

# **BELIEVE IN YOU TEENS LTD CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY**



This policy was first adopted on 5th December 2018

This policy was last reviewed on 16th August 2024

This policy is due for review on 16th August 2030

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## **General Policy Statement**

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. The Chief Executive will ensure that Believe in You Limited safeguards and promotes the welfare of young people and has adequate arrangements to identify, assess and support those children who are suffering or likely to suffer harm. Believe in You Limited provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of young people. We understand the importance of providing an environment that will help young people feel safe and respected. We recognise the importance of enabling young people to talk openly and to feel confident that they will be listened to. We recognise that all adults within the educational establishment, including staff and volunteers have a full and active part to play in protecting our young people from harm.

The policy will be reviewed annually and revised where necessary.

## **Scope of this Policy**

In line with the law, this policy defines a child as anyone under the age of 18 years. This policy applies to all members of staff at Believe in You Limited, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers and activity providers.

## **Legal Framework**

Under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, all maintained establishments and independent establishments, including free educational establishments and academies, are required to cooperate with the local authority to improve the well-being of children in the local area.

Under section 14B of the Children Act 2004, the Local Safeguarding Children Board can require an establishment institution to supply information in order to perform its functions. This must be complied with.

This policy and the accompanying procedure have been developed in accordance with the following statutory guidance and local safeguarding procedures:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children, July 2018
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2023
- Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures - <https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Chief Executive of Believe in You Limited has the overall responsibility for child protection and safe guarding. This is achieved through training and upholding good practice. Any allegations made against staff members will be dealt with by the Chief Executive, who is responsible for updating and managing this policy. The Chief Executive will ensure that this policy has been adopted by all staff at Believe in You Limited, and sufficient time and resources have been allocated to staff to discuss their child guarding responsibilities. All staff members at Believe in You Limited have a responsibility to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and know how to respond to a disclosure and what to do in the case of a concerned child. New members of staff and volunteers will be given induction that includes basic child protection training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, online safety and familiarisation with the safeguarding and child protection policy.

## **Supporting the Child**

Believe in You Limited recognises that children who are abused or witness violence are likely to have low self-esteem and may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helpless, humiliated and some sense of blame. Our service may be the only stable and secure aspect of their lives. We accept that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Believe in You Limited will support all young people by:

- Ensuring social and emotional aspects of life are considered during sessions.
- Ensuring young people understand online safety and learn the risks of social media platforms.
- Ensuring child protection is considered during all sessions to ensure young people are safe.
- Look for signs that a young person may feel unsafe and discuss who they may speak to.
- Ensuring young people know who they can approach if they have a concern.
- Supporting the development of young people through increased security, confidence and independence.
- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and self-assertiveness while not condoning aggression or bullying.
- Ensuring repeated hate incidents, e.g. racist, homophobic or gender- or disability-based bullying, are considered under child protection procedures.
- Liaising and working together with other support services and those agencies involved in safeguarding young people.
- Monitoring young people who has been identified as having welfare or protection concerns and providing appropriate support.

- Ensuring that all staff understand the additional safeguarding issues of young people with special educational needs and disabilities and how to address them.

## **Record Keeping**

Good record keeping is important to Believe in You Limited and we understand that records must be accurate, relevant, up to date and factual. All child protection and welfare concerns, discussions and decisions made will be recorded in writing and kept in line with the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance Keeping Records of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns Guidance for Early Years Settings, Schools and Colleges.

We will continue to support any young person leaving Believe in You sessions that have shown concerns by ensuring that all appropriate information, including child protection and welfare concerns, are confidentially forwarded as a matter of urgency.

## **Managing Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers**

Believe in You Limited will prevent people who pose risks to young people from working for us by ensuring that all individuals working in any capacity to our young people have been subjected to safeguarding checks in line with the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Educational establishments and Colleges, September 2023.

Sometimes the behaviour of adults can lead to an allegation of abuse being made. Allegations can sometimes arise from a different understanding of the same event, this can cause distress and difficulty for the young person involved. However, many allegations are genuine and there are some adults who are deliberately abusing or harming children. If an allegation is made or information is received about an adult who works in our setting which indicates that they may be unsuitable to work with children, the member of staff receiving the information should inform the Chief Executive immediately.

Believe in You Limited have produced a flow chart support guide which will be followed in such circumstances.

## **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Believe in You Limited recognises that all matters relating to child protection are confidential. Disclosure of information will be done on a need to know basis only and with the best interests of the young person in mind. All staff members are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep a secret regarding a child protection issue. All staff members have a responsibility to share information to safe guard a child.

