responsibility for the inclusion of these practices in effective updated policy and procedure documents will lie with the designated Director of Berkshire Youth. At least one member of the selection panel will have undergone safe recruitment training.

### **Allegation Management**

Any allegations made against a member of staff will be dealt with in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment. Allegations Management processes (Appendix 2) will reflect the practice in local multiagency procedures. Internal allegations should be reported in accordance to Berkshire Youth Whistle blowing policy.

An allegation that someone working or volunteering with children has harmed them, committed a criminal offence involving children or otherwise acted in a way that suggests they pose a risk of harm must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

### **Interagency Working**

Berkshire Youth will participate in arrangements for the safeguarding of children and young people through voluntary sector representation in multiagency safeguarding

arrangements.

Berkshire Youth will provide representatives at relevant sub groups and partnership groups; training and workforce development groups, quality assurance, partnership and steering groups as appropriate.

All allegations of abuse and neglect will result in referral to the appropriate agencies. This neither ends nor negates the responsibilities of Berkshire Youth staff with regard to safeguarding

Berkshire Youth will initiate early help assessments and participate in multiagency action plans for young people whose needs require a multiagency approach but are deemed to be below the threshold for child protection intervention. Where applicable, Berkshire Youth staff will be invited to be involved in Child Protection Plans.

### **Information Sharing**

Berkshire Youth will share information and concerns about young people in accordance with locally agreed information sharing protocols and further Central Government Guidance. The principle that information should always be shared where there are concerns that a child may be at risk is paramount.

Building on the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 established the new DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) which processes criminal records checks and manages the Barred Children's and Barred Adults' Lists of unsuitable people who should not work in regulated activities with these groups. The DBS decides who is unsuitable to work or volunteer with vulnerable groups and it is illegal for a barred person to apply for such work (paid or voluntary), or for a charity to employ a barred person in such work. It is also a legal 'Duty to Refer' for employers to refer someone to the DBS if they:

- dismissed them because they harmed a child or adult
- dismissed them because they might have harmed a child or adult otherwise
- were planning to dismiss them for either of these reasons, but the person resigned first

### **Definitions**

#### **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is a wider concept than that of child protection. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined by Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development; and
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

**Child:** A 'Child' is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. Their circumstance does not affect their entitlement to protection. A young person living

away from home or a member of the armed forces is equally entitled to protection from harm

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

The document "Working Together to safeguard Children" identifies and defines four categories of abuse

**Physical Abuse:** this involves hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

**Emotional Abuse:** this is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of the other person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed upon children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capacity, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction it may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying, causing children to frequently 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.

**Sexual Abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not a child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving young children looking at, or in the production of pornographic images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate way 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

**Neglect:** is persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy or as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing or 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)
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

**Domestic Abuse:** From January 2005 the legal definition of harming children was extended to include the harm children suffer by seeing or hearing ill treatment of another, particularly in the home. This was in response to evidence that children can suffer serious long term damage through living in a household where domestic abuse and violence is taking place

**Cultural difference:** is not an excuse for abuse and we should not have lower expectations for some families or persons from certain areas. We must remain alert to and act on concerns related to honour based violence, forced marriage and FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)

**Risky Behaviour:** Those working with teenagers and adolescents should also be aware of the types of behaviours which may be practised by young people which may place them at risk of significant harm and so are indicative of the need for further assessment. (e.g. drug taking, self harm, inappropriate sexual activity)

**Peer on Peer abuse:**

Berkshire Youth recognise that all staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between children and young people. Staff should also recognise that downplaying certain behaviours as “just banter” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment for children and young people and a culture that normalises abuse. Staff should understand that even if there are no reports of peer-on-peer abuse in their sessions/centre, this doesn't mean it is not happening. If staff have any concerns about peer-on-peer abuse, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a deputy.

Berkshire Youth has a zero-tolerance approach to peer-on-peer abuse and has systems in place for children to report abuse.

**Serious Violence:**

Keeping children safe in education (2021) provides new information about risk factors that might increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence has been added.

