

Prepared by: Tom Harwood	Issue Number: 4	Date of Issue: January 2020 (reviewed in February 2021, March 2022, April 2023, March 2024)
Approved by: Board of Trustees	Signed: Tom Harwood	Date:12/03/2024



Bedford Blues Foundation Safeguarding Policy (Protecting Young People and Adults at Risk)

Bedford Blues Foundation (BBF) will take all reasonable steps to safeguard young people below age 18, and Adults at Risk, who attend our programmes and other activities related to fundraising and sport and physical activity.

BBF is committed to the policy, aims, objectives and procedures for protecting children at Risk as set out by the Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Safeguarding Children Partnerships Procedures – Multi Agency Policy:

https://bedfordscb.proceduresonline.com/using_this_manual.html

Reason for this Policy

The policy exists to ensure that BBF implements appropriate arrangements and procedures to protect young people and adults at risk who attend our programmes and from harm by ensuring participants;

- Feel secure in a supportive environment
- Are free to focus on their work and personal development
- Can rely on people in positions of trust
- Know who they can talk to if they have any concerns
- Can be confident that any problems that do arise will be properly and effectively dealt with.
- Clarifying standards of behaviour for staff and children
- Contributing to the establishment of a safe, resilient and robust ethos, built on mutual respect, and shared values
- Creating an organisational culture that is safe for children, both at BBF, in the wider community and online
- Building links with families and other agencies which consider contextual safeguarding

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- Developing staff’s awareness of the risks and vulnerabilities children face to enable them to recognise and respond to concerns
- Addressing concerns at the earliest possible stage in the least intrusive way

Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a core element of all aspects of BBF’s activity. The term Safeguarding describes the broader preventative and precautionary approaches to planning and procedures that are necessary to be in place to protect all participants, staff and visitors and minimise risk from any potential harm. Protection of children and adults at risk, safer recruitment practice and health and safety are all aspects of Safeguarding.

BBF recognises that personal safety is a fundamental precondition for effective and successful teaching and learning and can only be felt in a safe learning environment that promotes well-being, safety and security for all participants, staff and visitors.

For the purposes of this policy a child or young person is defined as follows:

'Any person aged 18 and under'

The categories of abuse for children are as follows:

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 of, 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 capability, 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 (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.

Sexual Abuse

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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 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.

Child sexual exploitation 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 e.g. as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

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

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

Children with Additional Needs

BBF recognises that while all children have a right to be safe, some children may be more vulnerable to abuse, for example those with a disability or special educational need, Looked After Children, previously LAC, privately fostered, those living with domestic violence or drug / alcohol abusing parents, etc

Adults at Risk

For the purpose of this policy an Adult at Risk (previously referred to as a Vulnerable Adult) is defined as follows:

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Definition of an adult at risk (care Act 2014) a person aged over 18 who:

- Has need for care and support
- is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse and neglect.

We have a statutory duty to safeguard adults at risk.

Designated Safeguarding Officer & Safeguarding Team at BBF

Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) – Community Rugby	Ben Wiggins Community Rugby Manager	ben@bluesfoundation.org.uk 01234 321880
Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) – Outreach	Aaron Colbert Community Rugby Manager	aaron@bluesfoundation.org.uk 01234 321880
Senior Safeguarding Manager (SSM)	Tom Harwood Head of Foundation	tom@bluesfoundation.org.uk 01234 321880
Trustee link for Safeguarding	Lead Safeguarding Trustee	Vacant
Dedicated email for anyone, including a member of the public wishing to report a concern about safeguarding at BBF		safeguarding@bluesfoundation.org.uk

Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The designated member of staff with lead responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk is the Designated Safeguarding Officer. She/he will be assisted by other designated members of staff drawn from management. They will be suitably experienced. Designated members of staff have a key responsibility for raising awareness, within the staff, of issues relating to the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk, and the promotion of a safe environment within BBF.

