SAFEGUARDING ADULT & CHILDREN’S POLICY STATEMENT

This Policy has been adopted by the Children and Families Forum Board of Trustees who remain responsible for its review on an annual basis.
SAFEGUARDING
ADULT & CHILDREN’S
POLICY STATEMENT

At the Children and Families Forum we believe that the safety and welfare of children and young people and adults are of the utmost importance. It is the duty of all our staff and volunteers to protect all individuals from abuse and to be alert to the possibility of abuse and to ensure our member groups and organisations are aware of this duty for their own staff and volunteers.

The following Policy & procedures has been adopted by the Trustees of The Forum and has been set up in accordance with the London Borough of Bromley (‘LBB’) Safeguarding Children Partnership Guidance, Safeguarding Adult Partnership Guidance & London Child Protection Procedures.

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the wellbeing, views, wishes and beliefs of adults and children is promoted within safeguarding arrangements.

The Children and Families Forum are in a unique position to be supporting voluntary sector groups, charities and organisations working to in turn support children, young people and families across the London Borough of Bromley. The Forum does not undertake any direct work with children or vulnerable adults, although we do commission and supply training for adults (usually professionals and volunteers working in the sector).

All adults and children have the right to live their lives free of abuse and neglect and have the right processes in place to ensure their safeguard and better outcomes.
Learning and development is a crucial component of safeguarding that enables all staff to be alert to the potential indicators of abuse or neglect of people at risk (either through direct contact with adults, children and their families or through the contracting process) and know how to act on those concerns. The Forum is committed to enabling those working in Bromley’s voluntary sector to access appropriate training throughout the year and to facilitating relationships between the sector and statutory services/roles including the Local Authority Designated Officer, CAF team and Safeguarding Partnerships.

Another crucial component of safeguarding is the legislative frameworks that provide guidance for all member and partner agencies in regards to the requirements for safeguarding adults and children at risk.

Examples are the Children Act (1989, 2004 and 2017) and the Mental Capacity Act (2005).
SAFEGUARDING ADULT & CHILDREN’S PROCEDURE

1. **Point of Disclosure:**

1.1 A concern may arise either as a result of a direct disclosure or (more commonly) as a result of an individual reporting by staff members or volunteers. In either case, the procedure to follow is:

1.2 **The staff member/volunteer should:**

   - **A** Make clear to the reporter that s/he has a concern.
   - **B** Make clear s/he may have an obligation to report the concern.
   - **C** Complete the Incident Record Form.
   - **D** Take contact details for the reporter (including an address).
   - **E** Make clear notes of the discussion.
   - **F** Explain the reporting process that will be followed; in the first instance to BCFF’s Safeguarding Officer and Chair, and then, if The Chair feels it appropriate, to the relevant authorities.
   - **G** If at all possible obtain consent to discuss with other relevant organizations (although we are not dependent on consent if an issue is recognised as a safeguarding issue, obtaining consent will allow BCFF to raise any issues with the relevant operational bodies and thus seek resolutions to the situation.
1.3 All incidents must be reported as soon as possible to the Chair of The BCFF Trustees or a designated deputy.

2. Decision-making, reporting and escalations:

2.1 The Chair and/or their designated deputy and the Chair will discuss the concern, where possible the staff member/volunteer who has referred the matter will be party to these discussions.

2.2 The Chair will make decisions on reporting, referrals and escalations of the issues raised based on BCFF’s responsibilities in law, the duties of local services and the best interests of the person about whom the concern is raised.

2.3 If a safeguarding issue is identified by this meeting then reports will be made, in writing (email) and in a timely manner, to the relevant Safeguarding Teams.

3. Follow – up and monitoring

3.1 In keeping with BCFF’s practice in regard to following up issues raised, BCFF will receive assurances about the next steps from the safeguarding team.

3.2 Where possible and appropriate, the relevant staff member will contact the original reporter to explain these next steps.

