



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Be Free Young Carers recognises its responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and Trustees and focuses on the following elements:

- Staff recruitment and selection - ensuring that all staff and volunteers, (who have unsupervised access to children) have been safely recruited and appropriately checked through the DBS process;
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe;
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting suspected cases of abuse;
- Supporting children who are the subject of a child protection plan;
- Establishing a safe and nurturing environment where children feel safe and happy.

We recognise that staff and volunteers who work regularly with children are best placed to notice changes in behaviour and/or physical injuries or receive disclosure from children about possible risk of harm. **Be Free Young Carer** staff will therefore –

- Report any unusual / inappropriate behaviour to their designated staff member for child protection;
- Ensure that children and young people know they can approach any of the adults in our establishment if they are worried about something and that they will receive a consistent, supportive response.

Staff in our establishment will follow the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures in all cases of suspected abuse. These can be found at www.oscb.org.uk

We will therefore:

- Ensure we have a designated lead staff member for safeguarding and child protection. In our organisation that person is the Director, **John Tabor**;
- Ensure that our lead staff member and other client facing staff receive Specialist Safeguarding training, refreshed every two years;
- Ensure that all other staff, Trustees and volunteers receive Generalist Safeguarding training every three years;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers have read this safeguarding policy and know who the designated staff member is, in case they need to pass on concerns;
- Keep accurate written records of concerns on children where a referral is not appropriate immediately;
- Ensure that all staff, (including volunteers) are recruited safely and have had the appropriate checks, (e.g DBS). Online safer recruitment training is available at: www.cwdcouncil.org.uk;
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware that they must refer any allegations against a member of staff or a volunteer to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 01865 815232;

- Ensure that this policy is reviewed annually;
- Ensure that the **Be Free Young Carers'** Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures are implemented in line with Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board Policies, including implementation of the S11 standards, annual review of practice against standards, and presentation of an annual Safeguarding Report.

We recognise that children who have been abused, or witness violence, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They can feel helplessness, humiliation and a sense of blame. Our organisation may provide the only stability in the lives of some children and we will endeavour to support them by:

- Liaising with other agencies that support children, (e.g. Social Care and Health) where appropriate
- Providing opportunities for children to discuss and explore issues around safety and ensuring children know who to talk to in our organisation if they need help
- Promoting a positive ethos within our organisation, giving children the sense of being safe, supported and valued.

ALL STAFF have a responsibility for action in cases of suspected child abuse. The following procedure must be followed if a member of staff has concerns about the safety of a child or if a disclosure is made.

1. If a child asks to speak to you about a problem, DO NOT promise confidentiality, but explain that it may be necessary to consult a senior colleague;
2. RECEIVE – Stop and listen to if someone wants to tell you about suspicions of abuse. Listen quietly and actively, giving your undivided attention. Allow silences when needed. Do not show shock or disbelief and take what is said seriously;
3. REASSURE – Stay calm and give reassurance that only those people who need to know will be told about this. Explain to the child that they have done the right thing by telling you and that what has happened is not their fault;
4. REACT – Establish the facts of what has happened but do not ask leading questions. Keep questioning open, e.g. 'Is there anything else you want to say?' or 'Can you tell me more about that?' Do not criticise the perpetrator. Explain to the child what you will do next, e.g. you will need to pass this information to your lead person for child protection;
5. RECORD – If possible, make brief notes about what the child is telling you as they are speaking. If this is not appropriate, write down what was said, as soon as the child has left. Record the date, time, place, your name and role and what was said, (rather than your interpretation of it). Do not record subjective opinions or personal judgements. Use the child's language wherever possible;
6. REPORT – Report the incident to your lead person for child protection as soon as possible and do not tell any other adults or children about it. Ensure that this person has your notes of what was said so that they can keep them in a safe place.

If you cannot find your lead person for child protection and have a concern about a child call the Oxfordshire multi-agency safeguarding hub, MASH, as soon as possible on **0845 050 7666**.