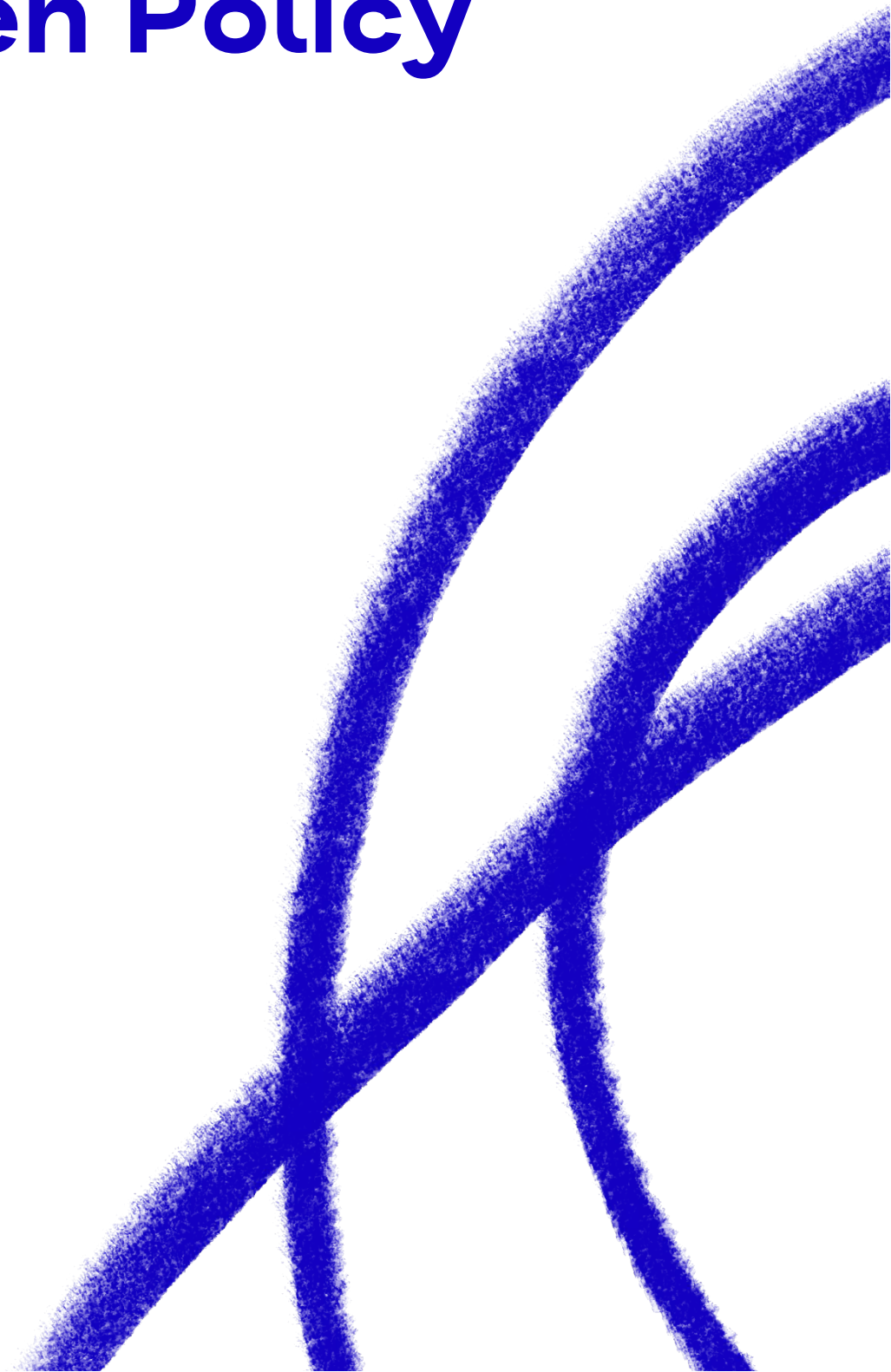


# **Safeguarding Children Policy**

**Version 3**  
**July 2024**



Title	Safeguarding Children Policy
Author	Helen Ioannou, Director (children, young people and all age)
Version	3
Date first published	Version 1: 2019
Previous review dates	Version 2: August 2023 Version 3: July 2024
Next review date	July 2025
Review schedule	This policy will be reviewed annually, or in line with organisational or legislative changes including MQM guidance.
Responsibility	Board of Trustees
Responsibility for development, review and implementation	Executive Leadership Team and Operational Delivery Team, led by the Accountable Officer for Safeguarding, the Child Safeguarding Lead and the Adult Safeguarding Lead
Target audience	All staff, volunteers, service members, students on placement, visitors, funding bodies, job and volunteer applicants and the Board of Trustees
Accessibility	Workforce: People HR and People and Culture SharePoint Service members and others: Mind in Bradford website If you would like a copy of this policy or need it in another format, please contact us at 01274 730815, speak to a member of staff, or email us at <a href="mailto:admin@mindinbradford.org.uk">admin@mindinbradford.org.uk</a>
Associated policies	Safeguarding Adults at Risk policy Boundaries Policy Confidentiality Policy Data Protection Policy Volunteer Policy DBS Policy Recruitment and Selection (Staff Handbook)

# 1. Purpose and scope

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

This policy is to safeguard all children aged under 18, including unborn babies and children not accessing our services. It covers all areas of our work and locations, such as online, phone, in person, at events and during training.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Mind in Bradford, including, the board of trustees, paid staff, volunteers, contractors, agency workers and students. At Mind in Bradford, we developed this policy to ensure we fulfil our duty to children as a mental health service provider, keeping the voices of children and families at the centre. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide protection for all children who access or are the children of people who access Mind in Bradford Services.
- Provide our workforce<sup>1</sup> with guidance and procedures to follow if they suspect a child may be experiencing or at risk of harm.

Everyone working on the behalf of Mind in Bradford must follow this policy, regardless of whether they work directly with children. This includes staff, volunteers, trustees, students, interns, contractors, agency workers, trainees, and subcontracted providers. It's crucial to recognise that issues experienced by adults, such as mental illness, domestic abuse, substance misuse, and criminality, can impact children's safety and wellbeing.

# 2. Policy statement

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and upholding our responsibility as a provider of mental health services for children, and for adults who have contact with children.

