

Joint Adult and Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Approach to safeguarding adults and child protection

Guiding principles:

Everyone's responsibility - Everyone at Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre has a responsibility to keep children and adults at risk who need our support safe from abuse and neglect.

Prevention – We will put sensible measures in place to prevent abuse, including the use of safe recruitment practices, promoting safe working practice, and raising awareness of safeguarding.

Protection – We will provide policies, procedures, information, and training to enable all staff, trustees and volunteers to identify and respond appropriately to concerns about abuse and neglect

Partnership - We will work in partnership with statutory, regulatory, and other relevant organisations to ensure that our response to safeguarding concerns are appropriate.

Empowerment – We will uphold all carer rights in our safeguarding work.

Accountability - We aim to be transparent in our approaches and recognise the need to provide staff, trustees and volunteers with continuous learning and improvement to ensure each have clarity of their role and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities

1 All staff and volunteers

Every individual working for Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre, irrespective of their role, has a part to play in safeguarding children and adults who need support. All staff and volunteers will undertake training and must familiarise themselves with our current Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Trustees

Trustees approve the Safeguarding Policy and have a duty of care to the Charity, which includes taking the necessary steps to safeguard those at risk from abuse and neglect, managing risk and protecting the reputation of the charity. The Vice-Chair is safeguarding lead for the Board and all Trustees undertake annual safeguarding training.

Senior Managers

Senior Managers have a responsibility to ensure that safeguarding is included, where appropriate, in the strategic plans, risk assessments, communications and quality assurance processes. Managers are required to undertake relevant training. In some cases, they will be required to make decisions in relation to safeguarding concerns in consultation with the Safeguarding Lead.

2 Managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring that they, and the staff and volunteers that they supervise, are aware of the safeguarding policy and procedures and undertake relevant training. They should promote the discussion of safeguarding at team meetings, in clinical supervision and as part of supervision or one-to-one meetings. They may be required to make decisions relating to safeguarding concerns and can seek advice from the Safeguarding Lead.

3 Safeguarding Lead

The Safeguarding Lead (and Deputy Safeguarding Lead) is the Designated Safeguarding Officer (and Deputy Safeguarding Officer) at Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre. They are responsible for developing and quality-assuring safeguarding activity across the Charity and supporting best practice for external stakeholders. The DSO and deputy DSO are required to undertake relevant training for the role.

4 Breaches of Policy

Failure to comply with the Charity's safeguarding policy may be managed in a number of ways, depending on the nature and consequences of any incident. In some cases, a combination of the following responses may be required.

- A referral to B&NES Council (adult & children services) in a co-ordinated safeguarding investigation
- A referral to the Police for investigation
- A referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)
- A referral to People & Performance disciplinary process
- Referral for a serious incident report to The Charity Commission
- A referral to an internal review or co-operation with an external review

5 Equality Statement

Bath and North East Somerset Carers' Centre is committed to providing services that embrace diversity and that promote equality of opportunity and inclusion. Everyone who accesses our services or works for us in a paid or voluntary capacity should be safe, empowered to play a part in promoting their own welfare and that of others and able to live a life free from abuse. This applies to all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, or belief.

Safeguarding Children / Adults at Risk Policy and Code of Conduct

1 Policy Statement

The Carers' Centre works directly with children, young people, and adults on a range of its projects and programmes and has a responsibility to promote the wellbeing and safety of all people it comes into contact with. The Carers' Centre believes that it is always unacceptable for a person to experience abuse or neglect of any kind. The Carers' Centre is committed to practice that protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm and recognises its duty to ensure that appropriate action is taken where a child, young person or adult at risk is experiencing harm or is at risk of harm.

