

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

**THE BRIDGE YOUTH PROJECT**

[office@the-bridge.org.uk](mailto:office@the-bridge.org.uk)

[www.the-bridge.org.uk](http://www.the-bridge.org.uk)

01980 655521

Version 28/03/17



## Rationale

Every young person deserves and has equal rights to be happy and secure in everything they do. Schools, parents and carers need to feel sure that the people in charge of Bridge activities their child is involved with are trustworthy, responsible and will do everything they can to keep the young person safe from harm.

Unfortunately sometimes young people are at risk of harm. It is therefore the duty of The Bridge team to put in place safeguards to protect the young people with whom we work. All staff and volunteers have a duty to follow this policy and maintain the wellbeing of young people in their care. This policy will be reviewed annually, by the senior team of the Bridge and agreed by the Executive trustees.

## The Bridge Safeguarding aims.

- To create an environment which is safe and secure for all young people.
- To safeguard all members of our community, of all ages, particularly in the schools, churches etc where we undertake work. It is the responsibility of each one of the team to prevent the physical, spiritual, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect of young people.
- To ensure that any person working with young people is aware of their duty to have the vigilance and forethought to prevent abuse and report any abuse discovered or suspected.
- To encourage young people to develop a sense of independence and self-worth.

## Fulfilling our aims.

In order to fulfil these aims:

- The Bridge has two named people responsible for safeguarding within the organisation: Mary Bordass (Trustee) and Alex Ewing (Director).
- The Bridge follows the practice laid down by Amaze and Salisbury Diocese, for recruiting and training of all staff and volunteers.
- The Bridge staff and volunteers must know the clear procedures for recording and reporting incidents. (By way of the Safeguarding Children pack given to each individual team member)

- Whilst in school, each team member follows school safeguarding policy procedures, being aware of each schools designated safeguarding officer.
- All Bridge staff and volunteers are required to have their safeguarding pack with them at all times, this will include personal DBS certificate, Bridge Safeguarding children policy, a list of all schools designated safeguarding children officer, and a reporting form for Bridge records.

## **Premises.**

The Bridge is careful to control who comes into our office area so that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to the young people within Avon Valley College. Avon Valley College has a procedure for recording the names of visitors to the site.

In other schools, it is our policy to follow school policy. Should we have any 'visitors' viewing the work of The Bridge – schools will be informed and permission given BEFORE arrival with said visitor.

## **Recruitment**

The Bridge procedure for recruiting staff and volunteers is fair and safe. We allow sufficient time before appointment to carry out all necessary checks and references. We will not allow any member of staff or volunteer to have unsupervised contact with young people without these having been completed satisfactorily. Once these checks are complete, the office will contact appropriate persons/section leaders.

Applicants for roles within the Bridge, whether paid or voluntary, will be clearly informed of the need to carry out a Wiltshire enhanced DBS check and take up references before posts can be confirmed as well as the fact that positions are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. If an application is rejected because of information that has been disclosed, applicants will be informed that this is the case.

Successful applicants will be required to register with the update service online within 19 calendar days of issue of the DBS certificate. [www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service](http://www.gov.uk/dbs-update-service). Failure to do so will incur admin charges for which The Bridge will not be held responsible, and will subsequently delay the application process. If you require any assistance, please contact the office as soon as possible.

**\*\* It is the responsibility of all volunteers and paid staff to ensure that 'auto renew' has been selected upon registration to the update service, within 19 days of the DBS issue date – which is **clearly stated** on the certificate.**

**The cost of the annual update service must be incurred by paid staff, however this should be reimbursed through standard expense claims process. The update service is free for volunteers. \*\***

## **Training.**

Safeguarding young people is a core element of our professional development and training programme for all staff and volunteers. All new staff and volunteers are given a staff handbook outlining The Bridge safeguarding procedure as part of their induction before they take up any of their duties, and are given training as soon as possible. This includes guidance on recognising the additional vulnerability of some young people because of their race, gender, disability, language, religion, sexual orientation or culture. Staff and volunteers receive ongoing training in safeguarding each year.

## **Disciplinary action**

If a member of staff or volunteer is dismissed from The Bridge or internally disciplined because of misconduct relating to a child or young person, we will notify the relevant authorities so that the name may be included on the list for the protection of children and vulnerable adults. This also applies to those who resign in circumstances that would otherwise have led to dismissal for reasons of a concern about safeguarding.

