

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

THE BRONTE YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY STATEMENT

Our aim at The Bronte is to create a safe and welcoming space for all children and young people to explore their interests and identity, as well as to develop socially and emotionally. We aim to prevent abuse wherever possible.

The Bronte is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, and our Governing document is our Memorandum and Articles of Association. We act as a Unitary Board that consists of Trustees, Advisors, Secretary and Senior Staff, operating as a singular and interdependent team with clear accountabilities and shared decision-making.

Our registered Charity No. is 1131577

The Bronte has been delivering Youth and Community services in the same location in St Andrews Community, in the heart of Liverpool City Centre for over 50 years. Our main aim is to provide a facility and service to children and young people within the local community. We provide a welcoming, friendly, and safe environment, with the aim to encourage children and young people to learn new skills, meet new friends, build confidence and make a positive contribution within the community. In addition to the evening youth club activities, we organise regular residential trips for the children and young people. This involves young people not only participating in the residentials but being fully involved in all aspects of the planning and delivery of the event, ensuring positive outcomes along with opportunities to acquire new skills and experiences, have lots of fun and enjoyment whilst creating some special lifelong memories.

Alongside our youth provision, we strive to provide a community hub for the local and wider community to socialise and get support such as Food Banks and coffee mornings, along with combating social isolation. We provide an inclusive, welcoming, safe, and friendly environment to all.

We will work with other organisations to carry out robust procedures to deal with abuse in line with the [NSPCC Safeguarding Children and Young people](#) guidance. This will enable us to be consistent and as effective as possible in dealing with any concerns or complaints.

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children in England including [“Working together to Safeguard children 2023”](#) and [“The Care Act 2014”](#) which is specifically for those we work with aged 18 and over and [“The Children’s 2004”](#) which promotes and protects the rights of children in England.

The purpose of this policy statement is:

- To protect children and young people who receive The Bronte’s services from harm. This includes the children of adults who use our services.
- To provide staff and volunteers, as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of The Bronte, including paid staff, volunteers, and trustees.

WE BELIEVE THAT...

- We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that keeps them safe.
- We believe that everyone has the right to live their lives free from violence, fear, and abuse as well as to be protected from harm and exploitation.
- Children have the right to express themselves (in whatever way is appropriate for their age and stage of development) and to have their views listened to.
- Children shall be treated as individuals and are entitled to dignity and respect.
- Children have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives.

WE RECOGNISE THAT...

- The welfare of children is paramount in all the work we do and in all the decisions that we take.
- All children, regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation have an equal right to protection from all types of harm and abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs and or issues.
- Extra safeguards may be needed to keep children who are additionally vulnerable safe from abuse.

OUR COMMITMENT...

- We are committed to working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, careers, and other agencies as this is essential in promoting young people's welfare.
- All staff, volunteers, and trustees will value, listen to and respect children and young people.
- All staff, volunteers, and trustees will adopt child protection and safeguarding best practice through our policies, procedures, and code of conduct.
- Line managers will provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures, and behaviour codes confidently and competently.
- Trustees will recruit and select staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made.
- All staff and volunteers will record, store, and use information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.

- All staff and volunteers will share information about safeguarding and good practice with children and young people and their families via leaflets, posters, group work and one-to-one discussions.
- All staff and volunteers will make sure children, young people and their families know where to go for help if they have a concern.
- The DSL will use our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involve children, young people, families, and carers appropriately.
- The DSL will use our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- Staff and volunteers will create and maintain an anti-bullying environment and ensure that we have a policy to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does occur.
- Trustees will ensure that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place.
- All staff and volunteers will ensure that we have a safe physical environment for children, young people, and anyone else by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
- All staff, volunteers, and trustees will maintain a culture where children, young people, and their families are comfortable sharing concerns.

STAFF RATIOS

When working with groups of children and young people there must be enough adults to provide the appropriate level of supervision. We are committed to the guidance provided by the NSPCC which recommends having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people. Supervision levels will vary depending on the children's age, behaviour, and abilities with each group. They will also vary depending on:

- The nature and duration of activities.
- The competence and experience of the staff involved.
- The requirements of location, accommodation, or organisation.
- Any special medical needs.
- Any specialist equipment needed.

We will carry out a risk assessment of the planned activities, taking these issues into consideration. This will help us to make decisions about how many adults we need and what skills and experience they should have.