All members of staff, including the designated safeguarding team, receive training in safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk and inter-agency working, as recommended by the Bedford Borough Safeguarding Board and Be Active Beds. They will receive accredited training at least every

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three years and refresher training annually. The Team is required to keep up to date with developments in safeguarding as required.

We have a dedicated noticeboard with information for staff, participants and families to see information about how we keep everyone safe which is in our Foundation Hub.

Designated Officers are responsible for:

- Overseeing the referral of cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant agency;
- Maintaining a proper record of any safeguarding referrals, complaint or concern (even where that concern does not lead to a referral);
- Ensuring that parents or carers of children, young people and vulnerable adults within BBF are aware of the company’s policy and procedures with regards to safeguarding.
- Liaising with appropriate agencies.
- Ensuring that all staff receive training in safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk and that refresher training takes place at least every three years;
- Ensuring that all members of staff are aware of BBF’s Procedures for Protecting Children, Young People & Adults at Risk.
- Dealing with Staff /Volunteer disciplinary issues following alleged harm or abuse to a participant.

Staff Responsibilities

All Staff are responsible for:

- Being vigilant to potential signs that participants may be being harmed or abused
- Being vigilant to the actions and behaviour of participants in the centre
- Using the BBF Whistleblowing arrangements for reporting concerns about fellow staff members/volunteers
- Reporting all suspicions and allegations of harm/abuse to participants to the Designated Safeguarding Officer
- To demonstrate a commitment to safeguard the welfare of all students
- To attend Safeguarding training as part of an induction programme and at least yearly thereafter, with specific updates throughout the year.
- To liaise with the DSL (deputy DSL where DSL is absent) to record safeguarding incidents, and action as required.

Visitors

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- Visitors to show ID to staff on arrival.
- Visitors may not attend unless with prior knowledge of a scheduled event.
- Visitors to be signed into the visitors’ book or sign in sheet.
- Visitors to be alerted to any current issues, or housekeeping.
- Visitors to be signed out on leaving.
- Visitors DBS?

Trustees

- Ensure that BBF comply with their duties under legislation. They will have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 to ensure that the policies, procedures and training at BBF are effective and comply with the law at all time
- The named Trustee for safeguarding for BBS is Angela Novell
- Trustees ensure the Designated Safeguarding Lead maintains management oversight of any work undertaken by the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Trustees ensure all training requirements are met for staff and volunteers.

Staff & Volunteer Safeguards – Code of Practice & Behaviour

The list of safe practice and appropriate behaviour is designed to assist staff to safeguard themselves at work, and to support the protection of children, young people and adults at risk.

In some cases there may be instances where staff may be in breach of the code of practice and behaviours set out below. Each case needs to be identified and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer when a risk assessment for the particular event will be carried out which either will result in agreement for the practice to continue, or a decision for the practice to discontinue immediately.

Lone and One to One Working

- Avoid lone working at BBF premises due to reasons of health & safety
- Avoid working in rooms where you cannot be seen by others
- Avoid being alone with known/unknown individuals
- Make sure all areas are well lit
- Make sure someone in authority knows where you are at all times
- Avoid physical contact at all times

Relationships & Socialising

- Staff should not socialise or develop personal relationships with BBF participants.

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- Staff should not give their personal home or mobile phone numbers to BBF participants, or contact them outside of working hours.
- Staff should not contact participants outside of the remit of their direct role within the organisation.
- Never engage in physical contact.
- Do not initiate emotional or physical relationships with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Do not take children, young people, or adults at risk to your home, or discuss issues relating to your personal life.
- Avoid, where possible, doing things of a personal nature for children, young people or adults at risk that they can do for themselves.
- Never allow or encourage touching a child, young person or adult at risk in a sexually suggestive manner.
- Never allow children, young people, or adults at risk to swear, or use sexualised language unchallenged.
- Never allow allegations made by children, young people or adults at risk to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do not accept gifts from children, young people or adults at risk.
- Ensure appropriate clothing is worn whilst working with children, young people or adults at risk.
- Do not socialise with young people or adults at risk via social network sites, such as Facebook.

