

## **Child Protection Policy**

### **Summary**

- The BSF has a responsibility to promote and maintain a safeguarding culture and to promote the health and welfare of the children and young people we come into contact with. To achieve this, the BSF will adopt the six principles of safeguarding i.e.
  1. Empowerment – teaching children what abuse is and who they can talk to.
  2. Prevention – It is better to take action before harm occurs and if in doubt report on.
  3. Proportionality – proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
  4. Protection – support and representation for those in greatest need
  5. Partnerships – local solutions through working with other partners working in the community.
  6. Accountability – accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.
- This policy is non-contractual. This means that the BSF has the right to change or amend this policy at any time.
- As part of this, the BSF's commitment to safeguard the health and welfare of the children and young people we come into contact with, we will:
  - Consider the interests and well-being of children and young people in all our activities.
  - Follow the BSF's policy for recruitment, selection and training of employees and volunteers. Staff working with children must hold a child specific category on their DBS check.
  - Respect the rights, wishes and feelings of the children and young people with whom we are working, regardless of their age, level of maturity and understanding.
  - Take all reasonable practical steps to protect them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse.
  - Promote the welfare of children and young people and their protection within a relationship of trust.
  - Recognise the fact that all children and young people, 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.
  - Work in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies to promote children and young people's welfare. When the BSF is involved with another organisation to provide services on their behalf, the BSF will expect that the partner organisation has appropriate policies and procedures, sound recruitment and selection practices, and formal complaints procedures for children, young people and their families.

### **Procedure**

*Updated: May 2023*

- The BSF will ensure that a safeguarding culture is promoted to the children and vulnerable young people whilst we have contact with them, whether as service users or as the children of adult service users.
- All employees and volunteers must take action if they suspect abuse has taken place, so that the authorities can investigate and take any action necessary to protect a child or young person.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that:
  - Your actions are suitable at all times.
  - You follow the rules for the safety and security of young people.
  - You follow the process given following a suggestion, discovery or allegation, or disclosure of child abuse.
  - Any relationship you form with the young people under your care follows guidance in the BSF's Code of Conduct.
- You must refer your concerns to the BSF Children's Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. It is not your role to investigate or to decide whether abuse has taken place or not but to pass on your concerns. The local Child Safeguarding Officer and/or their deputy are available to provide support and discuss your concerns.
- You must keep confidential your concerns and only discuss them with relevant people such as your local, lead Child Protection Director or Social Services.
- You must not talk to anyone from the press or media but direct them to the lead Child Protection Director.
- You must follow any instructions given to you by the police, Social Services or the NSPCC, and if you have any concerns or worries in relation to the advice/instructions given contact the lead Child Protection Director for advice and support.
- Everyone is expected to work to this policy within our values and behaviours framework.

## **Guidelines**

If you suspect a child is being abused:

1. Immediately tell your local Child Protection Coordinator.
2. Fill in the Child Protection Form with details of your concerns. Be clear about what is fact, observation or opinion and identify where your information is from, for example other people. Give a copy to your co-ordinator.
3. You must make sure that the child has access to an adult who is not connected to the allegation or incident.
4. Do not promise to keep information confidential, even if the child has asked you to keep this information confidential.
5. Make sure that no further situation arises which could cause any further problems to the child or the BSF.

If a child tells you about abuse by someone else:

1. Let the child speak without interruption and accept what is said.
2. Ease any feelings of guilt and loneliness and do not pass judgement.
3. Tell the child that you will try to offer support.
4. Tell the child what you are going to do with the information.

*Updated: May 2023*

5. Follow steps 1-5 as detailed above.

If you get an allegation about any adult or young person:

1. Immediately tell your local Child Protection Coordinator.
2. Fill in the Child Protection Form with details of your concerns. Be clear about what is fact, observation or opinion and identify where your information is from, for example other people. Give a copy to your co-ordinator.

You must try to make sure no one is placed in a position which could cause further risk to the child or any other child or young person.