



# BEYOND THE HORIZON

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY & PROCEDURE

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## **PART ONE - THE POLICY**

### **1. Child Protection in Beyond the Horizon Charity**

1.1 Beyond the Horizon Charity exists to create opportunities for children and young people to find hope and transformation now and fulfilment in their future. Beyond the Horizon Charity wants to promote the safety and wellbeing of each child and young person in order that they have the best possible outcomes in all aspects of their lives. Beyond the Horizon Charity wants children and young people to receive a quality service, so are committed to their protection, the prevention of harm, the promotion of their wellbeing and development, and their opportunity to experience optimum life chances.

1.2 Everyone within Beyond the Horizon Charity shares the responsibility to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, regardless of their position and whether they work in a paid or unpaid capacity.

1.3 Beyond the Horizon Charity fully recognises the importance of working with parents, carers, and communities, and co-operating with other agencies in protecting children and young people.

1.4 All activity within Beyond the Horizon Charity should consider and put measures in place to safeguard children and young people. However, during the course of our work situations will arise that raise concern regarding the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person. In response to these situations it may be necessary for a referral to be made to a Children's Services department who may need to take action to ensure the child or young person's protection. This is referred to as Child Protection and is part of the wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

1.5 Child Protection is the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are believed to be suffering, or at risk of suffering, 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 the child, and places a duty on Local Authorities to make enquiries to decide whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the welfare of a child who is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

1.6 Beyond the Horizon Charity is required to follow the Child Protection Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) in Birmingham. Beyond the Horizon Charity Child Protection procedures are designed to augment local procedures and both must be followed.

1.7 In all its undertakings, Beyond the Horizon Charity will:

- Maintain a clear focus on the interests and rights of the child
- Respect everyone who receives or provides its services;
- Be supportive to children and their parent/s or carer/s in order to help prevent abuse occurring or to mitigate its effect;
- Co-operate with other agencies in dealing with actual or likely abuse;
- Support BTHC team members (including volunteers) in working in this area of activity.

## 2. Guiding Principles

2.1 The child's interests are **paramount** and his or her safety and welfare will always be given first priority.

2.2 Children and young people have the right to protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation (article 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) **Also see Appendices (Glossary) for definitions.**

2.3 Safeguarding children and young people (including Child Protection) is everyone's responsibility.

2.4 A child's concern will be listened to and always taken seriously.

2.5 The limits of confidentiality in the context of Child Protection will be explained to service participants at the time of their initial involvement with the organisation.

2.6 Care will be taken not to infringe privacy and confidentiality any more than is necessary to safeguard the welfare of the child.

2.7 In assessing the need for action when faced with Child Protection concerns, BTHC team members will consider the situation in the context of family relationships, religion and culture, but will not condone or ignore abusive behaviours that may be deemed acceptable to others.

2.8 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, BTHC team members will share their concerns with service participants and inform them of any action they intend to take.

2.9 Arrangements will be made to assist with communication in circumstances of disability or where English is not the first language.

2.10 BTHC team members will use plain, jargon-free language appropriate to the age, understanding and culture of each person, and will explain any unavoidable technical or professional terms.

2.11 Beyond the Horizon Charity will ensure that all BTHC team members, including volunteers, understand the agency's Child Protection procedures, and are trained to appropriate levels in

Safeguarding and Child Protection matters, including the latest Government guidance and requirements.

2.12 Beyond the Horizon Charity will ensure that the Child Protection procedures for the authorities within which it operates are understood in order that good working relationships and appropriate levels of co-operation can be maintained.

2.13 Beyond the Horizon Charity will ensure that all BTHC team members receive appropriate supervision on a regular basis and have access to a line manager in the event of the need for urgent case discussion.

2.14 Beyond the Horizon Charity is committed to learning and developing to improve safety for children and young people.

### **3 Scope of the Policy**

3.1 Every child or young person has the right to protection. Beyond the Horizon Charity is committed to practice that promotes good outcomes for children and young people and protects them from harm. BTHC team members accept and recognise their responsibility to develop awareness of the issues that cause children and young people harm.