Travelling

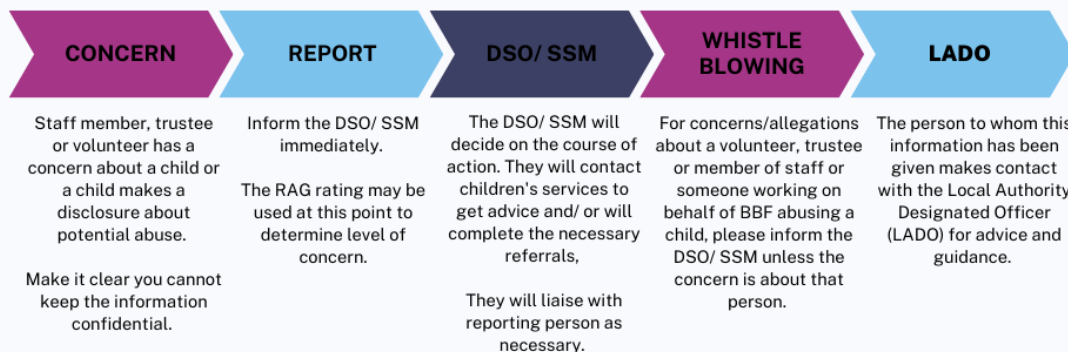
- Participants can only travel in Staff member's cars if they are fully comprehensively insured for business use, and when transporting participants to specific events as part of BBF Activities (i.e. theatre, pantomime, Christmas Parties etc).
- The journey must be planned and the risk assessment should be agreed by a member of the management team prior to the journey being made.
- Seat belts must be worn at all times.
- It is good practice to ensure that staff are not in a one to one situation with a participant; so where at all possible ensure that two staff accompany a lone participant

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Reporting Cases of Actual or Suspected Harm/Abuse

RED IMMEDIATE REFERRAL TO POLICE AND OR SOCIAL CARE, FAMILIES INFORMED AS APPROPRIATE
AMBER DISCUSS WITH OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED AND ESCALATE TO SOCIAL CARE, FAMILIES INFORMED AS APPROPRIATE
GREEN RECORD AND DISCUSS WITH PARENTS AND AT TEAM MEETINGS AS APPROPRIATE. MONITOR AND ESCALATE TO AMBER OR RED IF PERSISTENT.

REPORTING AND RECORDING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS



- Initial cases, including incidents, are reported internally via the BBF Participant Incident Reporting Procedure. If harm or abuse is suspected, staff must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) who will investigate the matter further, and where appropriate make disclosures to the relevant agency. The reporting process for disclosure of actual or suspected cases of abuse or harm to participants depends on whether the participant is defined as a young person or an adult at risk. Disclosures in respect of young people are made to the Bedford Borough Integrated Front Door reporting tool (previously MASH).
- The document/system required for reporting potential abuse of a child/young person can be found by following the link [here](#).
- If emergency intervention is required please call 999, or Bedfordshire Police on 01234 841212, or the NSPCC 0808 800 5000.
- The Head of Foundation will report accidents, incidents and cases of disclosure at the BBF Trustees Board Meetings by exception.

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Guidance for Handling Disclosure of Abuse

Staff should NOT investigate concerns or allegations themselves, but should report them immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). When a young person or adult at risk makes an allegation of abuse, the member of staff who receives it should:

- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing;
- Listen and not interrupt;
- Not promise the person that they will keep the matter confidential. Explain to him/her that you must report the matter to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or deputy) as this is part of our duty of care to participants, if you are in doubt as to whether the matter is a safeguarding issue, check with one of the safeguarding team members (contacts on page 11)
- Only ask simple, open, non-leading questions. For example, if a participant tells you they have been hurt, ask, 'Can you describe how that happened?' rather than 'Did someone hit you?'
- Accept what the participant is saying and do not offer an alternative interpretation of the alleged events;
- Note anything about the participant which may be connected, for example, any visible injuries including the position and description;
- If in doubt, seek advice from one of the designated members of staff;
- Complete the relevant documentation and submit to a Designated Safeguarding Officer or deputy

Staff Training

New employees, volunteers and trustees to BBF will receive an induction which includes information of all BBF Policies and Procedures. Where appropriate, all staff, volunteers and trustees at BBF receive training in the application of the principals in working with children, young people or adults at risk, including appropriate Safeguarding training.

