



Avonmouth Community Centre (ACCA) Child Protection Policy and Procedure	
Address: 257 Avonmouth Road Avonmouth Bristol BS11 9EN	
The Children’s Act 1989 The Children and Families Act 2014 Counter Extremism 2015 Working together to Safe-guard children 2015 and 2018 Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0-25 years	
Revised	July 2018
Due for Revision	July 2020

This child protection policy and procedure forms part of our safeguarding children arrangements.

Aims

- **Our setting considers that the welfare of the child is paramount and it is the duty of members, staff and volunteers under HM Government’s Working Together to Safeguard children to implement this policy, and to ensure that it has in place appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and young people and protect them from abuse**

(A)

1. Implementation and Monitoring

- The Board of trustees will appoint a trustee with responsibility for safeguarding called the Child Protection Officer.
- A role of the Child Protection Officer will be to identify a member of staff (Designated Senior) to take the lead responsibility for safeguarding child/children within the setting and liaising with local statutory children’s services agencies as appropriate. The Designated Senior must attend an inter-agency child protection training course, to be updated at least every 2 years.



- This Child Protection Officer will receive reports from the Designated Senior of any occasions when there are concerns or issues of Child Protection.
- All staff and volunteers working with children are to undertake child protection training and this to be updated every 3 years. There will be an annual update for all staff to keep practice updated, run by senior staff. The CP policy must be part of the induction for all staff and volunteers.
- The setting will review this policy annually, to ensure it is being implemented
- If the Designated Senior is uncertain about concerns about a child, consultation with **Families in Focus** should take place.

2. Definitions of Abuse:

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child.

The 1989 Children Act recognises four categories of abuse:

- **Physical Abuse** - actual or likely physical injury to a child, or failure to prevent physical injury. 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, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Sexual abuse also includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at or in the production of sexual images.
- **Emotional Abuse** - severe or persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection likely to cause adverse effect on the emotional and behavioural development of a child. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, or the failure to protect a child from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in the significant impairment of a child's health or development, including failure to thrive.



Other recognised categories of abuse:

Historical Abuse

There may be occasions when a child will disclose abuse (either sexual, physical, emotional or neglect) which occurred in the past. This information needs to be treated in exactly the same way as a disclosure of current child abuse. The reason for this is that the abuser may still represent a risk to children now.

Domestic Abuse

Staff may be working with children experiencing violence at home. Children experiencing this may demonstrate many of the symptoms listed in section A. Staff will need to treat them sensitively, record their concerns and consider informing First Response.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female circumcision is illegal in the UK (Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003) and it is an offence to take UK nationals, permanent or habitual UK residents to carry out FGM abroad, or to aid, abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of FGM abroad, even in countries where the practice is legal. All agencies have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children from being abused through FGM. Some signs that MAY indicate a girl is at risk of FGM include:

- Parents requesting an extended leave from school on top of school holidays
- If a girl comes from a country/community that has high prevalence of FGM
- Mother and other siblings have already undergone FGM
- Child may indicate that they are going for a special event

Consider whether any other indicators exist that suggest FGM may have or has already taken place, for example:

- The child has changed in behaviour after a prolonged absence from the setting
- The child has health problems, particularly bladder or menstrual problems;



- The child has difficulty walking, sitting or standing and may appear to be uncomfortable.

It is helpful if you can have conversations at the earliest opportunity and provide information about FGM from the BAVA website

<http://www.bava.org.uk/types-of-abuse/female-genital-mutilation/>

If you are concerned that a girl is at risk of FGM you should use the BSCB referral risk assessment. (at any time you may seek advice from BAND, Families in Focus or First Response) a record of the outcome of using the risk assessment must be kept.

If a girl is at immediate risk of FGM taking place it is a significant child protection issue and must be reported to the police and/or First Response.

You have a statutory duty to report if a girl or young woman under 18 informs you they have had FGM or if you see it. If FGM has taken place it is a significant child protection issue and must be documented and reported to First Response and/or the police.

When FGM has taken place, the Children's social care team will liaise with the health services so that an assessment takes place and to look at how the girl and family will be supported to access appropriate health care if needed. Legal action may be considered.

For more information on this topic, see the online South West Child Protection Procedures, NSPCC or locally BAVA. Contact details in the appendix.

The Prevent Duty

It is essential that staff members are able to identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, and know what to do when they are identified. Staff will be trained to recognise possible signs. In line with our e-safety policy appropriate controls for digital content will be in place.

There is no single way of identifying an individual who is likely to be susceptible to a terrorist ideology. As with managing other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour which



could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. It is important to take action if staff observe behaviour of concern. The Police Prevent Team can give advice, contact 01278 647466 or ring 101 and ask for the Prevent team, explaining you are calling about extremism or radicalisation.

