# BREC Application Form

This form provides Barnardo’s Research Ethics Committee (BREC) with the information they require to ensure your research is ethical and that the potential value/benefit of the research outweighs risk of harm. This helps children, young people and families to safely take part in research and ensures that their rights, wellbeing, safety and dignity are protected.

If you are planning to access Barnardo’s services, including service users, former service users**,** information/data relating to service users, or information/data from children and young people (CYP) and families accessed via Barnardo’s services,you need to gain support in principle for your research from service management. You must gain this support and **share your research proposal** or completed BREC Application Form with the service(s), **before submitting your full application to BREC**.

Applications cannot be reviewed by BREC without relevant supporting documents. Please ensure you attach the following supporting documents to your application.

* Recruitment materials, posters, recruitment letters/emails etc.
* Draft fieldwork tools (questionnaires, interview/focus group schedules, participant information sheets, consent forms etc.)
* Any applications to other ethics committees, and an explanation of the outcome or current status of these
* Contracts or agreements with gatekeepers, funders, and services
* An email of support from the service(s) you wish to involve in your research

Please send your completed form and all supporting documentation to [brec@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:brec@barnardos.org.uk)

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| A green and white text on a black background  Description automatically generated**Details** | |  |
| **Title of proposed research:** |  | |
| **Name of principal researcher:** |  | |
| **If the project is related to one previously reviewed by BREC, please provide the name of the related project:** |  | |
| **Email address:** |  | |
| **Research funder or commissioner:**  Please select all that apply. | Barnardo’s  Research Institute: (please specify)  Government Department: (please specify)  A university: (please specify)  Student research project  Other: (please specify) | |
| **Please name the Barnardo’s service(s) which have agreed ‘in principle’ to support your research:** |  | |
| **Please name your key service contact(s):** |  | |
| **Please name the contact(s) within the service(s) who has seen your research proposal or BREC application form:** |  | |
| **Date submitted:** | Click to enter date | |

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| **1 Purpose and value of research** | |
| 1.1 **Research aims and objectives:**  In this section of the application form you should consider what you hope to learn from the research, and clearly outline the overall aim of it. |  | |
| 1.2 **Research questions:**  In this section of the application form, you should consider the question(s) your research seeks to answer, and clearly outline your research questions. |  | |
| 1.3 **Value of research:**  In this section of the application form, you should:   * Clearly demonstrate how your research builds on, or adds to, other research on this topic * Outline any gaps in the knowledge base that your research will address * Describe the benefits of the research for the research participants (e.g. will participants enjoy the experience or learn something?) * Describe the benefits of the research for the wider group the participants belong to (e.g. will the outputs increase understanding of this group among policymakers or practitioners, or lead to service planning/policy development?) |  | |
| 1.4 **Dissemination of findings:**  In this section of the application form, you should outline your dissemination plan. You should:   * Consider who the audience(s) for your findings are (e.g. service users, practitioners, funders, policymakers, media, academics, Barnardo’s, etc), and describe what outputs will be produced for each (e.g. interim reports, final reports, podcasts, leaflets, press releases, oral presentations, journal articles, etc) * Outline how you will share your findings with: * Participants (e.g. by creating a child-friendly summary, sharing your final report with services, etc) * Barnardo’s/BREC * Consider whether there are any risks associated with publishing your findings, or whether they could have negative consequences for your participant group or for Barnardo’s (e.g. could your findings lead to negative media publicity about young people?), and outline how will you minimise any risk(s) (e.g. will you actively consult with participants or services regarding your findings/conclusions/recommendations, pre-publication?) |  | |

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| **2 Research methodology** | |
| 2.1 **Sample and recruitment**  In this section, you should outline:   * Your criteria for selecting research participants (e.g. in terms of age, characteristics, * gender, ethnicity, type of service they are receiving) * Your sampling strategy (e.g. random sampling, quota sampling, purposive) * How participants will be identified (e.g. from an established list, from service staff identifying appropriate participants) * How potential participants will be approached to take part (e.g. service staff will ask them, researcher will send them a letter) * How you will ensure all eligible participants can take part/how will you try to avoid the exclusion of certain groups (e.g. provide interpreters or translators) * The limitations of your sample (e.g. who will your sample exclude and how will this affect your findings)   Recruitment materials should be submitted with your application (e.g. posters, recruitment emails, etc). |  | |
| 2.2 **Data collection and fieldwork:**  In this section, you should:   * Outline the methods you plan to use in your data collection * Provide justification of why you have selected these methods * Are they the most appropriate to answer your research questions? Why? * What are the pros and cons of your chosen approach? * Will any creative methods be used to encourage participant engagement with your research (e.g. drawings, use of scenarios, storyboards, role play, etc.)? |  | |
| 2.3 **Interpretation of data:**  In this section, you should describe:   * How you plan to analyse your data (e.g. thematic analysis, framework analysis) * How you will make sure that your interpretation of data is valid (e.g. will you recognise your own bias? Will your interpretation of the data be peer reviewed? Will you verify your interpretation of the data with participants, and if so at what stage?) |  | |

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| **3 Responsibilities towards participants** | |
| 3.1 **Competency of researcher(s)**  In this section, you should:   * Provide the names and titles of all researchers * Clearly outline the roles of each member of the research team * Identify members of the research team who will have contact with research participants * Outline relevant experience/qualifications of the research team, including any relevant training (e.g. if researchers will have contact with participants who are vulnerable, what experience/qualifications do they have the will help them do this sensitively? Have researchers completed, e.g. child protection training, research skills training, etc.) * Outline any particular policies around research ethics that researchers will be following (e.g. own organisation’s policies, service policies, or partner agency policies, etc.) |  | |
| 3.2 **Voluntary, informed consent of participants**  In this section, you should detail:   * How participants will first learn about the research (including the purpose and who is carrying it out (e.g. posters in service, service staff talking to participants, researchers talking to participants directly) * How you will ensure information is accessible to (potential) participants (e.g. use of accessible language or pictures, piloting of information sheets/consent forms to ensure suitability, sharing information sheets with services before fieldwork visits, etc) * How you will check that participants fully understand what their participation will involve * How participants will know that they can choose not to be involved, or can withdraw, * without adverse consequences * Up to what point participants can withdraw their contribution to your research, and how * they will be made aware of this * How you will encourage participants to raise questions or concerns about the research * How participants will demonstrate their informed consent (e.g. signing consent forms, verbal consent, etc.)   Consent form(s) should be submitted with your application. |  | |
| 3.3 **Consent of parents/carers**  In this section, you should detail:   * If/how you will be asking parents/carers to consent to their child’s participation, and an explanation of why this is felt to be necessary/unnecessary * How you will approach parents/carers to give them information about your research (e.g. service staff talking to them, send them a letter, etc.) * How parents/carers will provide or refuse consent (e.g. verbally to service staff, returning a consent form in the post, etc.)   Parent/carer consent form(s) should be submitted with your application. |  | |