2. Supporting documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, guidance, and other related documents including

- Role description for the designated safeguarding officer
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about an adult, child, or young person
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers
- Recording concerns and information sharing
- Adult and child protection records retention and storage
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Expected behaviours for children and young people
- Adult Carers Charter
- Photography and sharing images guidance
- Safer recruitment
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health and safety Policy
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Induction, training, supervision, and support policies
- Adult to child supervision ratios

External

BCSSP Opportunities for Support A Guide to Thresholds in BaNES – Children can be found [here](#)

BCSSP Adult Carers and Safeguarding can be found [here](#)

Purpose

To safeguard and promote the wellbeing of the children, young people, and adults at risk with whom The Carers' Centre works

- To ensure that all employees and others covered by this policy understand the context within which checking with the Disclosure and Barring Service takes place
- To provide all employees and volunteers with guidance on how they should behave if they suspect that a child young person or adult at risk may be experiencing, or be at risk from abuse or harm
- To guide employees, trustees, and volunteers on how to respond to, and report concerns

3 Who is Affected by this Policy?

- 3.1 All paid employees, seconded staff, trustees, volunteers, mentors, students, contract, and unpaid staff working on behalf of The Carers' Centre in any capacity and in any setting.
- 3.2 Young carers, young people on work experience and any children or young adults.
- 3.2 All children or young people up to 18 years of age and includes children with whom The Carers' Centre has direct or indirect contact with, for example, children known to adults with whom The Carers' Centre works directly.
- 3.3 Adult carers at risk who need to be safeguarded from harm.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 As per the definitions set out in the Children Act 1989, a 'child' is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. It also includes unborn children.
- 4.2 Adults aged 18 and over have the potential to be at risk (either temporarily or permanently) for a variety of reasons and in different situations.

A child, young person or adult may be at risk if he/she:

- Has a learning or physical disability
- Has a physical or mental illness, chronic or otherwise, including an addiction to alcohol or drugs
- Has a reduction in physical or mental capacity
- Is in the receipt of enhanced healthcare services
- Is detained in custody
- Is receiving community services because of age, health, or disability
- Is living in sheltered or residential care home
- Is unable, for any other reason, to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation

5 Legal Framework

- 5.1 Everyone has a right to be safeguarded from abuse or neglect. There is a legislative framework in place to safeguard children and adults at risk through The Children Act 1989 (as amended by section 53 of the Children Act 2004) and by the Children and Social Work Act 2017), the

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Care Act 2014 (amended 2022). Mental Capacity Act & Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (2005) Domestic Abuse Act (2021)

- 5.2 Further national guidance that sets out the requirements and expectations of professionals to work together to effectively safeguard children include *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2023.) *Safeguarding Disabled Children: Practice Guidance* (2009) and *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (2015) (Department for Education 2015).
- 5.3 The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 sets out the "need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". The Prevent strategy is part of an overall counterterrorism strategy, CONTEST, and aims to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

6 General Principles

- 6.1 Safeguarding relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and to protect them from harm.

All staff and volunteers should have a basic awareness of safeguarding issues. This includes:

- Being alert to the possibility of abuse and neglect
- Having enough knowledge to recognise an abusive or potentially abusive event or set of circumstances
- Knowing with whom in the organisation to raise concerns with
- Being competent to take the appropriate immediate or emergency action

- 6.2 If any member of staff and volunteer has any concerns about a child or adult at risk, they must alert The Carers' Centre Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer (DSO) immediately. Or in their absence the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. (DDSO) If the DSO or DDSO agrees there are grounds for concern, they must take appropriate action to safeguard the child , young person, or adult at risk. This may include contacting the authority social care service or the local police child abuse investigation team.

If a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger the member of staff who first becomes aware of the danger should dial 999 for the police.

The above may include concerns about a member of staff, a suspicion that a child or adult at risk is being abused or neglected, or a suspicion that an activity is taking place that could place a person at risk. If the concern relates to a member of staff, the DSO, or the Trustee Safeguarding Lead. should contact Bath and North East Somerset Safety and Safeguarding designated officer (LADO) responsible for providing advice and liaison in such cases.

- 6.3 In any situation where there is a suspicion of abuse or neglect the welfare needs of the child, young person or adult at risk must come first even where there may be a conflict of interest (e.g., where the suspected perpetrator may be a member of staff).

7. What constitutes abuse?

Abuse is a deliberate act of ill treatment that can harm or is likely to harm a person's safety, wellbeing, and development. Abuse can be physical, sexual, or emotional. Abuse may not, however, fall easily into these categories and staff/associates are not expected to be experts in the field.

