



Batten Disease Family Association safeguarding policy for children, young people and adults

Our safeguarding policy

This policy applies to all members of our workforce (including paid staff, volunteers, members of boards of trustees, agency staff, students, or anyone else who may be working on behalf of the Batten Disease Family Association (BDFFA). All to whom the policy and procedures apply will be informed during their induction and at regular intervals thereafter.

The BDFFA is aware that the charities main beneficiaries are children and young adults with disabilities who represent one of the most vulnerable groups in our community.

Children and young people are those under 18. Adults are those of 18 and over.

BDFFA Responsibility

The responsibility for provision and implementation of this policy rests with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (Harriet Lunnemann). However it is the duty of all members of the BDFFA staff team, volunteers, trustees and others working for us to accept his or her personal responsibility to develop their awareness of the issues that cause harm and ensure that concerns are shared and reported so that appropriate action can be taken.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will review all child and vulnerable adult practices and procedures annually in consultation with employees and volunteers to ensure that this policy is fair, understood and supported by everyone involved with the BDFFA. The review will incorporate any new legislation

Breaches of the Safeguarding policy by a member of staff, paid or voluntary, will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

Definitions

When applied to children and young people aged up to 18, the definition of the term safeguarding is the same as that used in the statutory government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015). Here, safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development

- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

When applied to adults, safeguarding duties are considered in Care Act 2014: Statutory guidance for implementation (2014) as applying to all adults at risk (previously known as vulnerable adults). This means any adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

Categories of abuse, when applied to children, are:

Physical

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or 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.

The signs of physical abuse could be:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body.
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite Marks
- Broken Bones
- Scalds
- Flinching when being approached
- Aggressive behaviour for no apparent reason
- Reluctance to get changed, wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Depression
- Withdrawn behaviour

Emotional

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them, 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone

The signs of emotional abuse are:

- A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, eg in hospital or away from their parents' care.
- Sudden speech stories

- Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress.
- Neurotic behaviour
- Being able to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self Harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding behaviour

Sexual

Forcing or enticing a child or children to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts, such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

The signs of sexual abuse:

- Pain or itching in the genital area
- Bruising or bleeding in the genital area
- Sexually transmitted disease
- Vaginal discharge or infection
- Stomach Pains
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Pregnancy
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group
- Bedwetting
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level
- Sexual drawings or language
- Eating problems
- Self-harm
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Substance abuse
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/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 material substance abuse. Once a child is born it may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter, including exclusion from home or abandonment; failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger; failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of adequate care takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

The signs of neglect are:

- Constant hunger
- Constantly dirty or "smelly"

- Loss of weight or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for weather conditions
- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance or failing to attend appointments
- Having few friends
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised.

Online abuse

The signs of online abuse:

- A child or young person may hide what they are doing on the computer from you
- Uses computers outside of the home
- Maybe come obsessive of keeping hold of their phone, if they can get internet on it.
- Has difficulty sleeping
- Avoids telling you who their friends are
- Shows changes in behaviour

Types of abuse affecting adults at risk may include (not exclusively):

Physical abuse – including assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called ‘honour’ based violence.

Sexual abuse – including rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult’s financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery – encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Discriminatory abuse – including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse – including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, for example, or in relation to care provided in one’s own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be through neglect or poor professional practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within an organisation.

Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating

Self-neglect – this covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

The purpose of this policy:

- To protect children, young people and adults at risk (formerly known as ‘vulnerable adults’) who come into direct contact with the Batten Disease Family Association.
- To provide staff working for the Batten Disease Family Association with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child and adult protection, so that they understand the expectations that the Batten Disease Family Association has of them in terms of safeguarding, and can keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe;

The Batten Disease Family Association believes that a child, young person and adult at risk should never experience abuse of any kind. We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk, and to keep them safe. We are committed to practise in a way that protects them.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of law and guidance that seeks to protect children and adults at risk, namely:

- Children Act 1989
- United Convention of the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- *No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse*; Dept. of Health, March 2000; and subsequent reviews
- *Safeguarding Adults: A National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work*; ADASS, 2005
- *Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years - Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities*; HM Government 2014
- *Care Act 2014: Statutory guidance for implementation*; Dept of Health 2014
- *Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers*; HM Government 2015
- *Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*; HM Government 2015

This policy should be read alongside The Batten Disease Family Association policies and procedures on:

- Recruitment, induction and training
- Dealing with disclosures and concerns about a child, young person or adult at risk
- Managing allegations against staff
- Recording and information sharing
- Code of conduct for staff
- Safer recruitment
- E-safety
- Complaints
- Whistleblowing
- Health and safety
- Lone working policy and procedure

We recognise that:

- in all situations where a child or young person may be at risk of abuse, the welfare of the child is paramount, as enshrined in the Children Act 1989
- all children and adults at risk, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- some children are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues
- working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- working in partnership with adults at risk, their families, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of adults who may be vulnerable
- under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, adults at risk have the right to make their own decisions (including those deemed by others to be unwise or eccentric) and must be assumed to have capacity unless proved otherwise
- adults at risk must receive all appropriate help and support to make decisions
- decisions made on behalf of an adult who lacks mental capacity must be done in their best interests and be the least restrictive of their basic rights and freedoms.
- if an adult at risk who has capacity refuses intervention (about, for example, the suitability of a relationship or their ability to manage their financial resources), their wishes should be respected unless: there is a public interest, for example, not acting will put other adults or children at risk; or there is a public duty of care to intervene, for example a crime has been or may be committed.

We will seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- appointing a Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for children and adults, a deputy and a lead board member for safeguarding
- adopting child protection and adult safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- developing and implementing an effective e-safety policy and related procedures
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made and current DBS' are updated every 3 years.
- recording and storing information professionally and securely, and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, adults at risk and their families, staff and volunteers via leaflets, posters, one-to-one discussions

- using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, adults at risk, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we have a policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers, by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance

Contact details

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CEOP

www.ceop.police.uk

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually and when there are significant internal changes in SLS or in terms of legislation and guidance.

This policy was last reviewed on: 10th July 2017

Person responsible for overseeing review:

Signed by Designated Safeguarding Officer:

H. Lunnemann

Signed by Chief Executive:

Andrea J. West.