

CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

BRISTOL SCHOOLS CONNECTION DETAILS

Registered Charity No. 1162067

Name: Bristol Schools Connection (BSC)
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MISSION STATEMENT

The Trustees of Bristol Schools Connection (BSC) recognise the importance of the services provided to children, young people and families and their responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children and young people placing trust and confidence in the services provided by Bristol Schools Connection.

As part of its mission, BSC is committed to:

- Ensuring that the needs of the child are paramount.
- Responding quickly and appropriately to all suspicions or allegations of abuse, and providing parents and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns they may have.
- Valuing, listening to, respecting and relating effectively to children and young people, as well as promoting their welfare and protection; and enabling those children to have opportunities to develop physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.
- Appointing a Child protection officer who will take specific responsibility for child protection and act as the main point of contact for BSC workers, parents, children, schools, churches and other outside agencies.
- Playing our part in achieving positive outcomes for children in line with the every child matters agenda – Be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, achieve economic wellbeing.
- Protecting children from abuse – all children without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.
- Safe recruitment, supervision and training for all BSC staff, trustees, and volunteers in direct contact with children and young people.
- Adopting a procedure for dealing with concerns about possible abuse.
- Maintaining good links with schools, churches, the Diocese of Bristol, the statutory childcare authorities and other agencies, with regard to child safeguarding.
- The Trustees are committed to regularly reviewing the Safeguarding Policy – at least annually.

BRISTOL SCHOOLS CONNECTION POLICY

The Trustees recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children and young people. They also acknowledge that children and young people can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. The Trustees have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this document (hereafter “the policy”). The policy will be followed by the Trustees, any paid staff employees of BSC, and any volunteers working with BSC. The Trustees also recognise the need to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary child protection agencies. The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on a model published by the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS), with reference to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, and also following online Government guidance from the Charity Commission on safeguarding. The Trustees also undertake to follow the principles found within the ‘Abuse Of Trust Guidance (Caring For Young People and the Vulnerable? Guidance for preventing abuse 1999), issued by the Home Office. It is therefore

unacceptable for those in a position of trust to engage in any behaviour which might allow a sexual relationship to develop for as long as the relationship of trust continues. Children and parents will be informed about the policy and procedures as appropriate. They will also be able to access this policy online, or a paper copy (on request).

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

Who is a child? Any person under the age of 18 years old.

What is abuse?

Working Together to Safeguard Children (Working together to safeguard children, department of Health, 1999) states that “somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting; by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger.” It recognises four main areas of potential abuse for children: physical, sexual, emotion and neglect. Abuse can be described under any one of these four categories or a combination of categories.

Physical abuse: 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 or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to, a child whom they are looking after. This situation is now described as FI – fabricated or induced illness.

Possible signs of physical abuse

- Unexplained injuries or burns, particularly if they are recurrent
- Refusal to discuss injuries
- Improbable explanations for injuries
- Untreated injuries or lingering illness not attended to
- Admission of punishment which appears excessive
- Shrinking from physical contact
- Fear of returning home or of parents being contacted
- Fear of undressing
- Fear of medical help
- Aggression/bullying
- Over compliant behaviour or a ‘watchful attitude’
- Running away
- Significant changes in behaviour without explanation
- Deterioration in schoolwork
- Unexplained pattern of absences from school or groups and clubs which may serve to hide bruises or other physical injuries

Emotional abuse: is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. Children may be harmed by constant lack of love or affection, or threats, verbal attacks, taunting or shouting. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children (including interactions that are beyond the child’s developmental capacity, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing participation in normal social interaction). It can also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (including domestic violence). It can also involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger. The exploitation or corruption of children – including young people in abusive relationships, also comes under emotional abuse. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. It may convey to a child that they are worthless, unloved, inadequate, loved only insofar as they meet another persons needs.