Risk factors include:

- being male
- having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school
- having experienced child maltreatment
- having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Berkshire Youth will continue to educate staff regarding the risks to young people and work with both statutory and community partners to help identify and reduce risks to young people.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

The following outlines the roles and responsibilities for staff. This should be read in line with the staff handbook and the Berkshire Youth Safeguarding Contacts appendix 1

**All staff**

- Be aware of basic safeguarding issues and indicators
- Seek advice and guidance about any concerns
- Undertake appropriate risk assessments to ensure that young people are not exposed to undue risk from unsafe and unsuitable situations
- Identify of safeguarding issues and concerns
- Discuss with line manager and/or designated safeguarding lead
- Be aware of local referral methods
- Raise issues in supervision
- Keep appropriate records

**Team Leaders/Senior Leaders**

- Discuss with practitioner and/or line manager and/or local safeguarding managers
- Be aware of escalation process

- Raise, discuss and deal with issues in supervision
- Monitor and report on referrals, recording and decision making of practitioners
- Undertake training needs analysis for staff
- Be familiar with, and have ready access to, local multi agency procedures
- Keep up to date with the latest Central Government Guidance

### **Berkshire Youth Safeguarding Lead (Designated Officer)**

- Monitor and oversee safeguarding decision making within delivery with CEO
- Raise, discuss and deal with issues highlighted in supervision
- Oversee safeguarding training needs analysis and implementation of training plan within delivery area
- Manage relationships with partners agencies within delivery area, overseeing service development issues, escalation process etc
- Ensure Berkshire Youth is represented on multiagency safeguarding arrangement groups where appropriate
- Attend and participate in Berkshire Youth safeguarding meetings
- Consult on safeguarding issues with practitioners and line managers
- Record outcomes of any consultations
- Raise and discuss concerns with safeguarding lead Director for Berkshire Youth
- Awareness and facilitation of escalation process
- Refer matters where it appears a child may be at risk of harm to the local authority in line with Berkshire multiagency safeguarding arrangements.

### **Chief Executive**

- Overall responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people within Berkshire Youth
- Receive reports, identify and understand trends, take appropriate actions
- Ensure issues addressed appropriately within partnerships

### **Designated Board member for Safeguarding**

- Manage and chair Berkshire Youth safeguarding group
- Consultation on safeguarding issues with practitioners, line managers, and team leaders
- Supervision of safeguarding lead
- Report to Chief Exec and Berkshire Youth Board

**All concerns, and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously by trustees, staff and volunteers and responded to appropriately. This may require a referral to children's social care services, the independent Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for allegations against staff, trustees and other volunteers, and in emergencies, the Police.**

## Appendix 1 – Designated Officer contact details

### Berkshire Youth Safeguarding Contacts

Should you need to raise a concern please do so with your line manager/club leader who can then seek support and advice from the Designated Officer

Designated Officer for Safeguarding  
Sarah Emery  
07884310426  
sarah.emery@berkshireyouth.co.uk  
Out of Office hours: 07752528430

*Safeguarding is everyone's concern*  
*Should you wish to discuss a concern or an issue relating to a child or young person please contact your line manager. If they are not available please seek guidance from a Designated Officer*

*If you have exhausted all identified options within Berkshire Youth and still have concerns around children's Safeguarding, the relevant Multiagency Safeguarding Partnership Chair can be contacted as an independent person with whom to raise your concerns.*

Berkshire Youth has a "Whistle Blowing Policy" in place to safeguard and protect staff, young people and volunteers.

Deputy Designated Officer for Safeguarding  
Gareth Mephram  
07928816186  
gareth.mephram@berkshireyouth.co.uk

'Public Concern At Work', an independent charity whose lawyers can give free confidential advice about how to raise a concern about malpractice at work

Public Concern at Work

Whistleblowing Advice Line: 020 7404 6609

Website: <http://www.pcaw.org.uk/>

Email:

UK advice line: [whistle@pcaw.org.uk](mailto:whistle@pcaw.org.uk)

Designated Board Member for Safeguarding  
Wendy Austin – Bush –  
its\_woo@yahoo.co.uk

Updated October 2022



## Appendix 2 Flow chart – Allegation Management

