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| **Safeguarding Colleagues, Volunteer and Foster Carer**  **Policy & Procedures** |

January 2024

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**POLICY**

**Definition of Safeguarding**:

In this Policy, safeguarding colleagues, volunteers, foster carers and promoting their welfare means

* Protecting them from maltreatment and harm
* Preventing impairment of their health and safety
* Ensuring that they work or undertake activities in circumstances that are safe and in keeping with our duty of care as an employer or our obligations to our volunteers and foster carers

# **Purpose**

The overall purpose of this policy and its associated procedures is to safeguard all who work for and with Barnardo’s, including Staff Members, Volunteers, Foster Carers, Students on placement and Secondees into the Organisation. This includes responding to concerns of safeguarding raised by and about all those who work for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s and how to respond and report these concerns.

Our colleague, volunteer and foster carer safeguarding policy aims to achieve the following objectives by being vigilant in the execution of our duties:

* Creating a culture where all those working for, on behalf of, or with us are valued and their right to safety and respect is upheld
* Actively managing risk to minimise circumstances where those working for, on behalf of, or with us and suffer harm
* Ensure that we deliver on our Charity Commission obligations.

While the Procedures are inevitably focused on how to report matters where there is a current Safeguarding issue, we should be most concerned with fostering an environment that promotes and encourages the positive aspects of safeguarding that should prevent incidents, such as:

* Everyone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s being committed to treating others with respect, care, and kindness
* Taking the time to check in with direct reports and colleagues and trying to ensure you know when someone is or is not ok
* Being aware of the means of support within Barnardo’s, including our wellbeing offer - [Getting help with wellbeing, health and mental health issues | Inside Barnardos](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/getting-help-wellbeing-health-and-mental-health-issues)
* Fostering an environment where people can bring their whole self to work and can speak out if they are having a difficult time in work or out of work

# Scope

This Policy applies across all of Barnardo’s Corporate Departments, the Board of Trustees and Volunteers and ensures that everyone is clear about their role, responsibility and expectations in responding to any safeguarding concerns. It includes Foster Carers, who, while being self-employed, do work on behalf of Barnardo’s.

# Our Basis and Values

At Barnardo’s we have a Basis and set of Values that are central to all that we do:

**Basis**

Barnardo’s basis was originally grounded in our Christian roots and is now enriched and shared by people of many faiths and no religious faith, reflecting the diversity of our society today.

**Values and Behaviours**

Our values are:

* Respecting the unique worth of every person
* Encouraging people to fulfil their potential
* Working with hope
* Exercising responsible stewardship

Our Behaviours are set out here - [Our behaviours | Inside Barnardos](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/our-behaviours)

It is important that there is both an awareness of those who work for and with us and an ability to respond sensitively and appropriately to any concerns identified. Our Colleague, Volunteer and Foster Carer Safeguarding Policy and associated procedures reinforce our values and corporate responsibility and uphold our statutory duties. They demonstrate how we comply with UK legislation and other four nation’s government legislation, policy, guidance, research, and good practice.

# Our Approach to Safeguarding

At Barnardo’s, we are committed to the highest standards of safeguarding, and we operate in the belief that Safeguarding is everyone’s business. All who undertake work for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s have a responsibility to help create a safe work environment. While the Procedures will inevitably have to cover those instances where it is known or suspected that those working for Barnardo’s have suffered harm, the primary purpose of this Policy is to create and sustain a safe environment for our staff, volunteers, foster carers and others to work within.

**Senior Management Responsibilities**

There is a lead Corporate Director responsible to the Chief Executive (CEO) for safeguarding across the organisation who is the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation and will work in line with national legislation and guidance. The Corporate Director is supported by the organisation’s Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality who along with the Safeguarding Team promotes safer working practices and oversight of serious incidents and situations involving those who work for and with Barnardo’s. There is a key role for the Head of Health and Safety as a number of the occasions where those working, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s suffer harm will be at least partly within the purview of Health and Safety as well as Safeguarding.