## **Activity Providers or External Companies**

Believe in You Limited use external activity providers to enhance the development of young people. We fully ensure that all external activity providers are aware of this policy and know who to report concerns to. We ensure that all activity providers and external companies used in sessions are subjected to the appropriate level of safeguarding check in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, September 2023.

## **Whistle Blowing and Complaints**

Believe in You Limited fully support staff and provide a safe environment for raising concerns. All staff members are aware they must raise concerns about safe guarding issues even if this alters the attitude or relationship with colleagues. All concerns are raised confidentially and safely and are passed to the Chief Executive who will raise concerns with the Local Authority Designation Officer, if required. If Believe in You Limited staff feel unable to raise concerns through the Chief Executive, the NSPCC Whistle Blowing helpline can be reached 24 hours a day on 0800 028 0285.

## Supporting Staff Facing Allegations of Abuse

The following are contact details of organisations who will be able to support you if an allegation of abuse has been made against you:

- Natalie Greenall – Chief Executive & DSL Believe in You Limited

07928262748

- Amanda Glover – Local Authority Designated Officer

amanda.glover@eastsussex.gov.uk.

07825 782793

- The National Education Union

info@atl.org.uk

0345 811 8111

- Your Trade Union Representative

## Child Protection and Safe Guarding Policy Review

Believe in You Limited recognises that this Child Protection and Safe Guarding Policy is a working document and will continually monitor and update regularly in line with advice from the Local Authority Designation Officer and Local Education Authority. Believe in You staff also take responsibility in highlighting potential weaknesses within our child protection and safeguarding policy and encourage staff to provide input and feedback.

## Appendix A – Local Education Authority Guidelines

### Abuse Definitions

**Abuse**, including neglect, is a form of maltreatment. A person may abuse or neglect child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused within their family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them, or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children. Children are any people who have not yet reached their 18th birthday; a 16-year-old, whether living independently, in further education, in the armed forces or in hospital, is a child and is entitled to the same protection and services as anyone younger.

**Child protection** is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and refers to activity undertaken

to protect specific children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Early help** means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years to teenage years.

**Harm** is ill treatment or impairment of health and development, including impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another.

**Safeguarding children** is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children* (July 2018) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Significant harm** is the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in the family in the best interests of the child. Section 31 of the Children Act 1989 states 'where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health or development, his health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.'

## Categories of Abuse

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such that it causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve:

- Making a child feel worthless, unloved or inadequate
- Only there to meet another's needs
- Inappropriate age or developmental expectations
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration, learning and social interaction
- Seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another, e.g. domestic abuse
- Making the child feel worthless and unloved - high criticism and low warmth
- Serious bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Exploitation or corruption

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once a child is born, it may involve a parent 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 care givers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

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

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Activities may involve physical contact, including penetration of any part of the body, or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children looking at or in the production of sexual images, including on the internet, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

**Child sexual exploitation** is also sexual abuse; it involves children and young people receiving something, for example accommodation, drugs, gifts or affection, as a result of them performing sexual activities, or having others perform sexual activities on them. It could take the form of grooming of children, e.g. to take part in sexual activities or to post sexual images of themselves on the internet.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

## Further Information

### Child Sexual Exploitation

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Some of the following signs may be indicators of sexual exploitation:

- Children who appear with unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who associate with other young people involved in exploitation
- Children who have older boyfriends or girlfriends
- Children who suffer from sexually transmitted infections or become pregnant
- Children who suffer from changes in emotional well-being
- Children who misuse drugs and alcohol
- Children who go missing for periods of time or regularly come home late
- Children who regularly miss educational establishment

Due to the nature of the grooming methods used by their abusers, it is very common for children and young people who are sexually exploited not to recognise that they are being abused. Practitioners should be aware that young people particularly aged 17 and 18 may believe themselves to be acting voluntarily and will need practitioners to work with them so they can recognise that they are being sexually exploited.

### Domestic Violence

The definition of “domestic violence and abuse” was updated by the Home Office in March 2013 to include the reality that many young people are experiencing domestic abuse and violence in relationships at a young age. They may therefore be children in need or likely to suffer significant harm. The latest definition from the Home Office is as follows:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Emotional

Staff should be aware that any disclosures made by children may have a background in domestic abuse and that this abuse may be part of an overall pattern of abuse or violence towards women and girls in the family. That said domestic abuse can also be experienced by males and assumptions should not be made based on the gender of perpetrators of domestic abuse.

## Online Safety

Staff are encouraged to report their concerns if they believe that children are using the internet, mobile technology or social media inappropriately (e.g. sexting). In some extreme cases the Police may become involved if a child is at risk of exploitation due to their use of the internet or social media. Consequently staff must report concerns in a timely way so that advice and support can be sought.