Possible signs of emotional abuse

- Continual self-depreciation
- Fear of new situations
- Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations
- Self-harm or mutilation
- Compulsive stealing/scrounging
- Drug/solvent abuse
- 'Neurotic' behaviour – obsessive rocking, thumb-sucking, and so on
- Air of detachment – 'don't care' attitude
- Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends
- Desperate attention seeking behaviour
- Eating problems, including overeating and lack of appetite
- Depression, withdrawal
- Running away

Sexual abuse: Involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children or adolescents in sexual activity that they do not fully comprehend, or to which they are unable to give informed consent, or which violate the social taboos of family roles. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (e.g. rape or buggery) or non-penetrative acts – oral sex, masturbation, and fondling. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. Abusers often “groom” children for sexual purposes by taking a strong interest in the child or their family, gaining trust over a long period of time. Grooming can be played out by befriending in person, or over the internet/phone. The “Grooming” of children for abuse is included within the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Possible signs of sexual abuse:

- Bruises, scratches, burns or bite marks on the body
- Scratches, abrasions or persistent infections in the anal or genital regions
- Pregnancy – particularly in the case of young adolescents who are evasive concerning the identity of the father
- Sexual awareness inappropriate to the child's age – shown, for example, in drawings, vocabulary, games, and so on
- Frequent public masturbation
- Attempts to teach other children about sexual activity
- Refusing to stay with certain people or go to certain places
- Aggressiveness, anger, anxiety, tearfulness
- Withdrawal from friends
- Severe sleep disturbance with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares, sometimes with overt or veiled sexual connotation.

Possible signs of sexual abuse in older children:

- Promiscuity, prostitution, provocative sexual behaviour
- Self-injury, self-destructive behaviour, suicide attempts
- Eating disorders
- Tiredness, lethargy, listlessness
- Over-compliant behaviour
- Sleep disturbances
- Unexplained gift of money
- Depression
- Changes in behaviour

Neglect: persistent failure to meet basic essential needs of a child (e.g. food, warm clothing, medical attention), or if a child is left unsupervised at a young age, is likely to result in the

serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect might also occur during organised activities if young people are exposed to risk of injury or where there is failure to ensure their safety and well-being.

Possible signs of neglect:

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Inappropriate clothing
- Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem
- Poor social relationships
- Compulsive stealing and scrounging
- Constant tiredness

Spiritual Abuse: This is not an official named form of abuse, as it would come under emotional abuse. But it is worthy of noting. It could be defined as an abuse of power as it is often done in the name of God or Religion. It can involve manipulating or coercing an individual into thinking, saying or doing something, without respecting an individual's right to choose for themselves.

Many symptoms of distress in a child can point to abuse, but there are other explanations too. This has sometimes been the reason for falsely accusing parents of sexual abuse. It is important that the above signs are not taken as indicating that abuse has taken place, but that the possibility should be considered far more than in the past. They should make us stop and think – not jump to inappropriate conclusions.

SAFE RECRUITMENT AND SUPERVISION/TRAINING

- Employed members of staff will undergo a rigorous recruitment process which will involve an interview, 2 references (including a verbal reference), a signed declaration (that there is no reason why they shouldn't work with children) and an Enhanced DBS check.
- All volunteers working directly with BSC will undergo the screening/vetting process - involving an interview where suitability for the role will be assessed, 2 references taken, a signed declaration (that there is no reason why they shouldn't work with children) and an Enhanced DBS check.
- All Newly appointed Trustees will undergo a screening/vetting process – involving an interview where suitability of the role will be assessed, an enhanced DBS check, and 2 references will be taken.
- Paid employees and the child protection policy (trustee) are required to attend safeguarding training every three years.
- Employees, volunteers and trustees are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and the school child safeguarding policy, and the child safeguarding policy of any relevant church that BSC works with. A form will need to be signed to say that the policy has been read.
- Induction Safeguarding training will be given to all new BS workers and trustees.
- Trustees and BSC workers will have opportunities to learn about child protection in accordance with and as appropriate to their roles and responsibilities, including the emerging issues of: eSafety, cyber bullying, domestic violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, children who live away from home or go missing, child trafficking, gang membership, child sexual exploitation, race and racism and violent extremism.
- BSC employees will have regular supervision meetings, and their work will be appropriately monitored by the Line manager and trustees.

