



BIRMINGHAM CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The Mission Statement of Birmingham Child Contact Centre says that the organisation aims to: "Promote safe child contact within a national framework of child contact centres and services".

Accountability

Copies of this policy and its accompanying Statement of Commitment will be given to all of Birmingham Child Contact Centre's existing and new trustees and volunteers.

They will be required to retain the first copy, initial and return a second copy and sign and return the 'Statement of Commitment'.

Basic Principles

1. Birmingham Child Contact Centre believes that children and young people need safe environments in which they can grow and develop in confidence.
2. Birmingham Child Contact Centre recognises that organisations working with and supporting children and young people have a duty to keep them safe.
3. Birmingham Child Contact Centre places safeguarding children and young people and child protection at the centre of its activities.
4. Birmingham Child Contact Centre is committed to and working towards the objectives as defined in the [Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children March 2013 \(HM Government\)](#) (See Ref i). The Guidance makes clear that all those working to support children and their families should follow the guidance and states:
"It should be read and followed by LSCB Chairs and senior managers within organisations who commission and provide services for children and families, including social workers and professionals from health services, adult services, the police, Academy Trusts, education and the voluntary and community sector who have contact with children and families. All relevant professionals should read and comply with this guidance unless exceptional circumstances arise".
5. Birmingham Child Contact Centre believes that children and young people should not be exposed to negligence or avoidable risks.
6. Birmingham Child Contact Centre recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are emotive issues that need to be handled both sensitively and carefully.
7. Birmingham Child Contact Centre is committed to creating and implementing policies and procedures that will ensure where risks need to be taken regarding children and young people they are both fully assessed and carefully managed.
8. Birmingham Child Contact Centre also subscribes strongly to the view that **safeguarding is everyone's responsibility**. Everyone who works with children has a responsibility for keeping them safe. No single professional can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances and, if children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

9. Birmingham Child Contact Centre endorses the guidance in “Working Together” about the importance of developing a “child centred approach” It states:
- “Effective safeguarding systems are child centred. Failings in safeguarding systems are too often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults ahead of the needs of children.”
 - “Anyone working with children should see and speak to the child; listen to what they say; take their views seriously; and work with them collaboratively when deciding how to support their needs.
10. A child-centred approach adopted by Birmingham Child Contact Centre is supported by:
- the Children Act 1989 (as amended by section 53 of the Children Act 2004). This Act requires local authorities to give due regard to a child’s wishes when determining what services to provide under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, and before making decisions about action to be taken to protect individual children under section 47 of the Children Act 1989. These duties complement requirements relating to the wishes and feelings of children who are, or may be, looked after (section 22(4) Children Act 1989), including those who are provided with accommodation under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 and children taken into police protection (section 46(3)(d) of that Act);
 - the Equality Act 2010 which puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs; and
 - the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an international agreement that protects the rights of children and provides a child-centred framework for the development of services to children. The UK Government ratified the UNCRC in 1991 and, by doing so, recognises children’s rights to expression and receiving information.”
11. Birmingham Child Contact Centre is committed to ensuring that all its staff, trustees and member centres are aware of, kept up to date with and operate in accordance with good practice in relation with Safeguarding and Child Protection. This will mean that they will have the ability to recognise, respond to, report, record and refer issues of Safeguarding and Child Protection.
12. Birmingham Child Contact Centre recognises the difference between Child Protection and Safeguarding namely:
- Child Protection** is the process of protecting individual children identified as either suffering or likely to suffer significant harm as a result of abuse or neglect (“Working Together... 2010”). It involves recognising signs and symptoms of physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect and acting upon them.
- Safeguarding** involves keeping children and young people safe from a much wider range of potential dangers and/or harm. It looks at preventative action rather than just reactive action.
13. Birmingham Child Contact Centre is committed to ensuring that all its staff, trustees and volunteers are aware of, kept up to date with and operate in accordance with good practice in relation with Safeguarding and Child Protection. This will mean that they will have the ability to recognise, respond to, report, record and refer issues of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

14. Birmingham Child Contact Centre firmly believes that all volunteers, coordinators and trustees acknowledge the following:

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organization should play their full part; and
- A child-centred approach is vital for services to be effective; i.e. services should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

15. For clarity, Birmingham Child Contact Centre offers the following definitions to the following terms:

Definition of Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect from harm.

Safeguarding means...

- Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment
- Preventing harm to children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

Definition of Child protection:

Child protection is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. This includes child protection procedures that detail how to respond to concerns about a child.

Safeguarding children and child protection and guidance and legislation applies to children up to the age of 18.

Definition of Child Abuse:

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

An abused child will often experience more than one type of abuse, as well as other difficulties in their lives. It often happens over a period of time, rather than being a one-off event. And it can increasingly happen online.

The NSPCC estimate that over half a million children are abused in the UK each year.

Definition of Neglect:

Neglect is the ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs and is the most common form of child abuse.

A child may be left hungry or dirty, without adequate clothing, shelter, supervision, medical or health care.

A child may be put in danger or not protected from physical or emotional harm.

They may not get the love, care and attention they need from their parents.