3.2 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Everyone working within Beyond the Horizon Charity has a responsibility to protect children and young people and to respond to any concerns about a child or young person thought to be suffering (or suffered) harm as a result of abuse or neglect. Therefore, there is no trustee, director, manager, practitioner (including full-time, part-time and casual workers), carer, administrator, domestic assistant or volunteer that falls outside the scope of this Policy.

### **4 The aim of the Policy**

**Beyond the Horizon Charity endeavours to safeguard children and young people by ensuring that every BTHC team member will:**

- **Understand their responsibility in relation to protecting children**
- **Know how to respond to concerns regarding the safety or welfare of a child or young person**
- **Know how to respond to an allegation made against a member of BTHC team members where it is considered that a child may have been harmed or put at risk of harm.**

### **5 Roles and Accountabilities**

5.1 Everyone working within Beyond the Horizon Charity shares the responsibility to respond to concerns regarding the safety or welfare of children and young people. However, it is not the responsibility of anyone within Beyond the Horizon Charity to investigate concerns, but to take their

concerns to the appropriate responsible person and referring them on to the appropriate agency, if required.

5.2 Beyond the Horizon Charity has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who BTHC team members will go to with their concerns. Following the receipt of information regarding a concern, the DSL is responsible for:

- Considering any immediate action required to protect the child
- Deciding, after consultation with the team member and if necessary their clinical supervisor, whether the concern warrants a referral to the relevant authority's Children's Services Department
- Making the referral (or delegating this to the BTHC team member if appropriate)
- Ensuring that the information has been recorded in line with Beyond the Horizon Charity standards and procedures for case file recording and Safeguarding incident reporting
- Communicating any concerns to Trustees at quarterly meetings or sooner if deemed necessary
- Following up the referral where required (for example, where there has been no response from the Children's Services department)

**Failure (by anyone) to respond to, or report concerns regarding the safety or welfare of children and young people could result in disciplinary action.**

5.3 All BTHC team members must be aware of who they should take concerns to in the absence of the DSL. The DSL should ensure that an up to date list (with contact numbers) is available. **Current telephone numbers can be found on the last page of this document.** Each BTHC team member is given a list of contact numbers when they join. Any changes to this list will be sent out immediately. There is a Safeguarding Notice Board in the BTHC office where these numbers can also be found.

5.4 The DSL should follow the procedure for recording any concerns considered to be Safeguarding incidents or near misses (regardless of whether or not the concerns have been referred to a Children's Services department).

5.5 In order to make decisions about what action to take to protect children and young people, the DSL must be clear of their reporting structure and seek advice from the Chair of Trustees as appropriate.

## **6 Training**

6.1 All staff, volunteers and Trustees will undertake Safeguarding and Child Protection training in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

6.2 Trustees and those with no client contact: Induction safeguarding training, guided through Beyond the Horizon Charity's policy and reporting procedures. Refreshed every 2 years.

6.3 All staff and volunteers with direct client contact: Induction safeguarding training, guided through Beyond the Horizon Charity's policy and reporting procedures **and** minimum Level 2 Safeguarding and Child Protection Training. Refreshed every 2 years.

6.4 Designated Safeguarding Leads: As above **and** Level 3 Safeguarding and Child Protection Training or Designated Safeguarding Lead training. Refreshed every 2 years.

6.5 Any updates to Beyond the Horizon Charity policy or procedures will be communicated through management supervision, team meetings and via email.