## Preventing Radicalisation

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities, including local authorities and childcare, education and other children's services providers, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This came into force on 1 July 2015. The Prevent duty directs inspectors to examine an educational establishment's response to extremist behaviour when considering the behaviour and safety of pupils, as well as the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the educational establishment in preventing extremism.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 also places a duty on local authorities to ensure Channel panels are in place. The panel must include the local authority and chief officer of the local police. Panels will assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism, following a referral from the police and where considered appropriate and necessary consent is obtained, arrange for support to be provided to those individuals. The Act will require partners of Channel panels to co-operate with the panel in the carrying out of its functions and with the police in undertaking the initial assessment as to whether a referral is appropriate.

**Channel Training.** 'Channel' is the name for the process of referring a person for early intervention and support, including:

- Identifying people at risk of being drawn into terrorism
- Assessing the nature and extent of that risk, and
- Developing the most appropriate support plan for the people concerned.

The Channel process is about safeguarding children, young people and adults from being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from risk before a crime occurs.

Prevent is the pan-Sussex strategy for preventing vulnerable people from being radicalised into violent extremism: The pan Sussex Prevent describes partner's (including educational establishments) role in the Prevent agenda:

#### Sharing with colleagues

- Promote awareness of the PREVENT strategy within your organisation and partners, including the local risks, roles and responsibilities involved in its delivery
- Ensure colleagues and partners are aware of how to report any potentially relevant information or concerns
- Promote an understanding amongst colleagues and partners of how to identify indicators of terrorism
- Promote an understanding amongst colleagues and partners of how to identify potential signs of individual vulnerability to radicalisation.
- Indicators of terrorist activity

### Self-harm and suicidal behaviour

Self harm, self mutilation, eating disorders, suicide threats and gestures by a child must always be taken seriously and may be indicative of a serious mental or emotional disturbance.

### Sexting

Sexting among children and young people can be a common occurrence, where they often describe these incidents as 'mundane'. Children involved in sexting incidents will be dealt with by the police as victims as opposed to perpetrators, unless there are mitigating circumstances. The DSL should record all incidents of sexting. This should include both the actions taken and the actions not taken, together with justifications. In applying judgement to the sexting incident consider the following:

- Significant age difference between the sender/receiver involved
- If there is any external coercion involved or encouragement beyond the sender/receiver.
- If you recognise the child as more vulnerable than is usual.
- If the image is of a severe or extreme nature.
- If the situation is not isolated and the image has been more widely distributed.
- If this is not the first time children have been involved in a sexting act
- If other knowledge of either the sender or recipient may add cause for concern.

### Recognition of Abuse

In an abusive relationship, the child may:

- Appear frightened of their parent(s)
- Act in a way that is inappropriate to their age and development, although full account needs to be taken of different patterns of development and different ethnic groups

In an abusive relationship, the parent or carer may:

- Persistently avoid child health services and treatment of the child's illnesses • Have unrealistic expectations of the child
- Frequently complain about or to the child and fail to provide attention or praise
- Be absent
- Be misusing substances



- Persistently refuse to allow access on home visits by professionals
- Be involved in domestic violence and abuse
- Be socially isolated

Serious case reviews have found that parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and mental health problems, sometimes referred to as the 'toxic trio', if they coexist in a family could mean significant risks to children. Problems can be compounded by poverty, frequent house moves or eviction.

- Staff should be aware that children with special educational needs and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges including:
  - Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability
  - Children with special educational needs and disabilities are particularly vulnerable to bullying and often show no outward signs
  - Communication issues can be a barrier to effective safeguarding

## Dealing With a Disclosure Made by a Child

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of staff or volunteer should follow this guidance.

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Only ask questions when necessary to clarify.
- Accept what is being said.
- Allow the child to talk freely – do not put words in the child's mouth.
- Reassure the child that what has happened is not his or her fault.
- Do not make promises that you may not be able to keep.
- Do not promise confidentiality – it may be necessary to refer the child to Children's Social Care.
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell.
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator.
- Explain what has to be done next and who has to be told.
- Inform the safe guarding lead without delay.
- Complete the child protection incident/welfare concern form and pass it to the safe guarding lead.
- Dealing with a disclosure from a child and safeguarding issues can be stressful. Consider seeking support for yourself and discuss this with the safe guarding lead.

## Sources of Information

[eastsussex.gov.uk](http://eastsussex.gov.uk)

[atl.org.uk](http://atl.org.uk)

[eastsussexlscb.org.uk](http://eastsussexlscb.org.uk)



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