**Audit and Assurance Unit**

Barnardo’s has in place a programme of internal audit and review that enables continuous improvement and learning, across all corporate and directorate levels. This team makes recommendations on key policies, procedures and safeguarding issues.

**Procedures and Practice**

The organisation has clearly defined procedures, including this one, for identifying and taking action where there are safeguarding concerns about actual or suspected incidents or concerns.

**Safeguarding Leads**

Each region/nation and department in the organisation ensures there are designated individuals who are competent to advise staff and volunteers and can respond to safeguarding concerns, ensuring that actions are always respectful, professional, and based on what we know to be good practice.

**Safe Recruitment procedures**

Barnardo’s has a rigorous and robust [recruitment procedure](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/employee-and-volunteer-support/recruiting-employees-and-apprentices/recruitment-and-selection) in place to ensure that we appoint staff that are appropriately qualified and have the skills and knowledge to deliver a quality service.

For regulated posts, Enhanced Disclosure checks are obtained including checks against the adult and/or children’s Barred list where the activity meets the eligibility criteria. In retail, Basic Disclosure checks are carried out in line with our Licence to Practice.

Repeat disclosure checks for existing staff and volunteers are undertaken periodically and/or at every three years. Barnardo’s uses an online DBS employment check system that enables a faster, easier, and more secure turnaround on Disclosure checks. In retail, Basic Disclosure checks are carried out in line with our Licence to Practice. “Protection of Vulnerable Group checks” are completed within Scotland and are updated.

All those who work for, with, or on behalf of, Barnardo’s, including paid and unpaid staff, volunteers, and chaperones are required to agree to and abide by the organisation’s Safeguarding Code of Conduct.

**Learning Development & Training**

All staff and volunteers are required to complete mandatory safeguarding induction, either classroom based or online. This must be completed within the first two weeks of employment.

It is the responsibility of the individual and their line manager to ensure mandatory training is completed. Managers who supervise volunteers and staff in non-children’s services should ensure safeguarding training is provided and regularly updated as appropriate to the role.

**Support to Colleagues**

It is recognised that reporting safeguarding concerns can be a challenging and upsetting matter. Barnardo’s believes that we should welcome such reporting and that colleagues reporting such matters should be supported to do so by their Line Manager, Safeguarding Leads and the Safeguarding Team and to do so without fear of reprisal. Anyone involved in reporting should feel they can approach their Safeguarding Lead, the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality or the Assistant Director (Safeguarding and Compliance) to talk through a potential staff safeguarding issue and seek advice or a post-reporting de-brief, if required.

**Links with other Policies**

This policy and procedure are supported by other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy working practices. This includes our [Resolution Policy](https://r1.ddlnk.net/4ZNU-UOFG-1FMK2K-SHLZJ-1/c.aspx) which provides a framework to help colleagues resolve issues, concerns and conduct matters at the earliest opportunity, wherever possible and appropriate, before there's a need to escalate to a more formal process. It also includes, and is not intended to replace, our [Health and Safety Policy](https://contentserver.barnardos.org.uk/livelink91/livelink.exe/fetch/2000/7541824/12649304/12649308/11740515/13740935/359397516/%2D/Policy_01_%2D_Group_Safety_Policy_Statement.pdf?nodeid=472954350&vernum=-2) and Procedures and our Duty of Care to those who work for Barnardo’s.

# Roles and Responsibilities

**Accountability Framework:**

**The Trustees** have a duty of care, which includes taking necessary steps to safeguard and protect those who work for and with Barnardo’s. They will act in the best interests of those who work for, on behalf of, and with Barnardo’s and take all reasonable steps to prevent any harm to them. Trustees also have duties to manage risk and to protect Barnardo’s assets and reputation.

Barnardo’s Trustees are responsible for ensuring that those working with and on behalf of the organisation are not harmed in any way through contact with it.

The Trustees must ensure that there are appropriate Safeguarding Policies and that they are implemented effectively. They also have a personal duty of care in relation to Safeguarding.