Any concerns about a child will be referred through First Response or the police. The concern may then be dealt with through usual safeguarding processes or referred to the Channel process. For information regarding the Channel process an email address is in the appendix along with other contacts.

In addition if you think a child is at risk of extremism you must contact the Counter Extremism Group at email: counter.extremism@education.gsi.gov.uk or Tel: 020 7340 7264

3. Confidentiality and Appropriate Disclosure of Information

Confidentiality is crucial to all our relationships, but the welfare of the child is paramount. The law does not allow anyone to keep concerns relating to abuse to themselves. Therefore, confidentiality may not be maintained if the withholding of information will prejudice the welfare of the child.

All information that has been collected on any child will be kept locked and secure and access will be limited to the appropriate staff, management and relevant agencies.

In the event of an investigation it is essential that no information on child protection concerns relating to a child are disclosed inappropriately. Any such leaks could have serious consequences for both the child concerned and any investigation.

If uncertain about what information may be shared, take advice or refer to Bristol's Information Sharing protocol. (Please see Further Information section for a link.)



- Whilst parents / carers have the right to see any records kept on their child, this might not always be appropriate and should not put the child or yourself at risk.
- It is very important that only those who need to know, actually know, to avoid rumour and gossip that could affect the child, parent / carer and the group.

4.

Protecting Children and Young People

Please refer to BSCB Bristol Multi Agency Threshold Guidance, to help you identify the response needed.

Recognising Abuse

Recognising abuse is one of the first steps in protecting children and young people. There could be signs or behaviour that make you feel concerned. All staff should be alert to the following types of behaviour in the children:

- Becoming excessively aggressive, withdrawn or clingy.
- Seeming to be keeping a secret
- Significant changes in children's behaviour
- Deterioration in children's well-being
- Unexplained bruising, marks or signs of possible abuse or neglect.
- Any bruising on a non-mobile baby
- Unreasonable fear of certain people or places
- Acting out in an inappropriate way, perhaps with adults, other children, toys or objects
- Children's comments which give cause for concern, e.g.: inconsistent explanations of bruising, injuries or burns
- Self-harm
- Sexually explicit language or actions
- Are upset, withdrawn or angry after using the internet or texting
- Children who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions

Staff should be equally vigilant regarding signs relating to disabled children and not automatically assume that any of the above relates to their impairment.



Not all concerns about children or young people relate to abuse, there may well be other explanations. It is important to keep an open mind and consider what you know about the child and their circumstances.

If you are worried, it is not your responsibility to investigate and decide if it is abuse. It is your responsibility to act on your concerns and do something about it.

1. What to do if Abuse is Disclosed

The setting is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively.

- Stay calm.
- Listen to what the child / young person is actually saying.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Ask Open questions, e.g.: Can you tell me why you are upset? Can you tell me what is frightening you? Can you tell me why you don't want to go home today? Open questions enable you to gain information and clarification.
- Don't ask leading questions. This could lead a child to say something or agree with you wrongly. A closed question is: Are you afraid to go home because your Mum will hit you?
- Do not ask the child / young person to repeat what they have they told you, for another worker or committee member; as if the matter is to be investigated further it will be done so by trained professionals.
- Do not promise the child that this information can be kept secret, as subsequent disclosure could then lead to the child feeling betrayed.
- If appropriate explain to the child who you are going to tell and why. If the child asks what might happen next, it is ok to say that you don't know, but that you can be there to support them if they want.
- Make a note of any conversations with the child, trying to make these as detailed as possible, including when and where the conversations took place. Draw a diagram, if appropriate, to show the position of any bruises or marks the child or young person shows you, trying to indicate the size, shape and colour.
- Record as soon as possible and use the **actual words** used by the child.



- Keep all records factual. Be aware of not making assumptions or interpretations of what the child / young person is telling you. Store all records securely.
- Discuss your concerns with the Designated Senior responsible for child protection. If the allegations implicate the senior worker, the concerns should be discussed with the next tier of line management - the named committee member responsible for child protection (the Child Protection Officer. This must be reported as soon as possible to the LADO. See details in the Staff allegations section)
- If appropriate, inform parents / carers that you are going to report your suspicions / concerns. This might not always be possible and should not put the child or yourself at risk. When you report an incident, First Response/duty officer will ask you if the parent / carer has been informed. If they haven't, they will want to know the reasons why.
- If possible, you, or your Designated Senior, will report this information to an appropriate agency, mostly this will be First Response who will triage your call (see Appendix A). You can contact First Response by phone or if it is at the Families in Focus (previously called Early Help) level, by using the online Request for Help form (see link in 'further information').
- First Response will assess your call and pass you onto an appropriate agency. This will be Social Care (Level 3 Statutory Response) if it is a Child Protection issue or Families in Focus (Level 2 Escalating, Targeted support/Escalating Needs) if the concern is at a lower level but a multiagency response is needed. First Response may also signpost to other services or even ask you to plan to support the child. (Level 1 Plus Additional support Universal Services).
- Once the referral has been made, if appropriate, you can tell the child what is going to happen and what to expect.

