

Safeguarding Young People and Child Protection – A Quick Guide

All staff should be aware of BL's Policy and Procedures on Safeguarding Young People. These are available within your Quality Manual. If you suspect that a young person has suffered from, or may be at risk, of physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse or sexual abuse, **do not delay. Never do nothing!** You may be the first person to identify a concern about that young person. Always act immediately (on the same day) that you become aware of the situation. The flow chart below sets out the course of action that should be taken.

RECOGNISE THE SIGNS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

There are many possible indications of abuse or neglect:

- 🕒 Bruises or marks on the body of the young person
- 🕒 Remarks made by the young person, another student, friend, parent or adult
- 🕒 Observations of the young person's behaviour or reactions, including self harm
- 🕒 Unexplained changes in the young person's behaviour or personality
- 🕒 Evidence of disturbance through their behaviour or work of the young person
- 🕒 Neglect, poor nutrition, continuing poor health, excessive fatigue or exposure to unnecessary risks

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

Discuss the situation with the Safeguarding Manager or the Safeguarding Adviser as soon as you can and at least within the same working day.

Safeguarding Director
Julie Ritson
Safeguarding Manager
Judith Speed

MAKE WRITTEN NOTES

At the earliest opportunity make a written record of your concern and record the details of any conversations

Give your notes to
the Safeguarding
Manager or

REMEMBER

Whilst everyone must be aware that any young person could be a victim of abuse and must be familiar with these procedures, your concern must be discussed with the designated staff above. Individual members of staff should not investigate child abuse concerns. Any investigation will be undertaken by the Children's Social Care or the Police

Action to take if, as a member of BL staff, you receive an allegation of, or you yourself suspect, abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult

- **Stop and listen to what you are being told.** Responding to an allegation or suspicion of abuse of a child, young person or vulnerable adult immediately takes priority.
- **Make notes of what is said immediately afterwards.** Keep the notes taken without amendment, omission or addition, whatever subsequent reports may be written.
- **Do not promise confidentiality** or agree to “keep it a secret”. Action will have to be taken if you believe that person is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Try to be clear to the person about what you think will happen next. You can assure them, or anyone else giving you information, that you will only tell those you have to tell to try to get the matter dealt with. You can and should express support for them, or person giving you information in getting the matter sorted out.
- **Avoid asking leading questions** like “Did he/she do X to you?” but open questions like “Can you tell me what happened?” Ask only what you need to know to ascertain whether abuse may have taken place. You do not need full details. Avoid expressing opinions beyond the facts. Leading questions and anything likely to suggest ideas or interpretations could damage subsequent investigations or criminal proceedings.
- **Consider whether a young person now needs immediate protection** – consider both the person who has told you of concerns, and any other child, young person or vulnerable adult in the light of what you have been told or suspect. If you feel they need immediate protection, initiate or take the necessary temporary protective action – e.g. by staying with them on site until satisfactory arrangements are made. You can ask and take into account the person’s wishes about any immediate protection. You should aim to transfer protection of any young person into the normally expected arrangements in the setting concerned, as soon as you are satisfied that these are safe.
- **Consider whether the allegation or suspicion indicates that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm** (the trigger for children’s social care services, child protection and/or subsequent police enquiries). Consider whether:
 - ◆ the allegation or suspicion appears to you to be seriously meant;
 - ◆ if true, it would constitute, or seriously risk, them suffering or being likely to suffer significant harm (whether or not you personally believe it to be true – that assessment is for children’s social care services enquiries and or police investigations);
 - ◆ the actual or likely harm is of a sexual, physical, emotional or neglect nature, sufficient to affect the young person's normal physical, sexual, emotional, educational or social development.

Remember, even if you have any doubts and whether or not you personally believe it - the benefit of the doubt must always be in favour of making the report.

- **Do not tell the person who is the subject of an allegation or suspicion** what you have been told or what you suspect – that may put a young person at further risk and/or damage any subsequent children’s social care service or criminal investigation.

Do not investigate the case yourself. Discuss the allegation or suspicion immediately with the Designated Manager.

- **If you receive fax, email or letter** reporting actual or suspected abuse, inform the Safeguarding Manager immediately, including forwarding the documentation to them as soon as possible. Take no further action.

<p>Action to take if, as a member of BL staff, you observe abuse whilst it is taking place in the Centre</p>

You must do all you can to stop the abuse immediately without putting yourself or the person being physically, sexually or emotionally abused at further risk. Inform the perpetrator of your concerns. Advise them to stop the action immediately. Ask them to remove themselves from the area and to one without contact with children and young people. Advise them that you will immediately be informing the Safeguarding Manager.

If they fail to desist – ring the police.

If they do desist, accompany the victim to a place of safety away from the perpetrator and leave them in the care of a responsible adult.