## **7 Legal framework and guidance**

### 7.1 Legal Framework

Beyond the Horizon Charity's Child Protection Policy and Procedure is underpinned by:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Childcare Act 2006 (EYFS Statutory Framework)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Protection of Children Act 1999
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Equalities Act 2010
- The Police Act 1997
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Act 1998
- GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003

### 7.2 Guidance

Guidance informing this Policy includes:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 – A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused, DfE, March 2015
- Information Sharing, - Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers, May 2024
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education Guidance 2011



- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, May 2019
- NSPCC, Definitions and Signs of Child Abuse, July 2020.
- The Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales (2023)
- Right Help, Right Time - Delivering effective support for children and families in Birmingham, version 5, Dec 2021.
- Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment between children in schools and colleges, Sept 2021.
- After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition – Safeguarding guidance for providers, Sept 2023.
- Safeguarding and protecting people for charities and trustees - Charity Commission for England and Wales, June 2022.
- National Police Chiefs Council – When to call the police, Guidance for schools and colleges

## **8 Associated policies and guidance**

This Policy should be read in conjunction with Beyond the Horizon Charity's:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Beyond the Horizon Code of Conduct
- Lone Working Policy and Lone Working Procedure
- The safety and welfare of Children and Young People is also considered in Beyond the Horizon Charity policies and guidance relating to:
  - Recruitment
  - Involving children and young people in recruitment processes
  - Whistleblowing Policy
  - Complaints Policy and Procedure
  - Health and Safety responsibilities
  - Risk assessments
  - Case recording
  - Process for Recording Safeguarding Concerns
  - Data protection policy
  - Document retention and Disposal Policies
  - Guidance for Online Working, Guidance for Parents, and School Guidance for Schools and consent

## **PART TWO - THE PROCEDURE**

### **9 What to do if you're worried a child is being abused**

**9.1** A Child Protection issue may come to the notice of a BTHC team member or volunteer in several ways:

- A child may make a direct allegation or disclose abuse
- A child may make a comment that seems to suggest abuse

- A child may have bruises or marks
- A child's behaviour may suggest the possibility of abuse
- Something in an adult's behaviour may suggest that they are not a suitable person to care for children.

BTHC team members and volunteers should know how to respond to each of these situations.

**9.2 Where an allegation is made relating to a member of BTHC team members or for any other reason suspicion falls on a member of BTHC team members – please refer to the procedure outlined in PART 3.**

**9.3 No member of BTHC team members should try to investigate whether or not a child has been abused; this responsibility lies with Children's Services departments and the police. All concerns must be taken to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for discussion and agreement about what steps will be taken and by who. Every BTHC team member must be aware of whom to go to when the DSL is unavailable.**

**9.4 All Child Protection concerns must be reported to a Children's Services department, or to the police, on the same day. In addition, the DSL must contact the Chair of Trustees to make them aware of any referral being made. Any delays can result in serious consequences that can fail to protect a child and leave them in an extremely vulnerable position.**

**Failure (by anyone) to respond to, or report concerns regarding the safety or welfare of children and young people could result in disciplinary action.**

**10 If a child makes a direct allegation or disclosure, the BTHC team members should:**

**10.1** Let the child speak but should not ask any prompting or leading questions (such as asking "did this happen last night?"). The general rule is to ask only questions that are necessary to clarify whether the child is alleging that abuse has taken place. *(Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking a child leading questions).*

**10.2** Communicate with the child in a way that is appropriate to their age, understanding and preference. This is especially important for disabled children and for children whose preferred language is not English.

**10.3** Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing in talking to you, but avoid interrupting a child who is freely recalling events.

**10.4** Listen carefully; remembering that children may not necessarily have the vocabulary to explain clearly what it is that distresses them.