Staff and volunteers need to have:

- An understanding of their responsibility to keep children and young people safe.
- Clear procedures to follow if they have a concern about a child's wellbeing.
- Insurance for certain activities.
- A code of conduct which they understand and agree to follow.

Parents who attend activities with their children should not be used to supervise other children unless they have been recruited into the role, undergone the necessary checks and had the relevant child protection training.

General guidance from the NSPCC suggests:

- 4-8 years: one adult to six children
- 9-12 years: one adult to eight children
- 13-18: one adult to ten children

The Bronte will have, at a minimum, two members of staff on a session to minimise the risk of young people not being adequately supervised.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

All Youth work staff are subject to receipt of two good references and an Enhanced DBS Check prior to starting work at the Bronte Centre. Applicants are notified via the application process that a DBS check will be undertaken and if they do not give permission for this then their application will not be taken any further.

The original DBS Check certificate is to be handed to the Line Manager and stored on their personnel file. The applicant/employee is given a copy for their reference.

If a DBS check comes back that is not clear, a risk assessment is undertaken and if any risks can be managed, approval of the Trustee Safeguarding lead is sought prior to confirmation of appointment.

At Induction new employees are asked for copies of their training certificates for completion of their training log. Any training that is considered to be mandatory by The Bronte must be up to date or undertaken during their probationary period. The Line Manager will advise the employee of this.

All other staff on site are subject to a Basic DBS check prior to appointment confirmation and starting work.

STAFF TRAINING

As an organisation, we are committed to ensuring our staff, volunteers and trustees have the appropriate and relevant training to complete their role to the highest standards.

All paid staff working with young people are to have, at a minimum, intermediate Safeguarding training provided by the National Youth Agency which is to be reviewed annually.

Volunteers, trustees, and other staff (e.g. admin staff) are to have basic Safeguarding training provided by the National Youth Agency which is to be reviewed annually.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSL will have more in depth Safeguarding training that will help them perform their roles and responsibilities.

We are committed to having at a minimum of two staff members trained in first aid and use of the defibrillator. We will ensure that our Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads are trained to the relevant and appropriate level in line with their roles and responsibilities.

RESPONDING TO A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN

If any staff member, volunteer, or trustee has reason to believe that a child is being abused, they must discuss this with the designated safeguarding lead immediately and a decision should be taken on action to prevent further abuse in line with this policy. All staff and volunteers must be aware of the procedures to follow when dealing with urgent child protection cases.

HOW YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW HOW TO AND WHO TO REPORT CONCERNS TO

We ensure that the children and young people we work with know how to and who to report any concerns or issues with by clearly displaying posters explaining the process in a child friendly manner. We also regularly engage in casual conversations with young people around this topic as well as partake in activities that explain it in a clear way.

WHAT TO DO IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE TO A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

The person receiving the disclosure will:

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is being disclosed.
- Offer support without offering any immediate decisions.
- Reassure the child that they were right to disclose what happened, that the abuse is not their fault and that they will be taken seriously.
- Explain to the child that confidentiality cannot be maintained.
- Tell the child what action is likely to be taken, who will be informed and what process will happen.
- If the young person is hurt or is at immediate risk of harm, contact the police and ambulance service.
- Discuss this with the named member of staff (DSL) responsible for dealing with child protection issues, who will decide on an appropriate course of action.
- Keep a written factual record of the disclosure and subsequent action using an incident form which can be found at the [bottom](#) of this policy, or a hard copy stored in the Bronte staff office in the folder called “safeguarding incident report forms”. This form is to be handed to or emailed directly to the DSL upon completion and within 24 hours of the disclosure.

ENSURING THAT EVIDENCE IS NOT CONTAMINATED

The Bronte is aware of the danger of contaminating evidence, especially when dealing with young children and particularly in cases involving allegations of sexual abuse or gross physical abuse. For this reason, we will:

- Give the child time and reassurance so s/he can say what has happened in his/her own words.
- Avoid asking repeated questions.
- Avoid asking intrusive or leading questions.
- Avoid making judgmental comments.
- Avoid jumping to conclusions a) by asking who the child is talking about (e.g. “Dad” may refer to a stepfather), and b) by checking the meaning of any words that are unclear.
- Avoid further discussion of the abuse with the child and without delay talk to the staff member responsible for child protection and possibly also social services if a decision to refer is made.
- A written record must be given to the safeguarding lead.