- 7.1 Neglect also constitutes abuse but can be defined as failing to provide a child or vulnerable adult with the basic needs required for physical safety and wellbeing. The Carers' Centre recognises that a person's welfare is paramount and that all children and vulnerable adults - regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief and sexual orientation or identity - have the right to protection from all types of harm and abuse.

8 Categories of abuse

- 8.1 Please see the links below to further categorise what constitutes abuse for both children and adults:
<https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse/>

Children, young people, and adults at risk can experience abuse in a number of ways.

Forms of abuse that may affect children, young people, and adults at risk include:

- Abuse of trust
- Child sexual exploitation
- Child Trafficking
- Discriminatory abuse
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Financial or material abuse
- Grooming
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Modern slavery
- Neglect
- Online abuse
- Organisational or institutional abuse
- Physical abuse
- Psychological or emotional abuse
- Radicalisation of children or adults at risk
- Self-neglect
- Sexual Abuse

These categories can overlap, and an abused child, young person or adult often suffers more than one type of abuse.

- 8.2 Disabled children and young people are particularly vulnerable to abuse in any form. Safeguards for disabled children are essentially the same as for non-disabled children. Staff must maintain high standards of practice, remain vigilant to the possibility of a child being abused and minimise situations of risk. All staff must ensure that the children they work with know how to raise

concerns and have access to interpreters/specialist workers and other aids to communication if required. Where there are concerns about the welfare of a disabled child, they should be acted upon in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy.

9 Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk

9.1 Organisation duties and responsibilities

- Raise awareness of the need to protect children, young people and adults at risk and reduce risks to them
- Ensure that staff in contact with children, young people and adults at risk have the requisite knowledge, skill, and qualifications to carry out their jobs safely and effectively
- Ensure safe practice when working in partnership with other organisations, in particular that they have in place adequate safeguarding arrangements, including appropriate reporting to Trustee members to provide assurance on compliance and reporting
- Maintain an organisation that is safe for all staff, children, young people and adults at risk and an environment where poor practice is challenged
- Ensure that all staff, associates, volunteers, young people, and Trustee members who will be working with children and adults at risk are vetted through the Disclosure and Barring Scheme where applicable
- Ensure that when abuse or neglect is suspected or disclosed, it is clear what action must be taken
- Ensure that the Chief Executive, members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) are accountable for the effective implementation of this policy
- Ensure that all staff, Trustees, and volunteers receive copies of safeguarding policies, are trained in their meaning and application, and understand their responsibilities
- Safeguarding Trustee lead designated (see below)

9.2 Responsibilities of trustees

To comply with their legal duties, trustees must react responsibly to reports of safeguarding risks and incidents of abuse and take steps to make sure all staff know how to deal with these.

Trustees should report a serious incident to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) if:

- Beneficiaries have been, or are alleged to have been, abused, or mistreated while under the care of The Carers' Centre, or by someone connected with The Carers' Centre, for example a trustee, staff member or volunteer
- There has been an incident where someone has been abused or mistreated (alleged or actual) and this is connected with The Carers' Centre activities
- There has been a breach of procedures or policies at The Carers' Centre which has put carers at risk, including a failure to carry out checks which would have identified that a person is disqualified under safeguarding legislation, from working with children or adults
- Trustees must have training in safeguarding and nominate a trustee safeguarding lead for the organisation
- Trustees must also have 'Safeguarding' as a standard agenda item for Board meetings

9.3 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) and in their absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer (DDSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding is given high priority within The Carers' Centre. Specific responsibilities include:

- Providing support and advice to managers and all staff on safeguarding matters related to children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- Ensuring that all members of staff receive the appropriate level of training for their role on child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults as part of their induction, and on an ongoing basis where required
- Managing referrals/cases reported and working with Senior Leadership Team to ensure resolutions
- Referring the matter to the local authority designated officer (LADO) where a member of staff is suspected of abuse
- Maintaining an overview of safeguarding issues and monitoring the implementation of this policy, in conjunction with the Service Managers
- The DSO has responsibility for deciding whether to refer any reported matters onto the police or to the local authority social care service. Where possible, referrals should be made on the same working day and certainly **within 24 hours**. These incidents will be reported to Trustees on a quarterly basis
- The parents / carers permission should be sought before making a safeguarding referral about them, unless permission seeking may itself place a child or young person at risk of significant harm. In such cases it is the responsibility of the DSO to decide whether the parents/carers (if applicable) of the child or young person should be informed of the referral.