We support and safeguard children in a respectful and dignified way, supporting them in maintaining their human rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We recognise that every child is an individual, and when following child safeguarding procedures, we are committed to prioritising child and family voice and experience and keeping them at the centre of decision-making.

This policy provides clear direction about how we will safeguard children from harm. It has been evolved to ensure we are fulfilling our duty as a local mental health charity. It is in line and should be read in conjunction with:

## Bradford, Airedale and Wharfedale

- West Yorkshire Consortium Inter Agency Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures <https://westyorkscb.proceduresonline.com/>

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<sup>1</sup> All Mind in Bradford staff and volunteers.

- Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Continuum of need and risk identification tool <https://saferbradford.co.uk/children/practitioners-who-work-or-volunteer-with-children-and-young-people/>
- BDSCP Multi-agency information sharing & consent policy <https://saferbradford.co.uk/resources/childrens/information-sharing/>
- Bradford district domestic abuse and sexual violence strategy, 2021-2024 <https://www.saferbradford.co.uk/resources/childrens/domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence/>

### Craven (North Yorkshire)

- North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NYSCP) Procedures <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/procedures-practice-guidance-and-one-minute-guides/>
- NYSCP Framework for decision-making: right help, at the right time by the right person
- NYSCP Information sharing: one-minute guide
- NYSCP Domestic abuse strategy, 2018-2022

### Core legislation and guidance

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Children's social care national framework 2023
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: Advice for practitioners 2015
- Information Sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for children, young people, parents and carers [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66320b06c084007696fca731/Info\\_sharing\\_advice\\_content\\_May\\_2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66320b06c084007696fca731/Info_sharing_advice_content_May_2024.pdf)

### Other relevant legislation and guidance

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Signs of Safety Assessment and Planning Framework

## 3. Commitment

We are committed to keeping children safe by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them.
- Appointing an Accountable Officer for Safeguarding, a Child Safeguarding Lead and a lead trustee/board member for safeguarding, ensuring everyone understands their role and responsibilities.