DSL RESPONDING TO A CONCERN

The DSL will receive the safeguarding concern and then take the following actions:

- The DSL will decide if the child or young person requires a referral, if yes, the DSL will contact Liverpool MARF.
- If the concern is an allegation against another staff member, the DSL will contact Liverpool LADO.
- If the DSL is unsure about if the child or young person requires a referral, they should contact the NSPCC helpline for guidance (**NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000**) or, the DSL will directly ask the contact already established within Liverpool MARF.
- The DSL will then record the reason for either referring or not referring.
- The DSL will then inform the child or young person’s parent or guardian so long as they are not the perpetrator of the abuse.
- The DSL will record all decisions with reasons as to why they made them as well as any other additional information.
- All this information will be stored in line with GDPR guidance (more information on this can be found in our GDPR policy). If there are physical copies of this information, it will be stored in the staff office, in a locked filing cabinet that only the DSL and Deputy DSL will have access to.

IF THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A CHILD IS AT RISK OF SEXUAL ABUSE

In these circumstances it is essential to seek specialist advice from social services. It is inappropriate for the organisation to investigate such circumstances.

Children who have been sexually abused frequently feel very guilty and confused. It is important to reassure the child that the abuse is not his/her fault.

The parent should be made aware of any action The Bronte takes if they are not the perpetrator of this abuse.

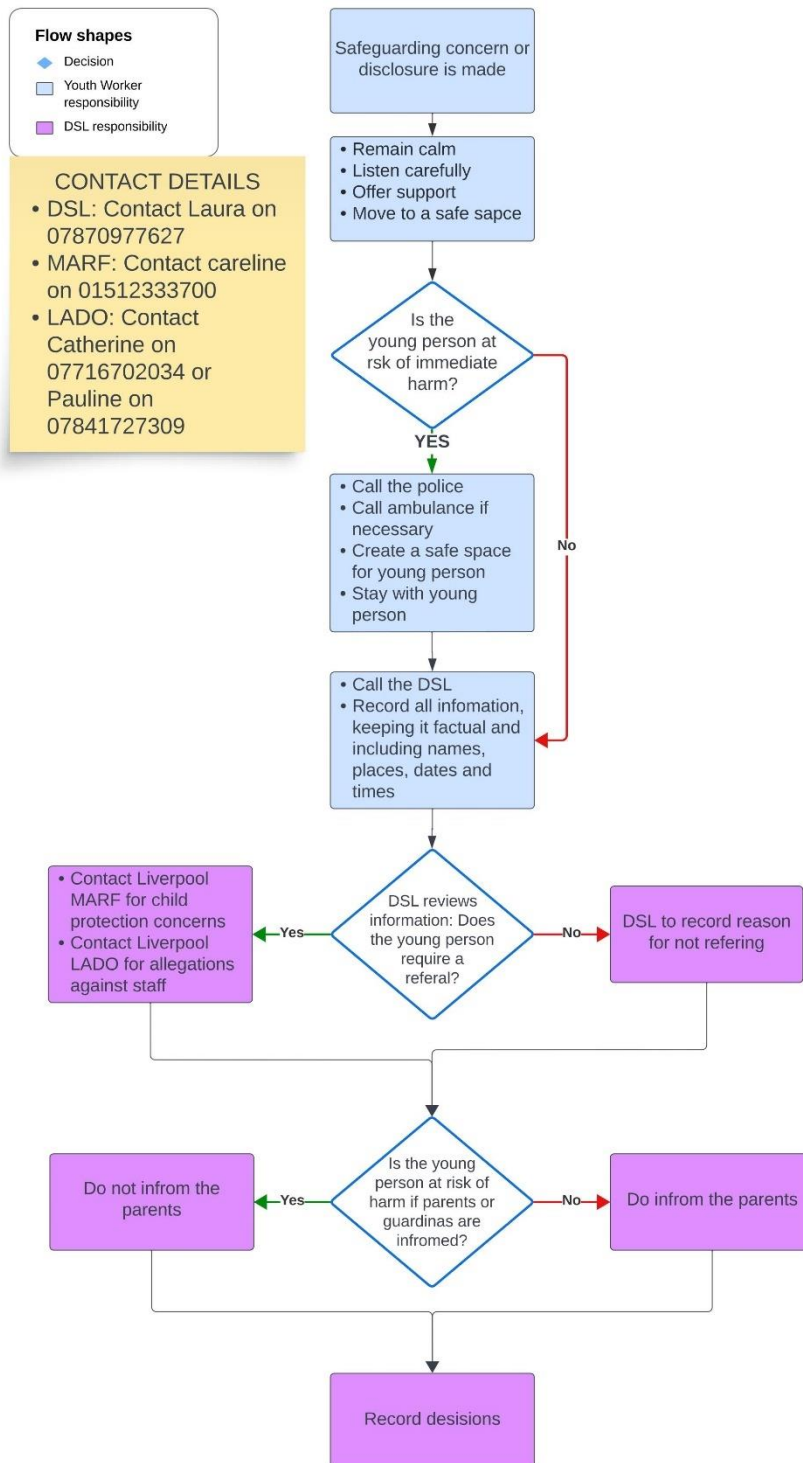
ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF

