



SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION POLICY – CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

1. Purpose and Scope of This Policy Statement

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd., a certified social enterprise, is a youth mentoring community business dedicated to supporting young people aged 11-18 in Nottingham. Our aim is to create a “third space” beyond home and school where young people can connect, grow, and thrive through activities that enhance mental health, collaboration, critical thinking, growth mindset, and leadership, with surpluses reinvested to maximise community benefit.

This policy is to reflect our comprehensive approach:

- **Safeguarding** means promoting the welfare of children, young people, parents/carers, and vulnerable adults, preventing impairment of their health or development, accident recording, and creating a safe environment where they can grow and achieve.
- **Child protection** refers specifically to the arrangements and procedures for identifying, responding to, and reporting concerns that a child or young person may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (including abuse or neglect).

This policy encompasses both safeguarding (prevention and promotion) and child protection (response to harm concerns). It provides the overarching principles guiding our approach to keeping children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe.

This policy also applies to vulnerable adults participating in or affected by our services, including mentoring, parents’ programmes, or community activities.

This policy applies to anyone working on behalf of Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd., including senior managers, staff, volunteers, and young people. All adults will be required to sign a declaration confirming they have read and will adhere to this policy, with declarations stored securely in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has been developed based on legislation, policy, and guidance that seeks to protect children in England, including:



- Children Act 1989
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (amended 2015)
- Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Care Act 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Prevent Duty Guidance 2015 (updated 2023)
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024
- Nottingham Adult Safeguarding Board procedures

3. Supporting Documents

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, procedures, and guidance, including:

- Role description for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Managing complaints and whistleblowing procedures
- Data Protection Policy



4. Our Beliefs and Recognition

We believe that:

- Children, young people, and vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind.
- We have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people, and vulnerable adults, to keep them safe, and to operate in a way that protects them.

We recognise that:

- The welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults is paramount in all the work we do and decisions we take.
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have an equal right to protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Some children are additionally vulnerable due to previous experiences, dependency levels, communication needs, or other issues, requiring extra safeguards to keep them safe.
- Some adults are additionally vulnerable due to disability, mental health, age, illness, or other factors.
- Specific considerations are needed for safeguarding children from Black, Asian, and minoritised ethnic communities, deaf and disabled children, LGBTQ+ children, and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

5. Commitments to Keep Children, Young people, and Vulnerable Adults Safe

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd. will seek to keep children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe by:

- Valuing, listening to, and respecting them, ensuring their voices are heard in age-appropriate ways.
- Adopting safeguarding best practices through our policies, procedures, and codes of conduct for staff and volunteers.



- Developing and implementing an effective online safety policy, particularly for activities involving anonymous polls or virtual sessions.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training, and quality assurance measures, ensuring they can confidently follow our policies and procedures.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks (e.g., DBS) are made and re-checked regularly.
- Recording, storing, and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation (see our Data Protection Policy).
- Maintaining accurate and timely accident records as part of creating and maintaining a safe environment, in line with our Health and Safety Policy and Accident Book procedures.
- Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, parents, and families via consent forms, posters, and discussions.
- Ensuring children, young people, and their families know where to go for help if they have concerns (bridgebuilderssafeguarding@gmail.com).
- Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, involving children, parents, and carers appropriately (information will be shared without consent where necessary to protect a child, in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).
- Managing allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately, reporting to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours where required.
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment, with procedures to address bullying effectively.
- Providing a safe physical environment for children, staff, and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law (e.g., risk assessments for in-person events).
- Building a safeguarding culture where staff, volunteers, children, and families treat each other with respect and feel comfortable sharing concerns.



- We will make referrals to Adult Social Care where appropriate.

6. Protecting Staff and Volunteers

To protect staff and volunteers from allegations of abuse, we recommend the following guidelines:

- Staff and volunteers should not be alone with young people, lock/unlock premises without another adult present, transport young people without another adult, take young people to their homes, visit young people at home without prior agreement and another adult present, make inappropriate contact (e.g., via personal social media), leave young people unattended, or leave them in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained, DBS-checked, or hold a safeguarding certificate.
- Staff and volunteers should avoid showing favouritism and ensure all interactions remain professional and within the club setting.

7. Reporting Abuse

If abuse is suspected or reported:

1. **Receive:** Listen actively to concerns, giving undivided attention without showing shock or disbelief.
2. **Reassure:** Stay calm, reassure the child they've done the right thing, and confirm it's not their fault.
3. **React:** Establish facts with open questions (e.g., "Can you tell me more?"), avoid criticising the perpetrator, and explain next steps.
4. **Record:** Make brief notes during or immediately after the conversation, recording the date, time, place, and exact words used, in line with GDPR.
5. **Report:** Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible, passing written notes directly to them. Do not discuss with others outside the organisation. If critical, refer to Nottingham's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) immediately on 0115 876 4800.

Confidentiality cannot be promised if a child's safety is at risk, and staff have a



professional duty to share information with relevant agencies to safeguard children.

For vulnerable adults, referrals will be made to Nottingham Adult Social Care (contact via MASH or adult safeguarding line).

8. Accident Recording and Safeguarding

All accidents, injuries, or near-misses involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults must be recorded in the organisation's Accident Book (see Health and Safety Policy) within 24 hours.

Any accident that may indicate neglect, physical abuse, or failure to supervise must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL will assess whether a safeguarding referral to Nottingham MASH (0115 876 4800) is required, in line with this policy and *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*.

Records in the Accident Book will be stored securely in accordance with our Data Protection Policy and reviewed regularly for patterns that may indicate safeguarding concerns.

9. Child Protection Procedures

These procedures apply where there are concerns that a **child, young person, or vulnerable adult** may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (including abuse or neglect).

The threshold for protection action is when there is reasonable cause to suspect significant harm (Children Act 1989, s.47 for children; Care Act 2014 for vulnerable adults).

- **Immediate action:** If a child is in immediate danger, call 999.
- **Non-urgent but significant concern:** Report to the DSL without delay (same working day). The DSL will:
 - Assess the information and decide on next steps (e.g., seek advice from MASH if unsure).
 - Make a referral to Nottingham MASH (0115 876 4800) if the threshold for s.47 enquiry or s.17 child in need is met.
 - Record the decision, rationale, and actions taken.



- Referrals for vulnerable adults follow Care Act procedures.
- **Multi-agency working:** We will cooperate fully with any child protection enquiries, attend strategy discussions/child protection conferences as required, and share information promptly to support assessment and planning.
- **Confidentiality:** Confidentiality cannot be promised if a child's safety is at risk. Staff have a professional duty to share information with relevant agencies to safeguard children, even without consent where necessary for protection (in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023).

10. Specific Safeguarding Themes

We acknowledge specific safeguarding risks, including but not limited to: bullying (including cyberbullying), child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, gangs and youth violence, mental health, radicalisation, sexting, trafficking, upskirting, financial abuse, domestic abuse, modern slavery, self-neglect, etc. Staff and volunteers will receive training to identify and report these concerns, including Prevent training to address radicalisation risks.

11. Contact Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Phone: 074 214 37484

Email: bridgebuilderssafeguarding@gmail.com

Nottingham Adult Social Care

Phone: 0115 876 3330

Nottingham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Phone: 0115 876 4800

NSPCC Helpline

Phone: 0808 800 5000

Nottingham Adult Social Care



Created on: 13 September, 2024	Approved by: Managing Director
Reviewed: 12 March, 2025 31 January, 2026 15 June, 2026	No. of review: 3
Next review: 31 June, 2027	