**The Chief Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team** are the senior managers responsible for the management of safeguarding incidents and concerns. The Corporate Director Children’s Services Operations is the designated safeguarding lead for the organisation.

**Corporate Department Heads/Managers** hold responsibility for the implementation of the Staff Safeguarding policy and effective management of safeguarding concerns in their department. Each department will be supported by their designated Safeguarding Lead Manager.

**Line Managers and Staff** are responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding concerns regarding those who work for and with Barnardo’s are addressed through respective line management structures in accordance with this Policy and Procedure.

The **Head of Corporate** **Safeguarding and Quality** is responsible for providing advice and support to Directors and other senior managers on best practice in adhering to this Policy and procedures, safer working practices and management of those that meet the threshold for internal escalation. They are also available for consultation and as a source of expertise for those Senior Managers who may be involved in reporting Colleague Safeguarding incidents who are not as familiar with safeguarding reporting, as colleagues in Children’s Services may be.

**Safeguarding Leads** provide additional Safeguarding advice and support in their Region, Nation, Business Line or Department in ensuring that the Policy and Procedures are adhered to and in ensuring that there is oversight of all internally escalated incidents and situations in their department.

**People Function** havea particular responsibility to ensure that in addition to offering expert advice and support in the management of colleague safeguarding incidents that they also work to ensure matters meeting the threshold (set out in the Procedures below) are appropriately reported. It will be important that the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality and the Head of People Operations meet regularly to ensure that we are capturing in real time and making adjustments to respective responsibilities regarding the management of colleague safeguarding issues and communicating these regularly to the organisation.

**Head of Health and Safety** has a key responsibility to work with all functions to ensure our colleagues, volunteers and foster carers are as safe and as healthy as they can be while undertaking work for Barnardo’s.

# Procedures

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# Communicating Colleague, Volunteer and Foster Carer Safeguarding Responsibilities

**Action: Line Managers**

1. Ensure that all staff/volunteers/Foster Carers are aware of this Policy and any relevant codes and practices or Directorate specific guidance.
2. Ensure contact numbers for Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality, the Assistant Director (Safeguarding and Compliance) and Head of People Operations are in an accessible place for staff and volunteers and they are updated regularly.

# Code of Conduct

The [Safeguarding Code of Conduct](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-code-conduct) supports staff and volunteers by making clear what is expected of them in terms of their conduct and behaviour; it assists them to raise concerns without fear of recrimination and reduces the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations being made against them.

**Induction (all departments)**

**Action: All Staff/Foster Carers/Volunteers**

Ensure that you have read, fully understand, agreed and signed the content of the [Safeguarding Code of Conduct](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/safeguarding/safeguarding-code-conduct) and this Policy and Procedure - it is your responsibility to speak to your line manager if you are not clear or require further clarification.

# 3. Definitions, Criteria and Threshold

In order to ensure we are clear who is included within the scope of this Procedure, it is important to establish a definition for who is defined as a colleague, volunteer or foster carer which is as follows:

* A person on Barnardo’s payroll on a full time, part time or sessional/as and when basis.
* A person being paid by Barnardo’s to undertake a specific activity, including consultancy and agency workers (this would include Foster Carers who are not employed by us but are paid by us).
* A volunteer whether “registered” or not – this would include one-off activity such as a celebrity.
* A person seconded to Barnardo’s at the time of the incident/concern.
* A Foster Carer or Prospective Adopter prior to the adoption order being made.

**Staff Safeguarding Incidents and Situations**

It is clearly very important that all colleague, volunteer, or foster carer Safeguarding matters are shared with Line Managers and others, however there are situations and incidents that may represent a colleague, volunteer or foster carer Safeguarding issue that needs to be considered for internal escalation to the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality (and Head of People Operations), these are:

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences a Hate Crime or equivalent while engaged in undertaking work or activity for Barnardo’s.
2. A situation where a person has been bullied and harassed in the workplace by their manager or another colleague.
3. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s reporting work-related stress.
4. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who is physically or sexually harmed in the workplace at the hands of Service Users or others.
5. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences an injury at work from an accident.
6. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences harassment from Service Users, e.g., via social media, contact outside of work, threats, etc.
7. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences financial/material loss while at work.