- BSC volunteers will be appropriately supervised and monitored by a BSC employee.
- The Trustees will ensure all BSC workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the principles set out in government guidelines “Safe from Harm” (HMSO 1993), the Criminal Records Bureau / Scottish Criminal Records Office / PECS Codes of Practice. The same principles will be applied to those appointed to work with vulnerable adults.

WORKING IN SCHOOLS GUIDELINES

All workers in schools will be familiar with and subject to the school’s own Child Safeguarding Policy.

BSC workers must discuss any/all safeguarding issues that arise with the member of school staff that they have been working with that day, and/or refer such issues to the school’s Child Protection officer if appropriate.

WORKING WITH OTHER CHURCHES AND THEIR LOCAL SCHOOLS

All BSC workers working with a church, will be familiar with and subject to that church’s Child Safeguarding Policy, and the safeguarding policy of the school that the church are working with. BSC workers must discuss any/all safeguarding issues that arise with the representative they have been working with from the church. Where appropriate the issues will be passed onto the church child protection officer, or the local school child protection officer.

WORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATION e.g. FALCON HOLIDAYS, CPAS

All BSC workers working with another organisation, will be familiar with and subject to that organisation’s Child Safeguarding Policy. BSC workers must discuss any/all safeguarding issues that arise with the representative they have been working with from the organisation. Where appropriate the issues will be passed onto the organisation’s child protection officer.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR TRUSTEES, BSC WORKERS (PAID AND VOLUNTARY) WORKING WITH CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE

The code of behaviour of the context you are working in should be followed (School, church or other organisations). **But the general guidelines below should also be followed:**

- Treat all children with the respect and dignity befitting their age.
- Watch their own language, tone of voice and body language.
- Avoid taking a child to the toilet, unless it is absolutely necessary. In this case, ensure that another adult is informed. Or organise a toilet break for the whole group.
- Try to ensure that a mixed group has male and female helpers.
- Ensure that a loving, respectful, and orderly atmosphere is created in which children/young people can learn, play, and interact with others. This atmosphere should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children / young people towards acceptable activities and behaviour, verbally encouraging positive behaviour and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behaviour.
- Use acceptable means of redirecting behaviour including: correcting the child verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child / young person from the group for a brief time (particularly if his/her behaviour is endangering or upsetting others). Physical punishment is illegal for people working with children and young people.
- First aid should be administered by someone suitably qualified and with others present. The child should administer the first aid where possible.

- Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming him/herself or others. If possible, try to make sure there is another adult present. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible.
- All significant incidents of physical touching (e.g. restraining a child or young person who is violent, physically removing a young person from the group, or preventing a young person from entering the group) that could give rise to concern or complaint should be recorded on an incident form/incident book. The incident will be reported to the Child Protection Officer (CPO) if necessary.
- All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child/ young person's needs and not the needs of the adult (i.e. initiated by the child/cue from the child).
- Colleagues must be prepared to support each other.
- Other adults should be prepared to speak out and take necessary action if any adult is behaving inappropriately and make the relevant people are aware of the situation.
- If a child starts to make a disclosure about abuse, do not influence what they say by the way we speak or asking leading questions. Non leading questions should be used, such as "Tell me... Explain to me....Describe to me....." (TED) Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you, and that you are going to have to tell someone else so that we can help them (do not promise to keep it a secret). Write down everything that was said as soon as possible, keeping it as factual as possible, and make a note of the emotions displayed by the child – sign and date it, and keep a copy for yourself, and pass it onto the person in charge of safeguarding in the relevant context that you are working in. Keep a copy and pass it onto the CPO of BSC.

Trustees and BSC workers should not:

- Invade a child's privacy whilst toileting or washing.
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child or young person even in fun.
- Touch a child or young person unnecessarily or inappropriately.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child or young person or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve the worker in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- Share a bed/bedroom with a child/children, a young person, or young people.
- Place themselves in a situation where they are alone with a child, children, a young person or young people. Work within sight of another adult.
- If physical contact is necessary in an activity – make sure that the child/parent is aware of it and it's nature, e.g. helping to put a climbing harness on, or restraining a child to stop a fight continuing.
- Permit abusive peer activities, e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying.
- Allow unknown adults access to children or young people. A known person should always accompany visitors.