- Ensuring everyone involved with Mind in Bradford understands child safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures and training, and knows what to do and who to contact if they have a concern relating to the welfare of a child.
- Providing effective management for our workforce through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so our workforce knows about, and follow, our policies and procedures confidently and competently.
- Recruiting and selecting our workforce in line with safer recruitment best practice, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- Using our safeguarding procedure to share information about child safeguarding concerns with the appropriate agencies. For example, the Disclosure and Barring Service, Police, Local Authority and other appropriate services.
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers and service members treat each other with respect and are comfortable about sharing concerns.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### **Board of Trustees are responsible for:**

- Having a lead trustee for safeguarding.
- Ensuring safeguarding policies and procedures are reviewed, fit for purpose and up to date.
- Challenging decisions which adversely affect anyone's wellbeing.
- Managing allegations of abuse against someone involved in the organisation.

### **The Accountable Officer for Safeguarding is responsible for:**

- Keeping up to date with safeguarding practice and legislation and updating the Board of these.
- Taking overall accountability for safeguarding practice within Mind in Bradford.
- Ensuring the Board are consulted and updated to changes of policy and safeguarding concerns.
- Escalating any concerns with external organisations regarding safeguarding.

### **The Child and Adult Safeguarding Leads are responsible for:**

- Keeping up to date with relevant safeguarding practice and legislation.
- Taking the lead in ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for keeping people safe.
- Deputising for the actions required by the Accountable Officer for Safeguarding if required.

### **All operational managers are responsible for:**

- Deciding whether to raise a safeguarding concern with the local authority.
- Making sure everyone in the organisation is aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and knows how to respond to concerns.
- Deciding when to share information with other agencies or raise a concern with local authority and, if consent is not given, whether to override and on what basis.
- Providing appropriate direction and coaching to staff to ensure a best practice approach to child safeguarding is integrated into operational practice.
- Ensuring training undertaken and experiences of responding to child safeguarding incidents are discussed in supervision so our workforce's understanding of safeguarding is clearly established, and further support identified, if required.

- Ensuring lessons learnt from safeguarding issues are discussed with relevant teams and changes in practice, procedure and policy embedded, where appropriate.
- Ensuring our workforce receive briefings on updates and changes to local authority procedures.

**All members of our workforce are responsible for:**

- Keeping children safe from harm.
- Ensuring they are aware of this policy and how to access it.
- Promoting the safety and welfare of children involved in Mind in Bradford's activities at all times.
- Immediately alerting a senior staff member regarding any challenges finding or understanding this policy.
- Knowing what to do if they suspect potential or actual harm, abuse or neglect of a child.
- Undertaking any mandatory safeguarding training as required.
- Familiarising themselves with local authority child safeguarding policies, procedures and training relevant to their role.
- Taking immediate actions, wherever possible, to ensure children are safe from harm.

## 5. Recognising safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding is taking all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised.

Harm is the ill treatment or impairment of the health or development of a child. Safeguarding children covers actual or potential harm, harm posed by others and 'harm to self' posed by the child.

Harm can occur over a series of repeated incidents or a one-off, they may form a pattern, or be sporadic, they may be happening currently, be historic and/or be potential future harm. Anyone may be the perpetrator of harm.

Harm may take place anywhere; for example, at home, work, health settings, in the local community, over the phone and online.

**There are four main categories of abuse and neglect of a child:**

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| • Physical abuse | • Emotional abuse |
| • Sexual abuse   | • Neglect         |

**Other categories of abuse include:**

- |                               |                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| • Bullying                    | • Modern slavery                                                                               |
| • Child sexual exploitation   | • Online abuse                                                                                 |
| • Child criminal exploitation | • Radicalisation                                                                               |
| • Domestic abuse              | • Harm to self (self-harm, suicidal behaviour or ideation, substance misuse, eating disorders) |
| • Female genital mutilation   |                                                                                                |

See Appendix 1: Types of abuse and how to recognise them, for more detailed information about how to identify the four main categories of abuse.