2. What to do if Abuse is Suspected

- If any signs or symptoms lead you to feel concerned that a child may be being abused or neglected, it is important that you record these (what, when & where) and share these concerns with the Designated Senior.
- Decide a plan of action:



- Ongoing observation of the child noting any further concerns.
 - Discussion with other staff to gain further information they may have.
 - Discussion with Parents/carers to establish if there might be reasons for the child's behaviour /actions.
 - Keep an open mind and avoid assumptions about the source of the harm.
 - Work with the child and parents/carers to reduce risk, this may be by offering a service through your setting or by referring to additional support externally.
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- If you or the Designated Senior is uncertain about whether the concern is reportable, call the Families in Focus Team for advice.
 - If you are still concerned about the welfare of the child / young person, this information must be passed on to First Response. Parents / carers should be informed unless you think this could put the child or yourself at risk.
 - First Response will assess your call and pass you onto an appropriate agency. This will be Social Care (Level 3 Statutory Response) if it is a Child Protection issue or Families in Focus (Level 2 Escalating, Targeted support/Escalating Needs) if the concern is at a lower level but a multiagency response is needed. First Response may also signpost to other services or even ask you to plan to support the child. (Level 1 Plus Additional support Universal Services).
 - If First Response has been contacted and they pass you to Children's' Social Care, they should let you know that they are responding to what you have told them. If you have not heard from the Social Care team, it may be appropriate to contact them to ensure that the details you gave them have been taken into consideration and acted upon.



3. What to do if it is an emergency

If you think a child is in immediate danger you should telephone the police on 999. In all other circumstances you need to refer the matter to First Response and follow the procedure described in section 1 above.

In a medical emergency your first action may need to be one of the following:

- Telephone for an ambulance, or,
- Ask the parent to take the child to the hospital at once, or,
- Take the child yourself

The child is the legal responsibility of the parent/carer and they must be involved as soon as practical, unless to do so would put the child at immediate risk of harm. Having taken the necessary emergency action it is important that you make immediate contact with First Response. If it is out of office hours, contact the Emergency duty team.

Working with Children and Young People

1. Recognising inappropriate behaviour in staff, volunteers and other adults.

There is no guaranteed way to identify a person who will harm children. However, there are possible warning signs. These may include:

- Paying an excessive amount of attention to a child or groups of children, providing presents, money or having favourites
- Seeking out vulnerable children, e.g. disabled children
- Trying to spend time alone with a particular child or group of children on a regular basis
- Making inappropriate sexual comments
- Sharing inappropriate images
- Being vague about where they have worked or when they have been employed
- Encouraging secretiveness

There may be other sources of concern; this is not a conclusive list. If you are concerned about another staff member or volunteer's behaviour you need to pass this on to the Designated Senior.



2. If a Staff Allegation is made, or you Suspect a Member of Staff or Volunteer of Abuse or Inappropriate Behaviour:

The LADO MUST be involved and consulted on ALL staff allegation incidents before an investigation of any type occurs.

If it appears that a staff member or volunteer has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, or,
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, or,
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children then these procedures **must** be followed:
- Record your concerns and report them to the Designated Senior.
 - The Designated Senior should take steps to ensure that during the remainder of the working day that particular member of staff is not left in sole charge of the children or any child.
 - At the earliest opportunity, contact the setting's Child Protection Officer - see list in Appendix A.
 - It may be clear in some cases, where a child has been injured and/or there is clear evidence of significant harm or risk of significant harm, an immediate referral must be made to the police, First Response or emergency services. In addition:
 - Either the Designated Senior or the Child Protection Officer must then contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) **WITHIN 1 WORKING DAY** of receiving the report of an allegation.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Telephone: 0117 903 7795 or Work Mobile: 07795 091020

- The setting should then follow the LADO's advice on how to deal with allegations against staff. **Note:** Do not start any investigation into the allegation until the LADO has been contacted.
- The setting should take advice from the LADO on how and when to inform the parents of the child.