- 10.5 Allow the child to speak for as long as they wish; if the child is clearly alleging abuse this does not mean that you need to tell the child not to say any more.
- 10.6 Never promise a child, young person or adult, that an allegation can be kept secret. When an abusive or exploitative relationship exists, a BTHC team member cannot agree to keep this secret.
- 10.7 Record what the child has said, including any times or dates mentioned, and details of any significant marks or behaviour that were observed. Also note the names of any witnesses to what has been said or observed.
- 10.8 Distinguish your own opinion from the facts. Any opinion you write about the child presenting in a certain manner, for example, should be explained with evidence of what leads you to forming this opinion.
- 10.9 Never try to question a person when a child has made a clear allegation about a specific individual. *Where this relates to another member of BTHC team, refer to the procedure outlined in section 3.*
- 10.10 Always take a child seriously if they make an allegation about another child or sibling. This does not necessarily mean that you accept everything the child has said as fact, but all concerns require further enquiries to be made and it is not your responsibility to decide whether abuse has taken place.
- 10.11 Explain to the child what you have to do next and who you are going to speak to.
- 10.12 As soon as possible after the receipt of an allegation or disclosure the BTHC team members must share the information with the BTHC Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). A discussion should agree the next steps and decide whether it is in the best interests of the child to inform the parent/s of the allegation made. (see appendix 3 on Information Sharing).**
- 10.13 If a child or young person is being supported at school and the BTHC team member has a Safeguarding concern, either as the result of a disclosure or the child's presentation (i.e. concern around abuse or neglect) this should be reported to the school DSL. The BTHC team member should then also report this to the BTHC DSL as soon as possible.**
- 10.14 If the child or young person is being supported at a community venue, the BTHC team member should report this to the BTHC DSL immediately.**
- 10.15 In exceptional circumstances, when it is judged that the child or young person is in immediate danger, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should take steps to keep them safe until appropriate action can be taken by Children's Services or the police. If a BTHC team member is unable to contact the DSL (or any of the team members responsible for safeguarding named on the last page of this document) and is working with a child at a community venue, they should keep the child with them only when it is safe for them to do so and should contact Children's Services or the police as soon

as possible. If the team member feels that it is unsafe to keep the child with them and that doing so could put them in further danger, they should confirm the child's address with the child and contact Children's Services or police as soon as the child has been collected from their session. A decision to take such action must be discussed, *immediately*, with the DSL (CEO) or in his/her absence the Chair of Trustees.

10.16 In general, seek to discuss your concerns with the child, as appropriate to their age and understanding, and with their parent/s and seek agreement to making a referral to Children's Services **UNLESS** you consider such a discussion would place the child at an increased risk of significant harm. (see appendix 3 on Information Sharing)

10.17 Where there are concerns that a child has been (or may be at risk of being) harmed and a parent refuses to agree to a referral being made to Children's Services, the parent/s should be informed that the referral will still be made in line with the responsibility of the BTHC team members and charity to act in the best interests of the child.

10.18 All decisions and outcomes relating to sharing information and seeking consent to a referral being made should be fully recorded with an explanation as to how/why decisions have been reached. (See appendix 3 on Information Sharing).

**11 If a child's comments seem to suggest abuse, but it is not clear, the BTHC team member should:**

11.1 Quickly try to create a situation where the child can talk freely (in a quiet room for example, if this is not a therapy session).

11.2 Let the child speak and only ask questions if they are necessary to clarify whether or not the child is trying to say that they have been abused.

11.3 Listen carefully; remembering that children may not necessarily have the vocabulary to explain what it is that distresses them.

11.4 Never promise a child or young person that an allegation can be kept secret.

11.5 If it is clear that the child is alleging abuse, avoid asking any further questions.

**12 If a child presents with a bruise or mark, or the child's behaviour causes concern:**

12.1 There are a number of things that may raise questions in your mind: you may see that a child has bruises or other marks, or may notice something unusual in the child's behaviour. Often these observations could have several different explanations and you may be unsure whether you should be

concerned or not. BTHC team members are not expected to be experts in identifying child abuse, but they should document and report any concerns they have about a child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

12.2 If a BTHC team member is concerned, they should try to be clear in their own mind about what it is that is disturbing them.

12.3 It may be appropriate to ask the child or the parent about a mark or unusual behaviour. Suspicion may be aroused more by an evasive or unconvincing answer than by the mark or behaviour itself.

12.4 If a BTHC team member is concerned, they should note the names of anyone else who saw the mark or behaviour that caused the concern.