9.3 Role of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Supporting the DSO in the above tasks
- Agree with DSO to have a named Deputy DSO in the event of absence
- Auditing the operation of the policy and procedures
- Implementing a training strategy for employees , volunteers (including trustees)
- Ensuring that the policy and procedures are implemented throughout the organisation
- Ensuring that the organisation's safeguarding policy is reviewed annually

9.4 Role of the line manager

Individual line managers are responsible for ensuring staff and volunteers comply with the expectations set out within this policy. Specific responsibilities include:

- Being the first point of contact to discuss any concerns
- Ensuring that all employees and volunteers in regulated roles are subject to DBS checks where applicable
- Reporting all concerns to the DSO or in their absence the DDSO
- Providing advice and support to employees reporting disclosures or concerns
- Working with the DSO and/or the DDSO to resolve issues
- Routinely discuss safeguarding in supervision and in 1:1 meeting

9.5 Employee and volunteer responsibilities

All Carers' Centre staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety of children, young people, and adults at risk with whom they work. It is the responsibility of staff to promote good practice, minimise, and manage potential risks. All staff – including volunteers, freelance staff, and associates – must be aware of the requirements within these procedures.

Actions for staff

The Carers' Centre staff have no powers to investigate abuse. Nonetheless, all Carers' Centre staff have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and/or adults at risk and a responsibility to work closely and co-operatively with other agencies in order to achieve this. Staff may have a role as referrers, witnesses, or supporters in safeguarding processes.

If a member of staff suspects that a child, young person or vulnerable adult is being harmed by experiencing, or already has experienced, abuse or neglect and/or is likely to suffer harm in the future, they must talk to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or in their absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer. The DSO will agree next steps including making any necessary referrals. The member of staff who took the concern holds responsibility for carrying out referrals to the relevant local authority social care team where abuse or neglect of a child, young person or vulnerable adult is reported or suspected.

If anyone other than the DSO makes a referral, they should inform the DSO as soon as possible.

It is not the responsibility of The Carers' Centre to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. It is the responsibility of staff at The Carers' Centre to act if there is cause for concern, in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any action necessary to protect children, young people and/or vulnerable adult.

If a member of staff is concerned that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, or requires immediate medical treatment, they should call the police and/or emergency medical services on 999 straight away and make a record in the CRM.

10 Staff Behaviour

10.1 Code of conduct

The Carers' Centre staff working with children, young people and adults at risk may be required to undergo awareness training.

Staff should not:

- Meet with any child, young person, or adult at risk on their own unless this has been risk assessed, and line manager informed
- Ask overly personal questions, including those about age or appearance (unless specifically related to a work project, in which case it must be documented)
- Send/give out material that could be considered offensive, which includes material on social media sites
- Suggest or imply a personal relationship could develop
- Take an aggressive or bullying tone

- Initiate physical contact and keep all contact to a minimum
- Offer or accept personal gifts
- Promise to keep secrets
- Ask leading questions or influence carers with their own beliefs or personal values
- Travel alone with a young and/or vulnerable adult
- Ensure they do not conceal or fail to report important information, relevant information regarding carers such as relevant personal information, child, or adult protection issues (See Professional Boundaries policy for further information)

Staff should always listen carefully to what is being disclosed and follow the documented procedures for recording and notification of a safeguarding concern

10.2 Website/online safety

Any project that provides service users with direct access to the Internet must have protocols in place to ensure safe use.

The Internet is a significant tool in the distribution of indecent photographs and some adults use the Internet to try to establish contact with young and/or vulnerable people to "groom" them for inappropriate or abusive relationships. The Carers' Centre would consider staff involvement in such activities as gross misconduct, which could ultimately lead to dismissal and referral for police investigation.

10.3 Presence on websites and social media

Staff, volunteers, and trustees should take care when communicating with others online, particularly when identifying themselves as Carers' Centre staff members and when in contact with children, young people, and adults at risk (See our Social Media Policy).