Any allegations against staff should be reported to Liverpool LADO by the DSL. If the allegation is towards the DSL, then staff should report this to the deputy DSL who will go on to report this to LADO. Please refer to our “Managing allegations against staff” policy for more information regarding this topic.

LADO Contact information:

Catherine: 077167020034 OR Pauline: 07841727309

SAFEGUARDING CONCERN REPORTING PROCEDURE FLOW CHART



GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate.

- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people/disabled adults with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before achieving goals or winning.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room or office with them).
- Building relationships based on mutual trust, which empowers children to share in the decision-making process.
- Listen to what a child is saying.
- Valuing each child or young person's contributions.
- Making activities fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play, without prejudice.
- Ensuring that if any form of manual/physical support is required, it should be provided openly and appropriately. Care is needed, as it is difficult to position hands appropriately in certain circumstances. Young people should ideally be consulted, and their agreement gained where possible. Some parents are becoming increasingly sensitive about manual support and their views should always be carefully considered.
- Involving parents or carers whenever appropriate. For example, engaging them to take responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups must be supervised in the changing rooms, try to ensure that parents, instructors, or volunteers work in pairs.
- Ensuring that where possible, a male and female member of staff should always accompany mixed groups. However, remember that same-gender abuse can also occur.
- Being an excellent role model – this includes not smoking or drinking alcohol in the company of young people.
- Giving enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Recognising the developmental needs and capacity of young people with and without disabilities – avoiding excessive physical activity or competition and not pushing them against their will.
- Keeping a written record of any incident or accident that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC/FILMING AND DIGITAL IMAGING EQUIPMENT

All staff and volunteers should be vigilant to ensure that events are not used as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or film footage of young and disabled people in vulnerable positions, and any concerns should be reported to the safeguarding lead.

At The Bronte, we use photography and filming as an aid to show the public what activities the children and young people have been doing within the organisation. Please refer to our Photography and Sharing Images Policy to understand how we keep children and young people safe during this process.

APPENDIX

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

Safeguarding means:

- protecting children from abuse and maltreatment.
- preventing harm to children's health or development.
- ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care.
- taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures which detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

All members of this organisation must adhere to this policy.

The development of the child protection policy will be ongoing, and will be supported by appropriate training, monitoring, and evaluation. This policy will be reviewed annually.

The Child Protection policy underpins the work of the organisation which aims to enable the children and young people using the project to be safe, secure, and protected.

The organisation will ensure that appropriate contacts including Childline, NSPCC Child Protection Helpline and OFSTED are displayed in accessible location within the organisation.

Four main areas of abuse:

- **Physical** abuse includes hitting, kicking, and punching and may even lead to death.
- **Emotional** abuse includes degrading punishments, threats and withholding love and affection, which can undermine a child or young person's confidence. All abuse involves some element of emotional mistreatment.
- **Neglect** occurs when basic needs such as food, warmth and medical care are not met.
- **Sexual** abuse includes all forms of sexual activity where children and young people are sexually exploited. This includes rape and oral sex. It also means inappropriate touching e.g. of the young person's genitals or breasts but extends to any touching or involvement in activities with which the child feels uncomfortable or which could be damaging.

Some common signs that there may be something concerning happening in a child's life include:

- Unexplained changes in behaviour or personality.
- Becoming withdrawn.
- Seeming anxious.
- Becoming uncharacteristically aggressive.
- Lacks social skills and has few friends if any.

- Poor bond or relationship with a parent.
- Knowledge of adult issues inappropriate for their age.
- Running away or going missing/
- Always choosing to wear clothes which cover their body.