**Threshold**

While all of these situations would represent a potential Safeguarding situation and should be brought to the attention of Line Managers, not all incidents need to be reported to the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality and Head of People Operations. Only those matters which need to be considered for reporting to the Charity Commission need to be escalated to the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality and Head of People Operations, therefore it is important that we set out a “threshold” as set out below:

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences a Hate Crime or equivalent while engaged in undertaking work for Barnardo’s

*As the criteria is set at what would constitute a crime or equivalent, any such incident of this nature would meet the threshold.*

1. A situation where a person has been bullied and harassed in the workplace by their manager or another colleague

*The threshold would be those that lead to formal investigation and where there is a positive finding leading to formal disciplinary action against a staff member.*

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s reporting work-related stress

*The threshold would be where the staff member has a fit note for work-related stress and is in receipt of medication, prescribed treatment or talking therapy.*

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who is physically or sexually harmed in the workplace at the hands of Service Users or others

*The threshold would be that they need medical attention and/or the Police are involved.*

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences an injury at work or during their role as a carer from an accident

*The threshold would be those that are hospitalised or attend hospital as a result of the injury, and/or the accident is RIDDOR reportable.*

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences harassment from Service Users, e.g., via social media, contact outside of work, threats, etc.

*The threshold here are ones where the Police are involved.*

1. Someone working for, on behalf of, or with Barnardo’s who experiences financial/material loss while at work

*The threshold is those where there is Police involvement.*

# 4. Responding to a Colleague Safeguarding Concern

**4.1 A Colleague, Volunteer of Foster Carer Safeguarding incident occurs, or situation develops**

**Action: Person becoming aware of the situation**

1. While it is expected that all colleagues will support their fellow colleagues, it is important that all potential Colleague, Volunteer or Foster Carer Safeguarding issues are brought to the attention of the person’s line manager or supervisor and to a more senior manager or safeguarding lead if the line manager is implicated in the situation or incident. Always offer reassurance, listen to what they are saying and make a record of what was said. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the person affected not to take action if you are worried that they are being seriously harmed or are at risk of serious harm.
2. It is not your job to investigate, verify what is being said or necessarily to decide whether a matter meets the threshold for upward reporting, this is the responsibility of the line manager, unless they are implicated, or the investigating manager.
3. Consult with your line manager, or in their absence, another manager or safeguarding lead, to agree the course of action, but do not delay longer than necessary and in any event you should be sharing the concern on the same day that you are informed.
4. If for any reason you do not feel able to alert a line manager then the [Whistleblowing Policy](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/employee-and-volunteer-support/whistleblowing-policy) must be followed. The hotline is accessible via Safecall on [**0800 915 1571**](tel:08009151571) or online through the ‘[**Report a Whistleblowing Concern’**](http://www.safecall.co.uk/barnardos)

**Action: Line Manager**

1. Contact your Line Manager and/or the responsible People Manager and/or Departmental Safeguarding Lead Manager to identify action required including whether the matter needs to be reported to the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality (or Head of People Operations).
2. If the Departmental Safeguarding Lead Manager is not available, contact the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality or Head of People Operations who will ensure that you receive the appropriate safeguarding advice and guidance and if you or they feel the incident or situation has met the criteria and threshold above complete a [Colleague Safeguarding Situation/Incident Form](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/safeguarding-incident-form-colleagues-volunteers-foster-carers).
3. If the concern arises at the weekend or outside of ‘normal’ working hours, you should escalate this through your department’s emergency contact arrangements and report the matter on the form as soon as practicable.