A child who is neglected will often suffer from other abuse as well. Neglect is dangerous and can cause serious, long-term damage - even death.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

Definition of Significant Harm:

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of 'Significant Harm' as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the best interests of children and gives local authorities a duty to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm.

<http://suffolkscb.org.uk/information-and-links/significant-harm/>

Intentions

Managing safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within Birmingham Child Contact Centre

Birmingham Child Contact Centre will have one Volunteer who will be responsible for ensuring that the Policy and its processes are implemented and adhered to. This person is the Volunteer & Families Coordinator.

Birmingham Child Contact Centre will also have one trustee who will have specific responsibilities for all matters referring to Safeguarding and Child Protection. This trustee's details are noted on the Contact Centre's, Contact Information Document; see Volunteers & Families Coordinator / Duty Coordinator, or can be addressed by post to: Trustee for Safeguarding, Edgbaston Community Centre, 40 Woodview Drive, Birmingham, B15 2HU

Recruitment

Disclosure and Barring Service

When recruiting Birmingham Child Contact Centre employees, trustees and volunteers who have unsupervised access to children, Birmingham Child Contact Centre will adhere to a thorough and standardised procedure that will include making appropriate checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which helps employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. (It replaced the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA):

- When first joining the organisation and every three years thereafter – as stated above, this applies to staff/trustees/unsupervised volunteers.
- Completing and signing a standard application form and a full CV including a written statement of their suitability for the post applied for.
- Signing a personal declaration of eligibility stating any criminal convictions including those considered to be spent
- Being asked to provide a minimum of two character references (excluding family members and those that have known the applicant personally for less than two years)
- Reading, understanding, accepting and complying with Birmingham Child Contact Centre's Policy for Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as part of the terms and conditions of their appointment as a Volunteer or trustee.

This procedure must be followed before any appointments are confirmed.

Any individual or organization undertaking relevant work for Birmingham Child Contact Centre on a contractual basis will need to demonstrate that they have procedures in place to carry out DBS and or other checks on their staff to an appropriate level.

Birmingham Child Contact Centre's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will also extend to the following in collaboration with its umbrella organisation:

- National Association of Child Contact Centre's (NACCC) accreditation and re-accreditation processes for its member centres requiring them to ensure that all their staff and volunteers are DBS checked to an enhanced level either when they first become involved with the centre or every three years.
- National Association of Child Contact Centre's (NACCC) ensuring that its staff, trustees and member centres are all aware of and kept up to date with good practice and procedural changes in relation to DBS check

Education and Training

The Birmingham Child Contact Centre induction process will include “Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children” training for all volunteers, staff and trustees. This is mandatory. Records of all training will be kept by the Volunteers & Families Coordinator and Training Coordinator

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children: Training for Birmingham Child Contact Centre

Birmingham Child Contact Centre will produce and regularly update training modules which will be made available by the Volunteers & Families Coordinator and Training Coordinator. Copies of our policies are also on BCCC’s website.

- Birmingham Child Contact Centre will dispense training for volunteers and coordinators regularly and at least every three years.
- Birmingham Child Contact Centre will encourage its volunteers, coordinators and trustees to operate in accordance with Birmingham City Council’s Local Safeguarding Children’s Board’s (LSCB) policies and procedures.
- Birmingham Child Contact Centre will help its volunteers, coordinators and trustees to be aware of legislation, guidelines and directives updates as and when they are issued.
- There is a National Domestic Violence Unit helpline available on 0800 800 0028, Birmingham Children’s Services have an Emergency Duty Team available on 0121 675 4806. NACCC has a dedicated Saturday safeguarding helpline operating from 10:00 am-6:00pm all run by trained members of staff to provide guidance and support when working with Safeguarding or Child Protection concerns.

Support and Supervision

- All volunteers, coordinators and trustees with direct access to information about or relating to children will be given on-going supervision.

Sharing Information

Birmingham Child Contact Centre staff, trustees and volunteers will follow a procedure that ensures that every safeguarding issue brought to the attention of Birmingham Child Contact Centre staff/trustees/volunteers is logged correctly and followed up to ensure that information is shared correctly with the relevant agencies.

Providing Advice and Support

Birmingham Child Contact Centre will ensure that Safeguarding is a rolling agenda item in all staff supervision.

Failing to follow or non-compliance with recognized procedures and good practice in relation to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by Birmingham Child Contact Centre’s staff and trustees will generate support, information and training.

In more serious cases involving Birmingham Child Contact Centre’s trustees or volunteers the people involved could be removed from the board of trustees or their role as a volunteer, by the Chair of the Board.

Distribution of Birmingham Child Contact Centre's Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection

A copy of this policy will be:

- Included in the Birmingham Child Contact Centre Handbook and Guidance Notes for trustees.
- Sent to all of Birmingham Child Contact Centre's members
- Made available on its website
- Made available to all of Birmingham Child Contact Centre's partner organisations, where applicable.

Review of Birmingham Child Contact Centre's Policy for Safeguarding and Child Protection

This will take place annually.

Additional changes to take account of new legislation and practice directions will also be made as and when required.

Copies of the revised policy will be made available as indicated in the distribution list shown above.