For more information on possible signs of abuse, click [here](#).

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisations policies, procedures, guidance, and other related documents:

- DSL role description.
- Code of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Photography and sharing images guidance.
- Online safety.
- Anti-bullying.
- Whistleblowing.

KEY

NSPCC	National society for the prevention of cruelty to children
DSL	Designated safeguarding lead
OFSTED	Office for standards in education, children’s services, and skills
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
MARF	Multi-agency referral form
HAF	Holiday Activities and Food

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

DSL	Contact Laura Cain on: 07870977627 Email on: Laura.cain@thebronte.org
DEPUTY DSL	Contact Lesley Lee on: 07841053137 Email on: Lesley.lee@thebronte.org
NSPCC HELPLINE	NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000
LIVERPOOL LADO	Contact Catherine on: 077167020034 OR contact Pauline on: 07841727309 What is the LADO and what do they do? (liverpoolscp.org.uk)
LIVERPOOL MARF	Contact Careline on: 01512333700 Children at risk (MARF referrals) - Liverpool City Council

SAFEGUARDING DISCLOSURE/CONCERN FORM

This form should be completed by the worker who has been disclosed to, or who was witness to a concern. Once completed it must be submitted directly to the **Laura Cain** within 24 hours of the disclosure/incident. If unavailable, submit this form to **Lesley Lee**. Please complete this form in **pen** if being submitted in writing. See contact details on last page.

Name of person completing this form and role:	
Date form completed:	

Details of child or young person at risk:

Name:	
Date of Birth:	
Gender:	
Any further information:	

Parents/carers details:

Name:	
Address:	
Contact Number:	
Email Address:	
Have Parents/Carers been notified of the incident or concern?	
If no, please state why:	

Details of reporter:

Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else?	Reporting my own concerns	
	Responding to someone else's concerns	

Reporter Details:

If responding to someone else's concerns, please provide their details below:

Name:	
Relationship to child/young person or adult at risk:	
Contact Number:	
Email Address:	

Incident Details:

Date and time of disclosure/concern:	
Programme/Group name:	
Location of disclosure/concern:	

Description of the disclosure or concern: (continue on separate sheet if necessary).
Include specific and factual information, names, dates, times, and all information about the harm that has occurred. Directly quote the young person's words if remembered. Include who else was present for the disclosure.

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Details of any previous concerns, incidents, or relevant safeguarding records

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Details of any witnesses

Consider anonymising where this will not negatively impact the ability to take immediate response actions.

Name:	
Relationship to child/young person or adult at risk:	
Contact Details:	

Details of any persons involved in the incident or alleged to have caused the incident, injury or presenting risk:

Consider anonymising where this will not negatively impact the ability to take immediate response actions.

Name:	
Relationship to child/young person or adult at risk:	
Contact Details:	

Notes:

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Outcome of incident & immediate actions taken:

Outcome of event & immediate actions taken: tick box where relevant	
Ambulance required:	
Police/ Fire/ Rescue required:	
First aid treatment provided and by whom:	
Medication administered:	
Disciplinary procedures enacted:	
Notes:	

Signed By Author:	Name:	Date:
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Reporting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) section: (to be completed by DSL)

Name of notified DSL:	
Date and time DSL notified of incident/concern:	
Date & time this form passed on to DSL (if different from above):	

DSL Comments

Actions taken / impact on rest of programme / external agency involvement / initial lessons learned / follow-up actions required:

External Agency Referral

Social Services notified:	Y/N
Date and time of referral:	
Name of contact person:	
Contact Number and Email:	
Agreed action or advice given below:	
Notes:	

LADO notified:	Y/N
Date and time of referral:	
Name of contact person:	
Contact Number and Email:	
Agreed action or advice given below:	
Notes:	

MARF notified:	Y/N
Date and time of referral:	
Name of contact person:	
Contact Number and Email:	

Agreed action or advice given below:	
Notes:	

Other referral made	Y/N
Agency:	
Date and time of referral:	
Name of contact person:	
Contact Number and Email:	
Agreed action or advice given below:	
Notes:	

Signed By DSL:	Name:	Date:

For Office Use Only:

Follow-up action required:		
Action:	Due date:	Whom responsible:

POLICY REVIEW DATE

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on:(date)

Signed:

[this should be signed by the most senior person with responsibility for safeguarding in your organisation, for example the safeguarding lead on your board of trustees].

Date: