

 Date: February 2017

 Review Date: February 2018

**Guidelines for responding[[1]](#footnote-1) to Safeguarding Allegations against Adults who work for or on behalf of Barnardo’s**

1. All adults who come into contact with children and vulnerable adults have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. In Barnardo’s, we take this duty very seriously and ensure that all those who work for or on behalf of our organisation act professionally to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for all our service users and their families.
2. The work we do is sensitive and complex and tensions and misunderstandings can very easily occur in everyday situations. It is at these times that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned and need to be handled promptly and sensitively.
3. It must also be recognised that some allegations will be genuine as sadly, in our society there are adults who deliberately seek out, create, or exploit opportunities to abuse children. It is therefore essential that we take all possible steps to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so. This is why our recruitment and selection policies are robust and why in June 2016, we issued a Safeguarding Code of Conduct to everyone who works with us or on our behalf is clear about expected codes of behaviour.
4. A Safeguarding Allegation[[2]](#footnote-2) is one where information comes to light from any source which suggests that an adult working for or on behalf of Barnardo’s has or may have:
* caused significant harm[[3]](#footnote-3)[[4]](#footnote-4) to a child or vulnerable adult
* committed a criminal offence against a child or adult or
* behaved in such a way that calls into question their suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.

***This includes historical information about abuse an adult may have experienced as a child whilst in receipt of services from Barnardo’s.***

1. Allegations may come to the attention of anyone working in the organisation. Some will be so serious as to require immediate referral to a senior manager and then to external agencies so that the police and the local authority can immediately investigate. Other allegations may be much less serious and at first sight might not seem to warrant consideration of a police investigation, or enquiries by children’s social care. **However, it is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are reported to managers in line with procedures so that that they can be examined objectively and independently by Local Authority Child Protection Services/Trusts. In England, allegations are managed by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).**
2. Local Authority Child Protection Officers/LADOs should be informed of all allegations that come to light and appear to meet the criteria in paragraph 4, so that s/he can consult police and social care colleagues if appropriate. These individuals, based in each locality are there to support and advise organisations when allegations arise, liaise with the police and monitor the progress of all cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly and consistently as possible through the use of a fair and thorough process.
3. If information is brought to your attention, either by an adult or by a child, which suggests an individual has or may have behaved in ways outlined in paragraph 4; it is not your job to investigate the allegation. Your job is to listen, ensure you have the basic details so you can record what was said, and respond appropriately e.g. - *‘thank you for bringing this to my attention, it is a serious matter and I will have to pass on to my manager’*. The general principles for responding sensitively to children /vulnerable adults clearly apply and assurances of confidentiality about what is being shared should not be given.
4. Regardless of what you might think or believe about what you have been told/heard or observed this information must be passed on to your manager. You should not discuss what you have been told with colleagues or with the subject of the allegation but you should be able to feel confident that the allegation will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately. If you are unsure about how the matter is being handled you can use the Whistleblowing procedure or contact the Head of Corporate Safeguarding or the Corporate Director Children’s Services (England) who is also the lead officer for Safeguarding.
5. If you are a manager and an allegation is brought to your attention, please refer to [Guidelines for Managers](http://livelink.barnardos.org.uk/livelink91/livelink.exe?func=ll&objId=258137212&objAction=viewheader) issued in August 2016 and ensure that you keep a log of all actions and telephone calls.
6. An Allegations Against Adults Reporting form should always be completed **and signed by the appropriate corporate leads. However, there should be no delay in submitting this form** to Safeguarding@Barnardos.org.uk whilst waiting for the signature of a senior manager
7. The attached flowchart outlines the basic process but advice and guidance can always be sought from the [Corporate Safeguarding Team or any Safeguarding Lead](http://b-hive.barnardos.org.uk/Interact/Pages/Section/Default.aspx?Section=3420).

**Review Date: November 2017**

**Responding to Allegations of Abuse by adults who work with or on**

**behalf of Barnardo’s**

Consideration of circumstances/

context

Crime/Child Protection Concern

Unprofessional Practice

Other

Employers Action

(may include investigation at request of LA/LADO)

Contact with LA/LADO

Discussion

No Further Action

No Further Action

Assessment of future risks

Support Guidance and Training

Disciplinary Proceedings

Behaviour Management

Contact with Local Authority CP services/Local Authority Designated Officer (England) (LADO) who advises on appropriate action

Discussion

Details, Action and Outcomes Recorded

Review Procedures

Referral to external bodies/DBS

(adult resigns, is dismissed or contract terminated)

Criminal

Proceedings/social care Enquiries

Child Protection/ Criminal Investigation

 Corporate Head of Safeguarding and/or Director of Children’s Services for advice and consultation AND contact with HR/People team

Allegation against Adults form completed

**Manager**

Checks and records details and contacts:

AD/RBM/SA Volunteers/Team Leader

**Allegation of abuse made against adult**

***Is child/adult safe?***

Comes to attention of adult in workplace/

work setting

Comes to the attention of outside agency eg police /social care

1. *Please note that Guidelines for Managers responding to Safeguarding Allegations and Gross Misconduct was issued in August 2016* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2016* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of Significant Harm to children, which includes the categories of Physical, Sexual and Emotional Abuse and Neglect. These categories should also be considered within the context of of abuse defined in Barnardo’s Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy i.e. physical abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, and acts of omission, and discriminatory abuse. They also include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff/volunteers and vulnerable adults in their care.* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)