- The setting is required to inform OFSTED of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visit or outing within 14 days. (See Appendix A.)
- If the concern is regarding the Designated Senior, the above procedure will be followed but the report will be made to the Deputy worker/Child Protection Officer.

3. Support to Staff and Volunteers

The management committee will fully support all members of staff in following this procedure. Following an allegation or investigation:

- Staff and volunteers who work with issues of child protection may themselves need support in dealing with the emotional distress this can cause. They can talk to the setting's Child Protection Officer and any of the appropriate agencies listed in Appendix A.
- Staff, volunteers or management members may also be subject to allegations of abusing children in relation to their work for the setting. While support will be offered to these individuals by the setting, we will ensure that the agency dealing with the matter is given all assistance in pursuing any investigation and the Bristol LADO will be informed. The disciplinary procedure may be implemented.

4. Recruitment and employment of Staff and Volunteers

We acknowledge that paedophiles and those that pose a threat to children may be attracted to employment that allows them access to children and young people. As part of this policy we will ensure that people working with the children are safe to do so.

- All staff (including the setting's Manager/Leader) and volunteers will be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service on joining the scheme, to be renewed every 3 years.
- All people connected with the setting must declare all convictions/cautions incurred since DBS disclosure which may affect their suitability to work with children.
- All people connected with the setting must declare their disqualification status and that of other persons living or working in their household.



- Two references will be taken up prior to appointment for new staff and volunteers and a medical reference may also be required.
- The selection and interview procedure of the setting will be adhered to. This must include a full employment history, qualifications, interview and identity checks.
- Providers must also meet their responsibilities under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 which includes a duty to make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service where a member of staff is dismissed (or would have been had the person not left the setting first) because they have harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm.

5. Use of Mobile Phones, Cameras and E safety

We are aware of the risks associated with the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting. To manage this appropriately we have a separate policy regarding the use of these devices. In addition we will ensure that all internet compatible devices used in the setting will have appropriate filters and controls.

6. Staff Behaviour

All staff, volunteers and management members within the setting recognise that they need to conduct themselves in an appropriate, open and transparent way to ensure a safer environment for all.

In addition we will use “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings,” as a tool to develop setting specific guidance on behaviour for staff and volunteers.

7. Whistleblowing

We have a separate whistle blowing procedure so serious and or systemic concerns about senior staff or management may be reported to more senior member of staff/management or to an appropriate external organisation if necessary. Allegations about specific staff members should be dealt with in line with the staff allegation section earlier in this document.



Further Information

South West Child Protection Procedures – provide detailed online information on all aspects of child protection, e.g : Staff allegations – www.swcpp.org.uk

“Addendum to the Multi Agency Guidance for Injuries in Non- Mobile babies” <http://bandltd.org.uk/development-support/safeguarding-non-mobile-babies-addendum-early-years-settings-childminders>

Working Together to Safeguard Children
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

First Response online Request for Help form- (Please note you cannot print off a copy of this form, so keep a record of the information sent) Do not send any child or family details by unsecured email.
https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en_US/social-care-health/report-concern-about-child-for-professionals

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings
<http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices-2015-final1.pdf>

Information sharing. Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf

BSCB “Guidance on the transfer of a child protection safeguarding file to another educational setting”
<https://bristolsafeguarding.org/media/1162/guidance-on-transfer-info-in-education.pdf>



Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

BSCB Threshold Guidance-2018

<https://bristolsafeguarding.org/children-home/professionals/policies/#ThresholdGuidance>

EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements – Child Protection



Named Child Protection Officer- Judith Hadley

Designated senior - Jac Blacker (centre manager)

Avonmouth Community Centre Association Child Protection Policy

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees.....Judith Hadley.....

Date agreed by the board of trustees...19th July 2018.....

Date for review.....July 2018



Safeguarding Implementation/Action Plan

Action	Priority level	Person/Group responsible	Resources required	Target completion date	Completion date
Nominate a child protection officer	1	Board of trustees	None	July 2018	July 2018
Appoint designated senior	1	Board of trustees	None	July 2018	July 2018
Training for child protection officer	1	Board of trustees and Centre manager	Time Cost of training	Sept 2018	
Training for designated senior	1	Board of trustees and Centre manager	Time Cost of training	Sept 2018	
Training for staff working directly with children	1	Centre manager and child protection officer	Time Cost of training Cost of child care	July 2018	May 2018
Training for staff and volunteers not directly working with children	2	Centre manager	Time Cost of training	Oct 2018	
Dissemination and circulation of child protection policy	1	Board, centre manager and senior play worker	none	July 2018	
Review of Child protection policy	3	Board	None	July 2019	
Review ALM membership sign in forms	3	Centre manager and ALM senior	Time	August 2018	