Equal Opportunities

We aim to include every child in BSC activities no matter what their ability or specific need. Through negotiation and careful planning it should be possible to include children with a wide scope of needs. In planning sessions, we aim to set children up to succeed by adapting both the environment and equipment to the specific needs of the child. See Equalities Policy statement.

Behaviour

BSC workers are encouraged to lead by example and promote a positive learning environment. We will observe children carefully and look at ways we can promote positive outcomes, demonstrate empathetic behaviour, think carefully about the type of language we use and

ultimately act as role models to the children. In the event of repeatedly unacceptable behaviour the school's behaviour policy will be enforced in consultation with school staff.

Bullying

Bullying will be addressed in accordance with the schools behaviour policy. During activities run by BSC we will endeavour to monitor the behaviour and try to identify the cause. If appropriate, we will raise the issue within the group or with the individuals concerned, in an age appropriate way and try to engage the pupils in solving the problem. Where necessary the bullied participant will be reassured and school staff will be informed of the incident.

SOCIAL NETWORKING, MESSAGING AND PHONE CALLS

Trustees and BSC workers should not have children and young people (under 18) related to the work of BSC as friends on facebook or other social networking sites.

Trustees and BSC workers should not engage in any instant messaging of young people via MSN or other instant messenger providers.

Messaging (text, email, on network sites)

The following guidelines are to be followed:

1. BSC workers and trustees are allowed to message a young person if they are in a 1-2-1 mentoring relationship (organised by BSC).
2. BSC workers and trustees are not allowed to 'over' message any young person. Over messaging means constantly sending them messages (over 3 leader initiated texts per week)
3. BSC workers and trustees are allowed to respond to messages from young people, but should not engage in long conversations.
4. BSC workers and trustees are to be very careful about how they write messages to young people of the opposite sex. Be polite in responses, but brief.
5. Messages should be brief and BSC workers/trustees must not use any form of social contact to foster special friendships with particular young people which go beyond the role of BSC worker or trustee.
6. No pastoral advice is to be given via messaging.

Phone calls

Calling young people should follow the guidelines as per 'Messaging.'

RISK MANAGMENT

What types of risk assessment are carried out, when and by whom?

Site – If BSC uses a particular site for an activity, the site will be risk assessed regularly. Control measures will be put in place to manage the risks. BSC will ensure that the sites used have public liability insurance.

Ratios – In accordance with the Children's Act 1989, BSC workers will ensure that the correct adult/child ratios are adhered to, bearing in mind the additional factors of the needs of the children.

Communication with parents – BSC workers do everything they can (in conjunction with the relevant school/church) to ensure that parents are effectively communicated with about BSC services, including information about activities, appropriate clothing/kit list, medical/emergency information, and permission.

Activity – Activities led by BSC, that are going to be undertaken with the children and young people need to be risk assessed. The BSC worker will complete a risk assessment of the activity and share the details of which with supervising assistants and participants.

Equipment – Equipment used will be in good working order for both children and leaders to use. An assessment of the equipment will be done on a regular basis. If the BSC worker sees them to be unfit for use (unsafe), then they should not be used.

Ongoing – The BSC worker(s) and children/young people should all be involved in ongoing risk assessments. If any of the group see any potential hazards that have not been identified, they should be brought to the attention of the Leader so they can be discussed.

Insurance – The BSC workers will be insured by BSC for activities that they are providing service users. The sites used will be covered with public liability insurance.

PHOTOGRAPHS, WEBSITE, AND MEDIA

- Careful consideration will be given as to why photographs are to be taken of children and what their subsequent use might be.
- Permission will be obtained from parents before photographs of their children are taken.
- Permission will be obtained from parents if photographs of their children are to be used for publicity purposes, either on flyers or on the website/other media.
- Photos will only be stored on paid BSC employees computers for a limited period.
- Photos taken on phones will be deleted when transferred to a computer.
- When working in a school, BSC will always adhere to the school photography/website/media policy and liaise with the head teacher.