12.5 If you are suspicious about a particular person, do not try to question them yourself, but take all information and concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**13. In situations where an adult service participant openly refers to abuse or expresses concern about their, or a partner's treatment of a child, the BTHC team members should:**

13.1 Check back what is being said and make it clear that he/she will need to discuss with their manager what happens next.

13.2 Upon receipt of any such information, the BTHC team member should discuss the matter immediately with the DSL or in their absence Chair of Trustees.

13.3 Where, following consultation with the DSL, it is decided that an immediate Child Protection referral to Children's Services is required, the BTHC team member should write a report detailing their concerns and send to the DSL as soon as possible and the DSL will make the referral to Children's Services. NB: In any such circumstances it is for the Local Authority to decide and negotiate as to who undertakes the investigation.

13.4 BTHC team members should, at all times, respect the right of parents, young people and children to be kept informed throughout the process of identifying concerns and referring them on to Children's Services. The wishes and feelings of the child or young person should, at all times, be ascertained and followed wherever possible. However, the primary consideration must always be the safety and welfare of the child or young person. (see appendix 3 on Information Sharing)

**14. In situations where an adult discloses that they were abused as a child:**

14.1 Adult service participants may disclose that they have been abused as children and the abuse may have continued into adulthood. They may not want to take any further action and it may be sufficient

that the abuse is acknowledged. They may, however, ask for or be assessed as needing help in dealing with these past events because of the impact upon their current behaviour and especially the effect upon any children for whom they have responsibility. In these circumstances the team member receiving such information should liaise with the DSL to:

14.2 Discuss the possibility of making a referral to an appropriate agency for counselling. This should only be made with the agreement of the service user.

14.3 Consider referring the matter to the police. No matter how old the abuse, it is not too late for a prosecution although this will be for the police to decide in conjunction with the Crown Prosecution Service. Before any decision to refer to the police, the DSL team should first liaise with each other or the Chair of Trustees. Again, careful thought will need to be given to how the service user will feel if he or she makes a statement to the police. Such a step requires much courage on the part of the service user. It is important to understand that the outcome may be that no further action is possible either because of a lack of corroborating evidence or because the police assess that the individual complainant will not be able to withstand a detailed cross examination by the solicitor for the defence.

14.4 Where it is alleged there are children currently living with an alleged perpetrator, the BTHC team member should inform the DSL immediately who should then liaise with the Chair of Trustees. In most circumstances the DSL will make the referral (if appropriate) to the Social Services Department within which the children are resident. In the first instance it is for the Children's Services to decide whether to liaise with the police.

14.5 The service participant may indicate that he or she is unwilling to make a statement to the police or talk to Children's Services. A referral should nonetheless be made if it is decided that the allegation is of sufficient substance and concern to be likely to merit further investigation.

## **15 Historical Child Abuse by participants of Beyond the Horizon Charity services**

15.1 Beyond the Horizon Charity has developed a set of clear criteria to determine what constitutes historical abuse, namely:

- The actual or likely abuse reported by an adult, that s/he or another person was abused as a child or young person.
- An adult is defined as anyone over the age of 18
- Abuse comprises emotional abuse, neglect, physical injury and sexual abuse.

15.2 Where a referral is received (from whatever source) alleging historical abuse, this should be passed to Children's Services. Immediate telephone contact should be made (with the Children's Services) where there is reason to believe that the alleged abuser is currently working with children and/or young people either within or outside of Beyond the Horizon Charity.

15.3 Beyond the Horizon Charity listens to, takes seriously and acts responsibly towards allegations of historical abuse and upon receiving information suggesting historical abuse, BTHC team members should:

- Inform the former service participant (or other informant) that the matter will be referred to the Appropriate Statutory Service who will respond to the referral.

**16 In making a referral to a Children's Services Department, Designated Safeguarding Lead or nominated practitioners, should ensure that**

16.1 Any referral that is made by telephone is confirmed in writing within 24 hours. Any telephone conversation should also be recorded (in the child's written records).