10.4 Carers' Centre staff obtaining and accessing inappropriate text and images

Many websites contain offensive, obscene, or indecent material such as:

- Sexually explicit images and related material
- Advocating of illegal activities
- Advocating intolerance for others.

Staff members must not download pornographic or other unsuitable material on to The Carers' Centre machines or distribute such material to others. The Carers' Centre would consider this gross misconduct which could ultimately lead to dismissal and referral for police investigation.

In addition, users must not place any material on to the Internet that would be considered inappropriate, offensive, or disrespectful of others. Disciplinary action will be taken against staff that breach this policy.

Where this is done inadvertently, the user must escape from the website and delete the material immediately. They should also report the incident to their line manager, the DSO or HR Manager. Failure to report incidents or follow this guidance will be treated as gross misconduct.

Where exemption is required, because of the nature of the work of the member of staff, permission must be given in advance by the line manager, DSO and in consultation with the IT services provider and documented. Children, young people, and adults at risk should not be given access to such websites.

10.5 Children or adults at risk obtaining indecent images or 'sexting'

If a child, young person, or adult at risk reports to a member of staff that they have sent, or been sent, indecent images (sometimes referred to as 'sexting'), they should discuss the concern with the DSO or in their absence the DDSO

The police and children's social care should always be contacted if:

- somebody involved is under the age of 18 years old
- there are concerns about the ability to give consent
- the images are extreme or show violence
- the incident is intended to cause physical or emotional harm
- there is reason to believe that the young person has been blackmailed, coerced, or groomed

Details of the incident and the actions taken must be recorded in writing

Staff should avoid looking at the image, video, or message in question. If it is on a device belonging to The Carers' Centre, it may need to be isolated so that nobody else can see it. This may involve blocking the network to all users.

10.6 Use of Recording Devices

To protect the privacy and dignity of all carers the use of recording apps or any form of audio or video recording during carer activities is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, mobile phones, recording apps, tablets, and wearable devices. Exceptions may only be made with explicit, informed consent from all parties involved and must comply with data protection laws and safeguarding guidelines. This policy helps ensure a safe and respectful environment for everyone involved in carer activities.

11 Confidentiality and Sharing Information

11.1.1 Confidentiality and the possible impact on the child, young person, or adult at risk

In any work with children and/or adults at risk it is important to be clear about confidentiality.

Confidentiality and safeguarding should be discussed with children, young people, and/or adults at risk at the beginning of any piece of work and reminders and information given from time to time, to ensure that they understand the processes and what responsibilities members of staff have. It is absolutely essential to be clear about the limits of confidentiality well before any such matter arises. E.g., any safeguarding concern will be reported.

While personal information held by professionals and agencies is subject to a legal duty of confidence and should not normally be disclosed without the subject's consent, it is essential that staff respond quickly where they have concerns or suspicions of abuse or neglect. Any concerns about confidentiality should not override the rights of children, young person, or adults at risk of suffering harm. The Carers' Centre's responsibility for protecting children, young people and adults at risk means that, where necessary to protect welfare, it will breach confidentiality to raise concerns. There is a need to clearly record the reason

for the breach and confirm it has been reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or in their absence the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Information sharing must be done in a way that is compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018, the Human Rights Act 1998, and the common law duty of confidentiality. However, a concern for confidentiality must never be used as a justification for withholding information when it would be in the child or adult at risk best interests to share information.

11.2 Do not investigate, promise to keep secrets, or ask leading questions

Should it become necessary to pass on information shared by another party this decision should always be discussed with the person in question and where possible their cooperation sought beforehand.

Explanations of the reasons; processes; likely sequence of events; and who to contact for information or for support should also be provided.

When a child or adult at risk makes an allegation of abuse, they may hope that the abuse will stop without further enquiries. They may fear the effect this will have on their family and may fear retribution from the abuser. They should be helped to understand why the referral (to the DSO/DDSO) must be made and what is likely to happen as a result. It is important to reassure the child or adult at risk, but he/she must not be told that their allegation will be treated in a particular way or that the information will be kept a secret.

A record should be kept of any decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

11.3 Confidential Record-Keeping

Even if a concern has been discussed with a line manager/ the DSO or DDSO it is important that all concerns are properly recorded in writing whether or not further action is taken.