| 3.4 **Participant comfort**  In this section, you should detail:   * How you will make sure your participants feel comfortable and secure * How you will accommodate participants’ needs and preferences (e.g. accessibility * requirements, provisions for a friend/worker/advocate to accompany them, etc) * Whether you will be asking participants about personal experiences or life events, and if yes, how you will do this in a sensitive way that |  | |
| 3.5 **Safeguarding children, young people, and vulnerable adults**  Researchers must follow *Barnardo’s Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Researchers*, which is attached as an appendix. Additionally, researchers must follow the safeguarding procedures of any individual service they will be working with. Ensure you have seen and understand these. In this section, you should detail how you will adhere to *Barnardo’s Safeguarding Code of Conduct* for Researchers during your research, and any other safeguarding procedures you will adhere to.  This section should include a description of how you will put this into practice – e.g. the types of issues you have considered, what you will do, and who you will contact if you suspect a child or vulnerable adult is at risk of harm to themselves or others. |  | |
| 3.6 **Confidentiality**  This section should detail the framework of confidentiality you will work within. You should describe:   * The level of confidentiality participants will have * Who will know that participants have taken part in your research * Who will know about the information participants give you * Instances where confidentiality would be broken * How you will explain to participants the level of confidentiality they will have * What steps you will take to maintain participants’ confidentiality throughout the research process (e.g. discuss with participants before they participate, in information sheets and consent forms, etc.). |  | |
| 3.7 **Recording and storing data**  In this section, you should describe:   * How you will record data * Whether the data you store will be anonymous, or whether it will include identifiable information (e.g. names or addresses, etc.) * How you will store data securely (e.g. what system(s) will you be using to store data and what security measures are in place?) * Who will have access to the data you collect * How long you will store data for * How you will dispose of data at the end of storage period * How you will gain permission from participants/their parents or carers to record and store data (e.g. discuss with participants before they participate, in information sheets and consent forms, etc.) |  | |
| 3.8 **Anonymity of findings**  In this section, you should describe:   * The level of anonymity participants will have * How you will explain to participants the level of anonymity they will have * How you will avoid participants being identified in your outputs (e.g. by using pseudonyms, by not naming the service or regions, etc.) |  | |
| 3.9 **Concluding relationships with participants**  In this section you should describe how you will end relationships with research participants (e.g. ‘closing down’ activities, debriefing meeting with service staff, etc.) |  | |
| 3.11 **Complaints procedure**  In this section you should detail how (potential) participants or services involved in your research will be able to make a complaint about the research or researcher(s), and how their complaints will be addressed – e.g. will the contact details of workers at service(s) be included in participant information sheets/consent forms?  Research approved by BREC should include an independent avenue of complaint within Barnardo’s, for (potential) participants accessed through Barnardo’s. |  | |
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| **4 Researcher welfare** | |
| 4.1 **Researcher’s physical welfare**  In this section, you should describe how the researcher(s) will avoid placing themselves at risk of physical harm (e.g. conducting fieldwork in pairs, proposing meeting participants in public places or services, ensuring colleagues know their whereabouts during fieldwork, etc). |  | |
| 3.2 **Researchers emotional welfare**  In this section you should:   * Detail the ways in which you anticipate the research might be upsetting to the researcher(s) * Detail how the emotional wellbeing of the researcher(s) will be safeguarded (including supports in place to help the researcher(s) cope with any emotional distress resulting from undertaking the research) |  | |

