



A COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Broadway House O 4-8 The Broadway O Newbury O Berkshire O RG14 1BA

Tel: 01635 760331 O www.t2twb.org

E-mail: office@t2twb.org

Policy Name
Safeguarding and Child Protection

Date reviewed by Policy Action Committee:
May 2023

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May 2023

Version Number:

Version 3.1

Next Review

April 2024

If any changes are made to these policies, the Board of Trustees will be notified that the policy has been amended.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Key Contact list for Safeguarding and Child Protection at Time to Talk West Berkshire

Contacts At Time to Talk

Designated Persons	Davina Nicholson (07768 637207)
Deputy Designated Persons	Steve Vardy (07768 024940 or 01635 42124) Kate Adams (07971 857191)
Nominated Trustee	Miss Elizabeth O'Keeffe

For Key Contacts within the Local Authority refer to Appendix 1 of this document.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The health, safety and well-being of all young people using our service are of paramount importance to all the adults who work in our organisation. Our clients have the right to protection, regardless of age, gender, race, culture or disability. They have a right to be safe at all our premises (Broadway House and off-site satellite venues).
- 1.2 In our organisation we respect our clients. The atmosphere within our organisation is one that encourages all clients to own and take responsibility for their wellbeing. We provide opportunities that enable our clients to take and make decisions for themselves.
- 1.3 We recognise that we are an agent of referral and not of investigation and enquiry.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 Time to Talk recognises it has a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding, child protection and promoting the welfare of our clients.

Our policy includes the whole organisation; all staff, trustees, and volunteers working in the organisation.

There are five main elements to our policy:

- a) Ensuring we practise safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with clients.
- b) When appropriate raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping clients with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- c) Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse through regular training for all staff and volunteers.
- d) Supporting clients who have been abused. Depending on how the disclosure has come about it may be in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- e) Establishing a safe environment in which our clients come to terms with their situation and move forward positively.

2.2 We recognise that because of the nature of contact with clients, volunteer counsellors are well placed to observe both the outward signs and verbal indications of abuse. We recognise that high self-esteem, confidence, and good lines of communication help prevention.

The organisation will therefore:

- a) Establish and maintain an environment where clients feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- b) Ensure clients know that they can discuss matters with counsellors if they are worried or are in difficulty.
- c) Provide materials which will help and inform clients in dealing with their situation. To work towards developing realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.
- d) Ensure that Whistleblowing Policy is in place and understood by all staff and volunteers.
- e) Ensure that Lone Working Policy is in place and understood by all staff and volunteers.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 We will follow the procedures set out by the West Berkshire Local Authority Safeguarding Children's Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education to:

- a) Ensure we have a designated suitably trained senior person for safeguarding and child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- b) Ensure we have a nominated suitably trained trustee responsible for safeguarding and child protection.

c) Ensure every member of staff, volunteer and trustee has access to training and knows who the designated person responsible for safeguarding and child protection is and their role.

d) Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated person responsible for safeguarding and child protection.

3.2 We shall:

a) Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection.

b) Keep written records of concerns about clients, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately and ensure that all records are kept securely, separate from the main file and in locked locations.

c) Follow our Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer and ensure West Berks. model policy advice is part of this process. (berks.proceduresonline.com)

d) Ensure safe recruitment and selection practices are always followed (see Counsellor Recruitment, Employee Recruitment and DBS Check Policies).

3.3 We recognise that clients who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. The organisation may be among the few secure and predictable elements in the lives of clients at risk. The organisation will endeavour to support the client through:

a) Supporting clients through counselling sessions.

b) Offer a positive, supportive and secure environment and give clients a sense of being valued.

c) Through the counselling the organisation will ensure clients know some behaviour is unacceptable, but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.

d) When, and if appropriate, liaise and work with other agencies that support the client such as Family Support Worker, Social Services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, Education Welfare Service and Educational Psychology Service.

4. Procedures

4.1 For Time to Talk's Child Protection and Risk Assessment Procedure please refer to the separate Procedure document.

4.2 This policy is in line with guidance from the following sources:

a) Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures (berks.proceduresonline.com)

b) Keeping Children Safe in Education (see Appendix 2)

c) What To Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused (see Appendix

- 2)
- d) Working Together to Safeguard Children (see Appendix 2)
- e) Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 (see Appendix 2)
- 4.3 Staff and volunteers are kept informed about child protection responsibilities and procedures through induction, briefings and awareness training. The Clinical Lead will ensure they are aware of the organisation's policy and the identity of the Designated Child Protection Person.
- 4.4 Any member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the organisation who receives a disclosure of abuse, an allegation or suspects that abuse may have occurred must report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Person (see Appendix 1) or in their absence, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Person (see Appendix 1). In the absence of either of the above, the matter should be brought to the attention of the most senior member of staff or the designated trustee.
- 4.5 The Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Person or their Deputy will immediately refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Duty Social Worker Referral and Assessment Team, West Street House, West Street Newbury. (See Appendix 1)
- 4.6 Essential information to be provided will include the clients name, date of birth, the reason for the referral, whether the client's parents/ guardians are aware of the referral, the name of person who initially received the disclosure plus any advice given. A telephone referral to the Referral and Assessment Team – in cases where there are immediate safeguarding concerns - should be confirmed in writing within 24 hours. This written confirmation must be signed and dated by the referrer.
- 4.7 The organisation will always undertake to share our intention to refer a client to the Referral and Assessment Team with the parents or carers unless to do so could place the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. On these occasions advice will be taken from the Referral and Assessment Team.