It is important that concerns raised are recorded accurately and in detail. All discussions should end with clear and explicit recorded agreement about who will be taking what action. Where no further action is the outcome the reason for this should be clearly recorded.

Records should be factual signed and dated and recorded in the safeguarding concerns tab of the CRM immediately.

Records must be uploaded to safeguarding concerns tab of the CRM with access restricted to DSO, Deputy DSO or HR Senior Manager.

Managers have a particular responsibility in maintaining the confidentiality of these records and must ensure that the records, or any information they contain, are made available only to relevant parties. The transfer of information - verbally, through the mail, electronically, etc. - should be done in such a way that confidentiality is maintained.

11.4 On and off-site activities

A Risk Assessment should be carried out at least 48 hours before any activity involving a child, young person or vulnerable adult takes place. Safeguarding and Code of Conduct procedures apply whether the activity is on or off-site.

12 Safer Recruitment

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 sets out that it is an offence for an employer to knowingly employ someone in a regulated position if they are barred from doing so. Where there is regular contact but not 'regulated' i.e., supervised it is still possible to consider an enhanced criminal records check but this will not include a check of the barred list through the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS). You must seek advice from HR.

Some roles within The Carers' Centre, whilst not 'regulated positions,' may involve working directly with children and/or adults at risk. Activities could include (but are not limited to): convening meetings; holding focus groups; and conducting interviews with children, young people, or adults at risk. Where this is the case, the relevant member of staff will be required to have an enhanced DBS check carried out prior to commencing any direct work with children and/or adults at risk.

Where a criminal conviction is disclosed by an applicant or through a DBS check/basic disclosure, the employees' line manager and the HR Senior Manager, will consider this assessment objectively and, where the assessment indicates that the level of risk is too high to allow the individual to start/continue working in a particular role/activity, the consequences of this for the individual will dependent upon:

- The check concerned
- The reason for the check (that is, check for a new employee, a recheck for an existing employee in their current post or a check for an existing employee in a new post)
- Relevant legislation
- The post concerned
- Whether the individual is suitable for other employment opportunities available within the organisation

Possible outcomes include amended duties, redeployment, withdrawal of an offer of employment or, where the individual started work before the relevant screening check was completed, dismissal.

Safe recruitment practice of checking work history, identity and explanations for any gaps must be followed for all staff working at The Carers' Centre and partner organisations even if direct contact with children and/or vulnerable adults is not part of their role.

13 Supporting Staff & Volunteers

It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that the staff they line manage are aware of and understand the procedures and have levels of knowledge and skills commensurate to the level and nature of their direct involvement with children, young people, and adults.

All staff and volunteers should:

- Be supervised and supported in their work
- Work to The Carers' Centre safeguarding procedures which are reviewed and updated annually or when a significant or legislative change has been made

- Have on-going training and support as required to effectively discharge their responsibilities
- Receive training in safeguarding at a level appropriate to their work situation
- Be able to raise concerns about poor and dangerous practice through The Carers' Centre Whistle Blowing Policy
- Have access to personal safety devices/services where appropriate for their role.

13.1 Allegations against staff and volunteers

Any suspicion, allegation or actual abuse of a child or adult at risk by an employee, trustee, volunteer, mentor, student, agency worker, contract, and unpaid staff must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer and/or to the HR Manager immediately. The DSO will inform the Trustee Safeguarding Lead

Concerns about staff must be treated with the same rigour as other concerns. If there are concerns that abuse has taken place the DSO will pass this information to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for investigation. The DSO will work with the member of staff's line manager and with HR. The DSO, Senior Manager and Trustee Safeguarding Lead will also need to refer to the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure in the staff Handbook and decide whether the member of staff should be suspended pending a full investigation.

If the individual reporting the incident is not happy with the response they receive from the DSO, then they should refer to The Carers' Centre Grievance procedure and Whistle Blowing Policy which can be found [here](#)

There may be instances when a staff member's performance or conduct when working with children and/or vulnerable adults will lead to The Carers' Centre disciplinary procedures being invoked. The Disciplinary Policy is available on the CitrusHR system and the Volunteer Handbook. The nature of the concern about the staff member's conduct and or performance will determine how and what disciplinary action is taken.