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| **Outputs** | |  |
| **Please list the output(s) you plan to produce and the estimated date(s) you plan to produce them** | | |
| Expected Output(s): |  | |
| Date(s): |  | |

## Appendix

## Barnardo’s Safeguarding & Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults

## Code of Conduct for Researchers

It is vital that researchers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know what to do to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Researchers must:

* Create a culture where children/vulnerable adults are valued and their right to safety and respect is upheld.
* Actively managed risk to minimise circumstances where children/vulnerable adults using Barnardo’s services may suffer harm.
* Work collaboratively with other organisations to ensure that children/vulnerable adults are safeguarded and protected.

Researchers must follow this *Code of Conduct for Researchers* alongside local interagency procedures, protocols & arrangements devised by Local Safeguarding. Partnerships/Regional Safeguarding Children Boards/Child Protection

Committees/Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland.

Researchers must also follow the Safeguarding procedures of any individual service(s) they plan to involve in their research.

### Researchers must understand the limits of confidentiality

All researchers who have access to information about children/adults at risk have a duty to preserve confidence. Each individual’s right to confidentiality must be respected. **All personal information must be treated with care and kept securely; this means not disclosing it to people who do not need to know**.

In normal circumstances the child/adult who is the subject of the information will be required to give consent before the information about them can be shared. The consent of the person who provided the information/gatekeepers may also be required. Irrespective of the age, abilities, or level of maturity of the child/adult, if information is disclosed which indicates that the child/adult (or another person) is at serious risk of harm, then **confidentiality cannot be preserved as safeguarding procedures must take precedence**.

Data protection legislation permits sharing of information where it is critical to prevent serious harm or distress, or in life-threatening situations.

### Before the child/adult participates in the research

**Explain the limits of confidentiality**. Before a child/adult takes part in research, researchers must explain to them the limits of confidentiality – including an age-appropriate explanation of your requirement to pass on any information that suggests someone is at risk of harm, and the process you will adopt for this.

### How researchers should respond to safeguarding concerns

RESPOND

If a child/ adult discloses information to you about abuse or harm that they have experienced, are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, you must:

* Listen carefully.
* Reassure. Always offer reassurance, listen to, and take seriously, what they are saying.
* Do not ask probing questions. It is not your job to investigate or examine the child/adult; this is the statutory responsibility of the local authority/child protection services and/or the Police.
* Explain that confidentiality must be broken. Never promise to keep secrets or be persuaded by the child/adult or family not to take action. Explain the process to the child/adult: that you will need to pass this information on, to whom, the reasons why and possible actions.

If a child/ adult discloses information to you about abuse or harm that they have experienced, are experiencing, or are at risk of experiencing, and you **are not sure whether the service already knows about it**, you must:

* **Ask the child/adult whether the Barnardo’s service already knows** about the information they have disclosed.
* **Regardless of whether the child/adult says the service already knows** about the information they have disclosed, or whether you suspect the service already knows, you must promptly inform the service of the disclosure/concern – just in case the service does not know.
* **Explain that confidentiality must be broken**. Researchers must explain to the child/ adult why they are required to pass this information on, to whom, the reasons why, and possible actions.

RECORD

**Record as much factual information as possible**. In all circumstances, you must record what your concerns are, identify what action has been taken, and pass this record to Barnardo’s (details of who to pass your record on to is in the ‘Report’ section below). Your report must include:

* Date and time of when you pass the record on
* Name of person you are passing the record on to
* Your name, number, and email address
* Name of the child/adult
* Personal information about child/ adult (gender, age, ethnicity)
* Brief description of the nature of the disclosure/concern
* Date and time you received the disclosure/concern
* Any other information

REPORT

* + **If you have accessed the child/adult through a Barnardo’s service, the researcher must inform the Manager of the service immediately.** Share your record of the incident with them. They will decide on the next steps and will store your record in the child/adult’s file.
  + **If the Manager of the service is not available, and if the child/adult is at immediate risk**, call Barnardo’s Head of Safeguarding and Quality on 07584 206139, to ensure that action is taken as soon as possible and within 24 hours. Share your record with them. You must check that action has been taken, after you have informed Barnardo’s.
  + **If the child/adult is not connected to a specific Barnardo’s service, and therefore you cannot pass your record on to a service Manager**, you should email your record to Safeguarding@barnardos.org.uk (as well as calling Barnardo’s Head of Safeguarding and Quality on 07584 206 139 if the child/adult is at immediate risk).
  + **If you are a member of Barnardo’s staff**, you must also report the incident to your Barnardo’s line manager immediately. Consult with your Barnardo’s line manager to agree the course of action but do not delay if this would place a child at increased risk.
  + **If you are not a member of Barnardo’s staff**, but an external researcher, do not pass your record/sensitive data regarding the child/adult to third parties outside of Barnardo’s - unless it is in the ‘Vital Interest’ of the child/adult, where it is critical to prevent serious harm or distress or life-threatening situations.
  + After you have passed your record to the appropriate people, and have checked that action has been taken, **destroy your own record of the disclosure and personal information of the child/adult**.
  + For more information visit <https://inside.barnardos.org.uk/safeguarding>.

IF A CHILD/ADULT IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, CALL THE POLICE