# 5. Reporting and Managing Colleague, Volunteer or Foster Carer Safeguarding Incidents and Situations

## 5.1 Reporting and Responding to Colleague, Volunteer or Foster Carer Safeguarding Incidents/Situations

**Action: Line Manager**

If a member of your team is involved in a colleague, volunteer or foster carer safeguarding incident or situation that meets the criteria and threshold above you must complete a [Colleague Safeguarding Situation/Incident Form](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/safeguarding-incident-form-colleagues-volunteers-foster-carers) as soon as possible and send it the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality, your departmental Director and those on the circulation list detailed on the form. If you are unsure as to whether the incident requires reporting, please consult with your departmental Safeguarding Lead or the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality.

**Action: Responsible Senior Manager**

1. Upon receiving information ensure that the safety of the staff member, volunteer or foster carer is paramount. If a crime has been committed a decision will need to be made about who will contact the police and relevant external bodies. Advice should be sought from the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality or Safeguarding Lead where the situation is very serious or unclear.
2. If the situation implicates another person who works for Barnardo’s, consideration of the potential for suspension or other leave of absence will need to take place, as well as possible referral and reporting to the appropriate agencies outside the Organisation.
3. Consult with People Team to agree next steps. Any investigating officer must be competent in safeguarding matters. These procedures must be followed in conjunction with the [Resolution Policy | Inside Barnardos](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/resolution-policy)
4. Ensure that colleagues who are involved in an investigation are aware of support options. Refer to [Sources of support | Inside Barnardos](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/people-and-culture/wellbeing/sources-support) for information.

# 6. Responding to Escalation

On receipt of a Colleague, Volunteer or Foster Carer Safeguarding Form, the Head of Safeguarding and Quality will:

1. Confirm that the Criteria and Threshold are met and communicate the same back to the person submitting the form.
2. Ensure that all prescribed individuals have been copied into the form.
3. Offer support or challenge to the proposed actions.
4. Set a Review date.
5. Consider whether this is a matter that needs to be considered in terms of reporting to the Charity Commission and flag accordingly.

The Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality will work to ensure that the internal reporting, compiling of statistics and dashboards, reports to Trustees and so on will follow and work with the existing reporting around Serious Safeguarding Incidents, Allegations Against Adults and Death of Service Users. This includes all matters raised as meeting the threshold for consideration for reporting to the Charity Commission are discussed at the existing quarterly meeting between the Head of Corporate Safeguarding and Quality, the Corporate Director of Children’s Services (Operations) and the Company Secretary.

# 7. Compliance

The Corporate Director and relevant members of the senior management team will monitor compliance with this policy and procedure in line with Barnardo’s Corporate Risk Register, relevant KPIs and other performance measures.

# 8. Information Sharing

Each individual’s right to confidentiality must be respected. All personal data must be treated with care and kept securely; this means not disclosing it to others unless there is a legal reason to do so, and we have informed the subject that we will do this in the privacy notice, or we have the informed consent of the subject, or their parent or person with legal responsibility for them. Disclosing personal data to unauthorised people could place the subject at risk of harm and may be a breach of GDPR.

There are circumstances when we may share personal data without the consent of the subject. The GDPR (article 6.1.d) permits the sharing of personal data without the consent of the data subject to safeguard the data subject, or others from harm. Safeguarding concerns must always be shared with the local authority and with the police where this is necessary to protect the data subject or others. The data subject, or their parent, should be informed that the data has been shared unless this would place the individuals concerned at further risk.

Under Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018, personal data may also be shared with the police without the consent of the subject in order to prevent, detect or prosecute a crime. As a voluntary organisation we are not obliged to share data with the police but may choose to do so. The request must be in writing and specify the data required and why this is needed. The responsible manager must weigh up the impact of not sharing the data against the duty of confidentiality that we owe the subject. If we decide not to share, the police must obtain a court order to access the data. All requests to share data must be recorded, including whether or not the data was shared and the reason for this.

For further information see the [Information sharing policy](https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/node/12541) or discuss with the Data Protection Manager or the Data Protection Officer.