## 6. Disclosures

Disclosure is the process by which children share their experiences of abuse with others. They may disclose directly, indirectly, behaviourally or non-verbally. Disclosures may be reported by a third party. Disclosures may be made against anyone, including staff and families. If a child discloses abuse or neglect, follow NSPCC guidance:

- **Listen carefully.** Be patient and focus on what you're being told. Avoid expressing your own views or feelings. A reaction of shock or disbelief could cause them to 'shut down', retract or stop talking.
- **Let them know they've done the right thing.** Reassurance can make a big impact.
- **Tell them it's not their fault.** Abuse is never the child's fault, and they need to hear this.
- **Say you'll take them seriously.** They may have kept the abuse secret out of fear of not being believed. Assure them they can trust you, and that you will listen and support them.
- **Don't talk to the alleged abuser.** Confronting the alleged abuser about what the child has told you could make the situation a lot worse for the child.
- **Explain what you'll do next.** Explain that you'll need to speak to someone who will be able to help.
- Follow the Mind in Bradford **Safeguarding Children Procedure** detailed in section seven.

### Other ways a child safeguarding concern may arise

Disclosures are only one way safeguarding concerns may arise. Other ways include:

- Observations of signs/indicators that harm has or may take place.
- Reports by a third party.
- Through online posts or during a live chat.

It is not always immediately clear if there is a child safeguarding concern. You may suspect abuse or neglect through observation of signs, such as a suspicious injury, or someone may appear to make a possible disclosure. In these situations, you must gather enough additional information to ascertain whether there is a child safeguarding concern. Think about what questions to ask and how:

- Avoid leading questions.
- Use the acronym 'TED' to encourage people to 'Tell', 'Explain' and 'Describe' the concern.
- Ask only enough to clarify whether there is a child safeguarding concern: remain aware that our role is to recognise and respond to abuse, not to investigate.

## 7. Responding to concerns

In the event of a child safeguarding concern, you must make a professional judgement about the level of need and risk and respond accordingly. You should use a Signs of Safety approach; assessing risk and identifying solutions by answering four straightforward questions:

1. What are we worried about?
2. What is working well?
3. What needs to happen?
4. What is our level of concern for the child, from 0-10? (0 = certainty of significant harm to child, 10 = confidence child is safe and not at risk of significant harm).

You may wish to speak with a senior member of staff to help with this.



You may use local authority guidance to help identify the level of need/risk and appropriate response to ensure the child gets the right support at the right time. For Bradford, this is the BDSCP's Continuum of Need and Risk Identification Tool, available here:

<https://saferbradford.co.uk/children/practitioners-who-work-or-volunteer-with-children-and-young-people/>. For Craven it is NYSCP's Framework for decision-making: right help, at the right time by the right person, available here: <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/professionals/procedures-practice-guidance-and-one-minute-guides/>.

## **Responding to safeguarding concerns**

In the event of a child safeguarding concern, if it is safe, take immediate action to ensure the safety of the child. Then follow the procedure below.

In the event of an emergency, call 999 and follow the steps in section eight: Responding to an emergency. An emergency is defined as when a child may be at immediate risk of significant harm.

Within Mind in Bradford, staff and volunteers must always inform the available Service Manager without delay. If the concerns relate to the Service Manager, inform an alternative or more senior manager within your organisation of the concerns.

## **Procedure**

### **1. Seek consent to share information**

Immediately following the concern, if safe to do so, seek consent from the child and their parent/guardian to share information with the relevant external agencies.

- While consent is not needed to share information about child safeguarding, it is good practice to inform children and their parents/guardians and aim to work cooperatively with them.
- If a child or parent/guardian declines to consent, explain our legal duty to share the information and let them know what will happen next.
- There are some circumstances where you do not need to seek consent:
  - If informing the parent/guardian would place a child at significant risk of harm, or
  - If the child is not of an age or level of understanding to provide consent.

### **2. Report to local authority**

Immediately after seeking consent, report the concern via referral to the relevant local authority children's social care team.

You may wish to speak with a senior member of staff prior to reporting to the relevant local authority, for advice or guidance prior to referral.

### **Bradford Children and Families Trust**

- Office hours: 01274 433999.
- Out of hours: 01274 431010.
- Ask the call handler to email you a written record of the call.

### **North Yorkshire Children's Social Care**

- Phone 0300 131 2 131 or complete a Universal Referral Form here: <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/>



- Phone referrals must be followed up in via the Universal Referral Form within 24 hours.

You may wish to speak with a senior member of staff for advice or guidance prior to making a referral.