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BSC WORKER (Paid employee or volunteer)

What constitutes an allegation?

A worker has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he/she is unsuitable to work with children

Procedure

- The worker will be subject to BSC's procedure regarding allegations against staff
- The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be informed within one working day regarding allegations of abuse against facilitators. The LADO is responsible for managing allegations against anyone who works with children in an employed or voluntary capacity. The LADO for Bristol can be contacted by telephone. The name of the current LADO is Nicola Laird: 0117 903 7795.
- The worker will be referred to the Disclosure and Barring service by BSC if it is deemed appropriate to dismiss them.

RESPONDING TO ANY ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a BSC worker (paid or voluntary) carry out their own investigation into the allegation or suspicion of abuse. The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse will do the following:

- Concerns must be reported as soon as possible to Jo Hewitt, Child Protection Officer (CPO) Tel no:07967325955, who is nominated by the Trustees, to act on their behalf, in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

- The CPO may also be required by conditions of the BSC's Insurance Policy to immediately inform the Insurance Company.
- In the absence of the CPO, or if the suspicions in any way involve the CPO, then the report should be made to *Tony Miles*, (Deputy CPO) mob. no: 07771852833. If the suspicions implicate both the CPO and the Deputy CPO then contact should be made with the local Social Services office telephone number between 9.00am and 5.00pm is 0117 955 8231. The out of hours emergency number is 01454 615165. The Police Child Protection Team telephone number is 0117 945 4320. To report a concern about a child call First Response Team Bristol – 0117 9036444 or Emergency Duty Team – 01454 615165. If the child is at immediate risk, call Police on 999.
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made by the CPO as appropriate and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the CPO, the absence of the CPO or the Deputy CPO, should not delay referral to the Social Services Department.
- The Trustees will support the CPO/Deputy CPO in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the child protection agencies, although the trustees hope that the above procedure will be used. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the CPO/Deputy CPO has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the CPO, as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Trustees demonstrate the commitment of BSC to effective child protection.

The role of the CPO/ deputy CPO is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to the Social Services Department. It is Social Services task to investigate the matter under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

ALLEGATIONS OF PHYSICAL INJURY OR NEGLECT

If a child has a physical injury or symptom of neglect, the CPO/ Deputy CPO will:

- Contact Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Will not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so having contacted Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/ carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of harm.
- Where the parent/ carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Social Services direct for advice.

ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the CPO/Deputy CPO will:

- Make no promise of confidentiality regarding reported abuse.
- Contact the Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct.
- NOT speak to the parent/ carer or anyone else.

RECORDING INCIDENTS AND CONCERNS, AND STORAGE OF FORMS

If an incident happens – e.g. an accident, or an usual event, or an unusual incident or conversation with a child, an Incident form will be filled in, and the necessary action taken. An incident form could also be filled in if a concern arises about the welfare of a child, and the necessary action will follow.

These forms will be securely stored at the Charity's office address (in compliance with relevant legislation and kept for the time period specified by our insurance company). Guidance on confidentiality and information sharing legislation will be followed, upholding the key principle that the protection of the child is the most important consideration.

Access to confidential information is restricted to the CPO and deputy CPO or the appropriate external agencies.

SUPPORT TO THOSE AFFECTED BY ABUSE

The Trustees are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to those who have been affected by abuse.

This policy will be reviewed annually and next on:		31 st July 2018
Signed	Jane Gillis	Date 31st July 2017
Print Name	_____	Appointment: BSC Development worker
Signed	Tony Miles	Date 31 st July 2017
Print Name	_____	Appointment: Chair of Trustees

USEFUL CONTACTS

Child-Safe (Avon and Somerset Police) – childsafes@avonandsomerset.police.uk
www.child-safe.org.uk 01275 816131

Childline 08001111

NSPCC – 08088005000 (24 hour) or text helpline 85888 (service is free and anonymous)

Helpline for Deaf – Textphone 180010808800

NSPCC Asian Languages - 08088005000

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/safeguarding-children-and-young-people>

<http://secure.ccpas.co.uk/documents/AbuseOfTrustQRG.pdf>