## **Suspected Abuse**

The Bridge acknowledges that abuse of young people can take different forms: physical, emotional, sexual, spiritual and neglect. When young people are suffering from physical, spiritual, sexual or emotional abuse, this may be demonstrated through changes in their behaviour or in other ways.

**\*\* We also need to be aware that schools are now including extremism/radicalisation and female genital mutilation in their safeguarding policies.\*\***

Where such changes in behaviour occur, or where there is cause for concern:

## **Within School**

The schools designated safeguarding officer will be informed immediately and given a completed Disclosure/Suspected Abuse form. (See Annex A)

## **Out of school** (Ie: Bridge trip/event)

The Safeguarding children officers of The Bridge will be informed (Mary Bordass - Trustee or Alex Ewing - Director) immediately, and given a completed Disclosure/Suspected Abuse form (See Annex A)

## **Disclosures made to us**

When a young person makes a disclosure to a member of staff or volunteer, they will offer reassurance to the child; listen to the child; and give an assurance that she or he will take appropriate action. The child **MUST NOT** be questioned. The member of staff and volunteers involved will not question the child themselves and will refer the disclosure to the relevant Safeguarding Children Officer immediately giving them a detailed report using the Disclosure/Suspected Abuse form (Annex A), and the body map if required.

### **Within School**

If safeguarding officers are unavailable, they will take the schools lead as to who the referral gets passed on to. Bridge staff/volunteers will also inform The Director that a disclosure has been made and details passed on to the Safeguarding Children Officer of the school. It is not required for details to be given to the Director at this point.

### **Out of school** (Ie: Bridge trip/event)

If the activity is not in a school the safeguarding officers of The Bridge will be informed (Mary Bordass - Trustee or Alex Ewing - Director).

## **Recording and reporting suspicions of abuse and disclosure.**

Staff and volunteers to whom a disclosure is made will make a detailed record using the Disclosure/Suspected Abuse Form (Annex A)

### **Within Schools**

- The young person's name and year group/form tutor

- The date and time of the observation or disclosure
- The **exact** words spoken by the child
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported and any other people present.
- Diagram of any signs of abuse on the body map. (ensuring that you indicate signs on the correct side of the body, and as accurate as you can.)

These records are signed and dated and handed to the schools Safeguarding Children Officer, where it is dealt with according to the Schools safeguarding children policy.

A basic report will be filled in using The Bridge Recording statement (See Annex B) for Bridge records which will include:

- Name of Staff/Volunteer
- School
- Date of initial school report
- Who the report was given to – in school.

These records will be kept in a secure confidential file in the Bridge office.

### **Out of school** (Ie: Bridge trip/event)

- The young person's name, address and date of birth (if known)
- The date and time of the observation or disclosure
- The **exact** words spoken by the child
- An objective record of the observation or disclosure
- The name of the person to whom the concern was reported and any other people present.

These records are signed and dated and handed to the Bridge Safeguarding Children Officer, where it is dealt with according to Bridge policy.

A copy of the record/report will be kept within the secure filing cabinet in the Bridge office, in a sealed envelope labelled with 'Strictly confidential – Only to be opened by Bridge Safeguarding Children Officer in the event of an investigation Date:..... Event.....'

We shall use our professional judgment in sharing information with schools and agencies who need to know, being open and honest with parents and young people as to why we feel the need to share the information. The welfare of the child is paramount and this is at the forefront of our actions.

## **Confidentiality**

Whatever is disclosed will remain confidential, **unless** the young person discloses that they or someone else is at risk of being harmed or where there is a risk of offending behaviour or offending behaviour has taken place. In this case we are instructed to refer any such disclosures or concerns immediately to one of the Safeguarding Children Officers in the School/Bridge.

All suspicions and investigations are kept confidential and shared only with those who **need** to know. If there are concerns, the member of staff or volunteer must immediately inform the relevant Safeguarding Children Officer. Where young people work with a number of different staff or volunteers, each of them should also be made aware that there are concerns about an aspect of well-being of the young person in question.

Any information shared with external agencies is done under the guidance of Salisbury local Safeguarding children board and the protection of the child is the most important consideration.

## **Important contact details:**

### **Bridge Safeguarding Children Officers**

**Alex Ewing (Director) - 07817 052672**

**Mary Bordass (Trustee) - 01722 336698**

### **Chair of Trustees**

David Wraight Home - 01722 504928

Mobile – 07553 957714

**MASH** (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) - 03004 560108

**Out of Hours** - 0845 6070888

**If you consider the incident to be an emergency call 999**