### **3. Report to statutory mental health service**

After reporting to the local authority, if the concern is about deliberate self-harm, suicidal thoughts or behaviours or eating disorders, immediately notify statutory mental health services:

Office hours – CAMHS: Bradford 01274 723241, Keighley and Craven 01535 661531.

Out of hours – First Response: 0800 952 1181.

### **4. Notify a senior staff member**

If you have not already done so, immediately notify a senior staff member via phone or in person:

- This may be your line manager, the relevant manager responsible for the service in which the concern came to light or the Child or Adult Safeguarding Lead.
- Out of office hours, you must inform the On-Call Manager via 01274 952 100.
- Ask the senior staff member for guidance about who else to notify and next steps.
- If the concerns relate to a member of the Mind in Bradford workforce, you must immediately raise the concerns with the People and Culture Manager, Accountable Officer for Safeguarding or Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

### **5. Notify relevant others**

After notifying a senior staff member, immediately notify relevant third parties. These may include:

- The person who referred the child to us.
- Key workers involved with the child/family.
- Key staff at the child's school.

Some third parties should not be notified, for example, those who do not have a legitimate purpose to know under data protection legislation, and those who may cause harm to the child if they are made aware of the concern.

### **6. Record the incident**

Immediately record details on the child's MYMUP profile, complete an incident report and send it to the relevant managers with a written copy of the safeguarding referral.

Record keeping is essential in relation to child safeguarding. Your recordings must include:

- Full name of child/children at risk of harm and their parent/guardian, and if consent has not been given, provide the rationale for this.
- The nature of the concerns; add as much detail as practically possible, including potential future harm
- The time(s) and date(s) of disclosures/observations.
- The date(s) and location(s) where suspected abuse took place.
- Where known, the full name of alleged abuser and relationship to child.
- Who the concerns have been discussed with within Mind in Bradford, what advice was given, and what decisions were made.
- Actions taken, including contact with statutory partners (local authority, police, NHS) and any other third parties, and reasons for these actions.

- Child and family voice, wishes and feelings.

Once the initial recordings are made, record all updates relating to the safeguarding concern on the child's MYMUP as and when they occur and make your manager aware of any updates as and when they occur.

### **Follow-up and debrief**

After the concern is reported and recorded, follow guidance given to you from the relevant statutory agencies and senior member/s of staff.

If your concerns remain in place and are not addressed within timescales agreed by statutory agencies or you are not satisfied with the follow-up actions taken by them, report this to your manager immediately so they can escalate the matter.

A senior staff member will offer you a 1-1 debrief to ensure any welfare issues are addressed and followed up. You can also access clinical supervision.

### **Timescales**

All the steps above should be followed within the timescales given. Sometimes this may require you to work beyond your scheduled work hours/pattern. In these circumstances, following the safeguarding procedure described above must always take priority. You should notify your manager or the on-call manager if you are working over your hours, and they will advise on next steps.

See Appendix 2: Safeguarding Children Procedure for a summary flowchart of our procedure for responding to child safeguarding concerns.

## **8. Responding in an emergency**

Where there are significant concerns about the immediate safety or welfare of a child, you must contact emergency services on 999 without delay. Then follow the steps below:

- Take any steps to protect the child from harm, as advised by emergency services.
- After reporting to emergency services, immediately inform your line manager or other relevant senior staff member, out of hours this is the On-Call Manager, on 01274 952 100.
- Follow steps two to seven in the procedure above.

## **9. Concerns involving our workforce**

Allegations and concerns about our workforce may arise in the context of their work or in their life outside work or at home.

If allegations or concerns are raised about abuse or neglect of a child by a member of our workforce, you must immediately report it to the People and Culture Manager, Accountable Officer for Safeguarding or CEO. If the People and Culture Manager or Accountable Officer for Safeguarding are implicated in the allegations or concerns, you must raise the concerns with the CEO. If the CEO is implicated, you must raise the concerns with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

If there is an immediate risk to people using our services and it is not possible to contact the People and Culture Manager, Accountable Officer for Safeguarding or CEO, it is appropriate to act such as

sending the staff member or volunteer home. A member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) should be involved in this decision.