On occasion, a child or adult at risk may abuse another child or adult at risk. Safeguarding procedures should be followed in respect of all parties in those situations.

13.2 Reporting a serious safeguarding incident

If any member of staff is involved in an actual or suspected serious safeguarding incident, or if a serious safeguarding incident takes place within any of The Carers' Centre workplaces or working context, in addition to following the protocols set out within this policy, it should also be reported to the Charity Commission. It is the responsibility of Trustees to ensure that this takes place.

All suspected or actual safeguarding incidents should be reported to the **B&NES Safeguarding Team; Adults 01225 394200, Children 01225 396 111/ 01225 477929 or out of hours Tel: 01454 615165 for the emergency duty team.** And in addition, immediate action should be taken to:

- Prevent or minimise any further harm
- Report it to the police, if it is suspected a crime has been committed, and to any other regulators the charity is accountable to
- Plan what to say to staff, volunteers, members, the public and the media
- Review what happened and prevent it from happening again - this may include strengthening internal controls and procedures, and/or seeking appropriate help from professional advisers

14 Complying with this policy

Expectations of employees and volunteers

It is important that staff work to a high standard of professional conduct and act with integrity at all times, in order to minimise the risk of abuse from within The Carers' Centre.

- It is important to create a work environment where the risk of abuse is minimised and children, young people and adults at risk feel comfortable and safe
- When incidents of abuse and neglect are raised or suspected it is important that staff have the necessary information and support and follow the procedures appropriately
- Staff should make sure they have read The Carers' Centre safeguarding procedures in full. They should highlight and discuss any issues requiring clarification and any training issues with their line manager
- Staff should make sure that they have a working knowledge of the different forms of abuse or neglect and possible indicators
- All staff should ensure that, when working with children, young people and adults at risk, all colleagues, volunteers, and other staff from partnering organisations have the appropriate employee checks in place which must include a full career history, identity checks and references and adherence to Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) where applicable.
- All staff and volunteers should take responsibility and complete mandatory safeguarding training

Staff should ensure any verbal conversation relating to possible safeguarding concerns are annotated on file (CRM).

15 Contact Details

If you suspect that a child or vulnerable adult needs protection or is at risk of abuse, please contact The Carers' Centre Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

Jacqui Orchard – CEO and DSO : Mobile No. 07925 922521

In the absence of the DSO staff should contact the Deputy DSO

Claire Abrahams – Senior Services Manager; Deputy DSO: Mobile No. 07455 046945

Sophie Kiernan – Support Manager and Adult Safeguarding Lead : Mobile No. 01761 258322

Leanna Wall – Young Carers Manager and Young Carers Safeguarding Lead – 01761 -258323

Jenny Theed – Trustee Safeguarding Lead : Mobile No. 07738 737889

Bath and North East Somerset Access, Advice and Information Team(s)

Safeguarding Triage and Urgent Response Team Adults: 01225 394 200 (Mon-Thurs 8:30am – 5:00pm. Fri 8:30am – 4:30pm)

Children: 01225 396111 / 01225 477929 (Mon-Thurs 8:30am – 5:00pm. Fri 8:30am – 4:30pm)

B&NES Safeguarding Portal Referral: <https://adults.bathnes.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

LADO : 01225 396810 / LADO@bathnes.gov.uk – Victoria Harlin

Emergency Duty Team, out of office hours: 01454 615165 (Evenings, Bank Holidays and Weekends)

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline (24 hours) To report or discuss concerns about a child's welfare.

Tel: 0808 800 5000 : Textphone: 0800 056 0566 : Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Command (CEOP) Report a concern that a child is being sexually abused or groomed online at <https://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre/>

16 Policy Owner

The Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is owned by The Carers' Centre Board of Trustees. It will be reviewed and updated annually by the Trustee Safeguarding Lead, Senior Management team (SLT) and Safeguarding Leads working group and approved by the Board to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and internal change. The HR Manager will ensure that each published version of this policy is archived, along with details of when it was in operation.

17 Safeguarding Procedure flow chart

When a safeguarding action/concern is identified by member of staff or volunteer they must adhere to the following procedure.