5. Training and Support

- 5.1 The Clinical Lead and all other staff and volunteers who work with clients will undertake appropriate child protection awareness training to equip them to carry out their responsibilities for child protection effectively, that is kept up to date by refresher training at three yearly intervals as set out in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES2006.
- 5.2 The organisation will ensure that the Designated Safeguarding and Child Protection Person also undertakes training in inter-agency working and refresher training at two yearly intervals to keep knowledge and skills up to date. Volunteers who work with clients in the organisation will be made aware

of the organisation's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their responsibilities.

- 5.3 Support will be available for staff and volunteers from the Clinical Lead in the first instance. All staff and volunteers will have access to advice and guidance on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour and conduct – see the Code of Conduct.

6. Professional Confidentiality

- 6.1 Issues of confidentiality are dealt with under our Confidentiality Policy.

7. Records and Monitoring

- 7.1 Well-kept records are essential to good child protection practice. Our organisation is clear about the need to record any concern held about a client using our service, the status of such records and when these records should be passed over to other agencies.
- 7.2 Any member of staff/volunteer receiving a disclosure of abuse or noticing signs or indicators of abuse, must make an accurate record as soon as possible noting what was said or seen, putting the event in context, and giving the date, time and location. All records will be dated and signed and will include the action taken.
- 7.3 These file notes are kept in a confidential file, which is separate to other files, and stored in a lockable filing cabinet. The safeguarding log is kept securely on the T2T network, only accessible to the safeguarding team.

8. Supporting Clients at Risk

- 8.1 Our organisation recognises that clients who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth or view the world as a positive place. This organisation may be one of the few secure and predictable contacts in the lives. This organisation will endeavour to support all clients through times of disclosure.

9. Allegations Against Staff Procedure

- 9.1 It is essential that the high standards of concern and professional responsibility adopted with regard to alleged child abuse by parents/carers/others are similarly displayed when members of staff are accused of abuse.
- 9.2 Only authorised agencies may investigate child abuse allegations (Social Care Services, the Police or in some areas, the NSPCC). Whilst it is permissible to ask the child simple, non-leading questions to ascertain the facts of the allegation, formal interviews and the taking of statements is not.
- 9.3 The organisation will follow the West Berkshire procedures in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff as set out in Berkshire Child Protection Procedures, available from West Berkshire Council. (berks.proceduresonline.com)

- 9.4 The Clinical Lead or another Senior Manager should in the first instance contact the Local Authority Designated Person (LADP). Through discussion and consultation, a decision will be made whether to hold an Allegation Strategy Meeting. Where the allegation is against the Senior Manager the Chair of Trustees will take this action.
- 9.5 If for any reason it is decided that an Allegations Strategy Meeting is not appropriate, it may be necessary to address matters in accordance with the organisation's disciplinary procedures.

10. Whistleblowing

- 10.1 This is dealt with under our Whistleblowing Policy.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 12.1 Implementation and day to day working of this policy will be monitored by the Designated Person who will liaise with the Trustees and bring to their attention any concerns that the Policy is not being adhered to, or any changes required arising from changes to statutory guidance.

Legislation relating to this policy:

Children Act 1989/2004

Education Act 1996

School standards & Framework Act 1998 Education Act 2002 s175

Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DCSF guidance 11/06

Appendix 1

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Deputy Designated Persons	Steve Vardy (07768 024940 or 01635 42124) Kate Adams (07971 857191)
Nominated Trustee	Miss Elizabeth O’Keeffe

Key Contacts within the Local Authority

	Name	Address	Telephone contact	Email
Contact, Advice & Assessment Service (CAAS)	Duty Social worker	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	Professionals only contact number: 01635 503190 Parents only Contact number: 01635 503090 Social Care - Emergency Duty Team (outside of office hours): 01344 351999 Safeguarding – Emergency Duty Team (outside of office hours): 01344 786512 Fax: 01344 786535	child@westberks.gov.uk adultcare@westberks.gov.uk
Prevent Officer Thames Valley Police	Prevent Officer	Reading Police Station, Castle Street, Reading RG1 7TH	07800 702319 0118 953 6000 Prevent advice line (National) - 0800 011 3764	preventreferralswestberkshire@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

	Name	Address	Telephone contact	Email
Building Communities Together Team Manager and PREVENT Lead, WBC	Susan Powell	CEO & Support West Berkshire Council 20 Mill Lane, Newbury, RG14 5QU	(01635) 264703 07881 856801	susan.powell@westberks.gov.uk www.westberks.gov.uk
Service Manager for Early Years, Vulnerable Learners, and Families	Avril Allenby	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	01635 519014	Avril.Allenby@westberks.gov.uk
Principal Education Welfare Officer, Lead Officer in Education for Safeguarding, and PREVENT Link for Education	Linda Curtis	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	01635 519788	Linda.curtis@westberks.gov.uk
Schools Safeguarding Officer	Joan Ball	Council Offices, Turnhams Green Park, Pincents Lane, Calcot, Reading West Berkshire RG31 4UH	01189 167770 01635 551111	joan.ball@westberks.gov.uk
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Contact can be made via CAAS	Fiona Goussard	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	via CAAS on 01635 503190	cpadmin@westberks.gov.uk or cpadmin@westberks.gcsx.gov.uk
Senior Education Welfare Officer	Sally-Ann Looker	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	01635 519788	sal.looker@westberks.gov.uk

	Name	Address	Telephone contact	Email
Exclusions Officer	Roslyn Arthur	Council Offices West Street House West Street Newbury Berkshire RG14 1BD	01635 503409	roslyn.arthur@westberks.gov.uk

Appendix 2: Links to government guidance

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education – March 2015**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children - March 2015**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

- **What to do if you're worried a child is being abused**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>

- **Safeguarding children and young people and young vulnerable adults**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-safeguarding-policy>

- **Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004**