Full details of the concerns should be recorded on an incident report and submitted via email to the senior staff member to whom you escalated the matter. Do not record the concerns on MYMUP unless directed to do so by the People and Culture Manager, Accountable Officer for Safeguarding or CEO.

After you notify an appropriate senior staff member they will report the concern to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day, prior to any internal investigation taking place. The senior staff member will then liaise with the LADO, children's social care and/or police as necessary, around next steps.

Any members of staff or volunteers implicated in any safeguarding allegations or concerns will be subject to the Mind in Bradford Disciplinary and Grievances Procedure, a copy of which is in the Mind in Bradford Employee Handbook on the People & Culture SharePoint site.

## 10. Concerns involving people who use our services

Our safeguarding children procedure must be followed in response to all child safeguarding concerns, including when a service member is the alleged perpetrator.

Allegations or concerns about people who use services requires escalation to the Accountable Officer for Safeguarding and a risk assessment to be completed. This must be undertaken collaboratively with staff who know the alleged perpetrator and a senior member of the team. The purpose of the risk assessment is to understand whether this is new or historic, the potential harm and the likelihood of it re-occurring.

The risk assessment should lead to an outcome that both safeguards the victim but also supports the perpetrator to access the support they need. The support does not have to be provided by Mind in Bradford.

## 11. Confidentiality

To safeguard children, we sometimes need to share information with external organisations. When it is safe to do so, we will seek consent from the child and their parent/guardian first. If we cannot obtain consent, but must breach confidentiality, we will do so carefully and sensitively, in compliance with our **Confidentiality Policy**.

We acknowledge that while those we support have a right to confidentiality, the safety and welfare of children take precedence. Therefore, we must explain to children and their parents/guardians that we may need to breach confidentiality and share information with external organisations to protect them and provide necessary support.

## 12. Subcontracted service provision

At Mind in Bradford, we subcontract various providers to deliver support on our behalf. All Service Level Agreements and other contracting documents require a clear commitment to safeguarding children and include detailed information about the providers' safeguarding responsibilities. They also include the mandatory expectation to:

- Have up-to-date child and adult safeguarding policies, aligned with legislation and local procedures, and reviewed annually.
- Ensure their workforce have the mandatory training as stipulated in the contract.
- Have appropriate recruitment safeguards in place, relating to enhanced disclosure checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Complete the NHS Safeguarding Self Declaration and a remedial action plan annually
- Provide us with information about all Serious Incidents, Patient Safety Incidents and Notifiable Safety Incidents.

Compliance with the above is monitored and reviewed by the relevant Mind in Bradford contract manager, and any concerns immediately escalated to the Child Safeguarding Lead.

## 13. Implementation and monitoring

### Implementation

All members of our workforce are made aware of this policy and expected to read and understand it in their first week of induction. It is accessible to them via People HR and the People & Culture SharePoint.

All members of our workforce undertake child safeguarding training appropriate to their role, with the level of training tailored to the nature of their specific duties. Our mandatory safeguarding training programme includes:

- Safeguarding children levels 1, 2 & 3 and annual refresher.
- Domestic violence and abuse.
- Preventing radicalisation: basic prevent awareness.
- Suicide prevention.

### Monitoring

We monitor our performance in relation to concerns via:

- Weekly reviews by Service Managers of incidents within their service areas.
- Fortnightly quality & safety meetings.
- Monthly Operational Delivery Team meetings.
- Monthly reviews performed by the Operational Leadership Team.
- Monthly ELT report and quarterly report to Board of Trustees - reporting by exception.

Safeguarding is a standing item on all supervision and team meeting agendas. To promote ongoing learning and service improvement, teams and individuals are encouraged to discuss, reflect on and learn from safeguarding incidents.

## 14. Important contacts

### Internal contacts

- **Accountable Officer for Safeguarding**  
Frankie Hill, Director (equity and quality) | [frankie@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:frankie@mindinbradford.org.uk)
- **Adult Safeguarding Lead**  
Heather Butcher, Director (adults and older adults) | [heather@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:heather@mindinbradford.org.uk)
- **Child Safeguarding Lead**  
Helen Ioannou, Director (children, young people and all age) | [heleni@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:heleni@mindinbradford.org.uk)
- **Chief Executive Officer**  
Helen Davey | [helen.davey@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:helen.davey@mindinbradford.org.uk)
- **People and Culture Manager**  
Samane Etesami | [samane.etesami@mindinbradford.org.uk](mailto:samane.etesami@mindinbradford.org.uk)
- **Trustee Lead for Safeguarding**  
Karen Dawber | [karen.dawber@bthft.nhs.uk](mailto:karen.dawber@bthft.nhs.uk)

All of the above can be contacted via our office phone number: 01274 730815.