Designated Safeguarding Officers and deputies will receive any additional training they require to enable them to effectively signpost or refer allegations or cases of suspected harm/abuse to participants.

Safer Recruitment

Before appointing staff, trustees and volunteers, BBF will carry out checks, in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy to establish whether any potential applicant has any previous convictions that would make them unsuitable for working with adults at risk and young people.

At no time will a volunteer or visitor to BBF be allowed to have contact with any participant without a member of staff being present. BBF keep a Single Central Record that records safeguarding training and where appropriate DBS numbers for individuals who have regular access to participants.

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Whistle Blowing

BBF operates a whistleblowing policy and procedure which allows anyone including a member of the public, to report concerns and suspected wrongdoing by using our dedicated email address which is safeguarding@bluesfoundation.org.uk.

Reporting and Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Members of Staff, Volunteers or Trustees

In rare instances, a member of staff, volunteer or trustee of an educational institution has been found responsible for abuse. Additionally, because of their (sometimes) frequent contact with children, young people and adults at risk, those within this group may have allegations of abuse made against them. BBF recognises that an allegation of abuse made against a member of this group may be made for a variety of reasons and that the facts of the allegation may or may not be true. It is imperative that those dealing with an allegation maintain an open mind and that an investigation is thorough and not subject to delay.

If such an incident were to arise then this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (unless they are implicated in any accusation) or a member of the designated safeguarding team.

If the allegation involves a child or young person the Designated Safeguarding Officer will need to report the matter to the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) lado@bedford.gov.uk or via the Integrated Front Door reporting system [here](#).

If the allegation involves an adult at risk then the matter follows the normal reporting procedures as described elsewhere in this policy.

PREVENT Strategy

BBF realises that it is a possibility that some of its participants may be a target for radical groups. While it is highly unlikely that the participants will become involved directly with terrorist acts they could be vulnerable to indirect activity. If any member of staff at BBF suspects any sort of coercion then the usual safeguarding process should apply.

Multi Agency Work

- We work in partnership with other agencies in the best interests of the children.
- BBF will, where necessary, liaise with the school nurse, initiate an Early Help Assessment, and make referrals to children's social care.
- Referrals and contacts should be made by the Designated Safeguarding Lead to the Local Authority where the child resides, depending on the level of need (for most authorities this is an online referral via the safeguarding portal).
- Where the child already has a social worker, the request for service will go immediately to the social worker involved, or in their absence to their team manager or Duty Worker.

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- We will cooperate with any child protection enquiries conducted by children’s social care: the school will ensure representation at appropriate inter-agency meetings such as team around the family meetings, initial and review child protection conferences, together with core group meetings.
- We will provide reports as required for these meetings in accordance with the LSCB interagency procedures

Confidential Contact Numbers for both advice and guidance

Children and Young People:

If you need to report an allegation or concern about an adult who works with children you should, in the first instance, speak to your Senior Manager and then to the LADO/Designated Officer within one working day of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the Police.

- Bedford Borough: 01234 276 693 or via secure email: Lado@bedford.gov.uk
- Central Bedfordshire: 0300 300 8142 or via secure email: LADO@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
- Luton: 01582 548 069 or via secure email: LADO@luton.gov.uk
- NSPCC Protection helpline (Freephone) 0800 800 5000 or 0800 056 0566
- Bereavement Child Death Line (Freephone) 0800 02 888 40


Adults:

Bedford Borough Council – Adult Social Care: 01234 267422

Central Bedfordshire Council – Adult Social Care: 0300 300 8303

Both Bedford Borough & Adult Social Care – out of hours emergency number: 0300 300 8123

Signatures

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Author	Tom Harwood		12/03/2024
Board of Trustees			