4. Record keeping

4.1 Personnel will keep accurate records as follows:
   - Log of contacts
   - Summary of the issues, identifying the potential safeguarding concerns
   - Log of the steps taken.
   - Reporting Officers must be careful to record concerns in a way that replicates, as closely as possible, the words of the reporter.

4.2 All records relating to safeguarding issues will be kept securely in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

4.3 The Chair will provide a report of all Safeguarding alerts, escalations or enquiries to the Board Trustee Members of BCFF on a quarterly basis at the normally held Board Meetings.

4.4 Any trends, issues or omissions obtained from these reports are to be addressed through BCFF internal procedures and external work with relevant providers, commissioners and other public authorities. Review: This policy will be reviewed annually and if necessary more frequently in line with changes in legislation and guidance on the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Children and Young People The legal definition of ‘children’, applies to those under 18 years of age. For the purpose of this policy the term ‘children’ applies to all children and young people (to include children and young people who are in the care of the Local Authority).

This is significant as young people aged 16 and 17 years with safeguarding needs may be accessing or transitioning into adult’ services. It is important to note that the “Mental Capacity Act 2005” applies from the age of 16.

Whilst ‘Unborn Children’ are not included in the legal definition of children, intervention to ensure their future well-being is encompassed within safeguarding children practice.

Safeguarding children and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- Ensuring 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 protection is an important part of safeguarding but refers specifically to the actions undertaken to protect children who are at risk of or suffering from significant harm.

Categories of child abuse are defined as:
- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Sexual
SAFEGUARDING
ADULTS

For the purpose of this policy an “adult” is someone aged eighteen years of age and above. Adult safeguarding means protecting a persons’ right to be free from abuse and neglect ensuring good outcomes based on the key principles set out within the Care Act 2014, which came into effect in April 2015.

These principles are:
• Empowerment
• Prevention
• Proportionality
• Protection
• Partnership
• Accountability

Abuse and neglect of adults can take many forms and is crucial that this is reviewed and assessed on an individual basis. Abuses can be in the form of the following:
• Physical Abuse
• Sexual Abuse
• Domestic Violence
• Psychological Abuse
• Modern Slavery
• Financial and Material Abuse
• Neglect and acts of omission and self-neglect
• Discriminatory Abuse
• Organisational Abuse
It is important to appreciate that abuse and/or neglect takes place in a wide range of contexts for both adults and children. For adults and children abuse may take place outside the family setting and in social contexts which render them vulnerable.

This may happen in a range of institutions but also in contexts such as radicalisation to terrorism when an adult has a period of vulnerability in their life. Exploitation of both adults and children also takes place within a range of contexts including modern slavery and trafficking.

Adults and children can be vulnerable to abuse due to their circumstances. An example is older people who are isolated and experience loneliness may, become victim to financial scamming and evidence has revealed that due to their loneliness the connection to the scammer provides the individual with ‘social contact’ which they do not receive in any other form.

Individuals in the protected characteristics are more likely to be subjected to verbal abuse and hate crime. Furthermore, one in four adults will experience anxiety/depression during their lifetime and may be more vulnerable to abuse during this time. This condition constitutes a protected characteristic when it impacts on daily life for more than twelve months and hence makes explicit the key links between safeguarding and the Equality Act (2010).

Understanding the context in which abuse can occur highlights the need for practitioners to be aware of a range of indicators and vulnerabilities.

For example, the links between animal abuse and abuse of people in that household is supported by evidence. The NSPCC highlighted increasing research and clinical evidence which suggests that there are sometimes inter-relationships, commonly referred to as ‘links’, between the abuse of children, vulnerable adults and animals.
A better understanding of these links can help to protect victims, both human and animal, and promote their welfare. Fleeing from domestic violence is often thwarted when the victim is concerned about their pet (NSPCC, 2007). Looked After Children may also have increased vulnerability to abuse. These children have usually entered the care system following neglect and/or abuse. Unsurprisingly, the life circumstances Looked After Children face can test their emotional resilience and cause large amounts of anxiety. This frequently manifests itself in mental health issues, and in 2015, the Department for Education and Department of Health estimated that nearly half of Looked After Children had a diagnosable mental health issue and two thirds had special education needs.