- **On-Call Manager**  
01274 952100

### External contacts

#### Bradford Children and Families Trust

Office hours: 01274 433999

Out of office hours, Emergency Duty Team: 01274 431010

Out of office hours, online referral: <https://ehmportal.bradford.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

#### North Yorkshire Children's Social Care

Office hours and out of hours: 0300 131 2 131

Universal Referral Form: <https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/>

## Types of abuse and how to recognise them

### The four main types of abuse

The following definitions and indicators are taken from **Working Together to Safeguarding Children** (2023) and **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused: advice for practitioners** (2015).

#### Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent/guardian fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of physical abuse:

- Frequent injuries.
- Unexplained or unusual fractures or broken bones.
- Unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, scalds or bite marks.

#### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of children such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving children opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a children's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve the child seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another person. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Some of the following signs may be indicators of emotional abuse:

- Children being excessively withdrawn, fearful, or anxious about doing something wrong.
- Parents/guardians who withdraw their attention from their child, giving them the 'cold shoulder'.
- Parents/guardians blaming their problems on their child.
- Parents/guardians who humiliate their child, for example, by name-calling or making negative comparisons.

#### Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing children to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether the child is aware of what is happening or not. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming children in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and

technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual abuse:

- Displaying knowledge or interest in sexual acts inappropriate to their age.
- Using sexual language or having sexual knowledge that you wouldn't expect them to have.
- Asking others to behave sexually or play sexual games.
- Having physical sexual health problems, including soreness in the genital and anal areas, sexually transmitted infections or pregnancy.

## **Neglect**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent/guardian failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment).
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers).
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Studies have shown that neglect can be life threatening and must therefore be treated with the same level of urgency as other forms of maltreatment. Neglect often co-exists with other forms of abuse and is often a precondition to other abuse taking place. Some of the following signs may be indicators of neglect:

- Living in a home that is indisputably dirty or unsafe.
- Being left hungry or dirty.
- Being left without adequate clothing, such as not having a winter coat.
- Living in dangerous conditions, such as around drugs, alcohol or violence.
- Often being angry, aggressive or self-harming.
- Failing to receive basic health care.
- Parents who fail to seek medical treatment when their children are ill or are injured.



# Safeguarding Children Procedure

**If you require support, advice or guidance at any point in this procedure, please speak with a senior member of staff.**

**In the event of a child safeguarding concern, if safe to do so, take immediate action to ensure the safety of the child. Then follow the steps below:**

## **1. If safe to do so**

Seek consent to share information from the child and parent/guardian immediately following the disclosure or concern

## **2. Immediately**

Report the concern to children's social care:

Bradford Children and Families Trust

- Office hours: 01274 433999
- Out of hours: 01274 431010

North Yorkshire Children's Social Care

- Call 0300 131 2 131 or complete a Universal Referral Form online:  
[www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/](http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/about-us/worried-about-a-child/)
- Follow up phone referrals with a Universal Referral Form within 24 hours

## **3. Immediately**

Report to statutory mental health services for disclosures or concerns about deliberate self-harm, suicidal thoughts or behaviours or eating disorders, if applicable

- Office hours, CAMHS: Bradford 01274 723241, Keighley & Craven 01535 661531
- Out of office hours, First Response: 0800 952 1181

## **4. Immediately**

Notify a senior member of staff in person or over the phone. Out of hours, contact the on-call manager on 01274 952 100

## **5. If relevant, and safe to do so, immediately**

Notify relevant others

## **6. Immediately**

Record the incident on MYMUP and on an incident report

## **7. As and when required**

Debrief and follow up as guided by statutory services and senior staff

## **In an emergency**

If you have reason to believe a child is at immediate risk of significant harm, the matter is an emergency, and you must contact emergency services immediately and without delay, by calling 999.