Forum member organisations and groups work with individuals affected by the above issues, and the Forum exists to help its members ensure their safeguarding processes are robust and appropriate.
SAFE RECRUITMENT

The Forum and any contracted support services must comply with safe recruitment practice including efficient use of the Disclosure and Barring System (DBS) with a system in place to repeat the process on a three yearly cycle, including DBS checks for eligible staff and enhanced level checks where appropriate.

Safeguarding adults and children responsibility to be included within all staff and volunteer job descriptions.

The Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) should be informed of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works or volunteers with children has:
- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- or behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children.

Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) by calling 020 8461 7669 or 020 8313 4325.

We encourage all member organisations to download and use the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership Application where possible, which includes all up-to-date safeguarding children information relevant to the borough and useful links.

All organisations in contact with children and families must follow the government statutory guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015”.

This includes voluntary and community organisations, faith groups, registered social landlords, CIOs, CICs and the private sector. Download Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 click here.

All other useful statutory guidance can be found on the Government site click here.
CHARITY TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Forum supports small groups to become registered charities as well as supporting established charities. The Forum will ensure that each member group understands their governance responsibilities regarding the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

The Charity Commission is very clear that all Charity Trustees Responsibilities: trustees of a charity (including management committee members of those that are too small to be registered) hold responsibility for safeguarding and must proactively take steps to prevent people, both children and adults from being harmed through contact with their organisation.

Useful guidance includes:

Charity Commission Guidance: on protecting vulnerable groups including children [click here].

Charity Commission Guidance: on protecting charities from abuse for extremist purposes [click here].

NSPCC Free Safeguarding Children’s Tool and Resource Library: for organisations, art and sports clubs, youth clubs and service providers. The resources include codes of conduct, sample policies and case studies [click here].

FORUM MEMBERSHIP

In order to be a member of the Bromley Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum a group, however small or large, will need to provide The Forum with a copy of their safeguarding policy and procedures.

The Forum team can assist a group to develop their safeguarding policy and The Forum will prioritise capacity building within the sector to ensure that safeguarding is everyone’s priority.

The Forum is committed to representing our members at the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership and associated committees and/or sub-groups (including the training subgroup).

The Forum will disseminate any relevant information that comes out of the Partnership to our members as efficiently as possible and support member organisations to access LBB and other training in order to facilitate a robust understanding of safeguarding and the continual professional development of staff and volunteers working in the sector.
DESIGNATED PERSON FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Helen Laryea-Dyer (Chair of Trustees) has the designated responsibility for Safeguarding, as appointed by the Trustees.

Anyone who has a concern about a person should contact her on 07957 924 287 immediately.

If that person is not available you should contact the deputy responsible for child protection. (Samantha Baldwin, Development Officer) on 07852 278 956.

The Designated Person Will:

• Liaise with LBB teams including Adult Social Care, Children’s Social Care, The Disabled Children Team, The Bromley Police Child Protection Team, the Local Authority Designated Officer and any other agencies on individual cases of suspected or identified child or vulnerable adult abuse;

• Be responsible for co-ordinating action within The Forum on safeguarding issues;

• Ensure that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the safeguarding policy and procedures set out in this document;

• Raise awareness about safeguarding and arrange training as appropriate.

Referral to Social Services (office hours)

• Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 20 61 7309 / 020 8461 7373 020 8461 7379 / 020 8461 7026

• Out of Hours Emergencies (5pm-8.30pm and weekends) 0300 303 8671

• NSPCC Child Protection Help line 0808 800 5000

• Bromley Police 101
Get involved

Please contact Charity Administrator at:
Community House, South Street
Bromley, Kent BR1 1RH
www.bcfforum.org
Tel: 07786 321596
Email: safeguarding@bcfforum.org

Honorary Patron
The Mayor’s Office,
London Borough of Bromley