16.2 A referral should contain as much that is known (or relevant) of the following information:

- Your name, the charity's name, your role and contact details
- The full name, date of birth and address of the child (and any other names they may be known by)
- The child's current whereabouts and any information about their physical or emotional state
- The child's ethnic origin, language of choice and any communication difficulties
- The names, dates of birth (or ages) of all other members of the household, both adults and children (including any other names they may be known by)
- The names, ages and addresses of the child's main carers and of all those with parental responsibility, and whether they present any safety issues for BTHC team members
- Information on whether those with parental responsibility are aware of the referral
- The child's legal status, placing local authority, name of social worker and contact details
- Details of any significant family members (or others) who are not members of the child's household
- The name, age and address of the alleged or suspected abuser, and whether he/she is aware of the referral
- Details of the nature of the alleged abuse, suspected abuse or general concerns
- If other children are known to have contact with the alleged abuser, give their names, addresses and dates of birth
- Details of the date, time and place where the abuse is alleged to have occurred
- The name, address and contact details for the child's GP, health visitor/school nurse and any other medical professional involved with the family
- The names and contact details for all other professionals involved with the child

**If a referral is being made to Birmingham Children's Trust using a 'Request Support form' please be aware that Egress emails are no longer accepted. Any electronic referral regarding safeguarding or child protection should be sent as a password protected document.**

**Referrals for children living in Birmingham should be sent to:**

**[CASS@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:CASS@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)**

**The Request Support Form can be found on the page below:**

**<https://lscpbirmingham.org.uk/safeguarding-concerns>**

16.3 An acknowledgement should be received from Children's Services within one working day of it being received.

16.4 Where no response has been received within 3 working days, Children's Services should be contacted again.

16.5 Following investigation by The Local Authority, the person who has made the referral to Children's Services may be invited to attend a Child Protection Case Conference. The conference will bring together all the relevant professionals and the family, to consider whether an agreed Child Protection plan needs implementing. It is important that workers are supported in preparing a report for the meeting and ensuring that they attend, as they will have important information to share about the child and can contribute to agreeing the Child Protection plan that may be produced as a result of the meeting.

### **PART THREE - PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST BTHC TEAM MEMBERS**

#### **17 What to do when an allegation of abuse is made against a member of BTHC team members**

17.1 All BTHC team members and volunteers must be familiar with and work to the principles and guidance set out in Beyond the Horizon Charity policy and procedures on Lone Working. Working to these principles and following the guidance will help ensure the protection of both children and BTHC team members. However, in rare circumstances BTHC team members working with children may become the subject of an allegation of abuse against a child in their charge.

17.2 In documentation from Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP), BTHC team members working with children and young people (and/or vulnerable adults) may be referred to as "persons in a position of trust". In addition to BTHC team members working directly with children and young people, this title also refers to others working within the charity. Within child care organisations, senior members (not necessarily having contact with children) have specific responsibility for ensuring the charity operates in ways that protect children and young people (for example Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer). Owing to their specific responsibility, these individuals also fall into the group of "persons in a position of trust"

17.3 Whenever an allegation is made against a BTHC team members, a situation arises that



requires the recipients of any information to remain highly professional and focussed on the needs of the child. This can be very testing when faced with a situation where a member of BTHC team members (who will most likely be a colleague who is considered a respected and trusted member of a team) is suspected of harming a child. However, in such circumstances the recipient of any allegation must:

- Keep focussed on the needs of the child
- **Never breach confidentiality** by passing on the information to anyone other than the Designated Safeguarding Lead (unless the allegation is against that person and so needs to be discussed with the Chair of Trustees)
- Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation.

17.4 A concern may arise about a person in a position of trust that raises a concern as to their suitability to work with children. If the allegation is made to a member of BTHC team members or a volunteer (who is not the subject of the allegation), as full information as possible must be obtained from the informant, including:

- The name of the alleged abuser
- The nature of the alleged abuse and the details of the child affected
- When it is thought to have occurred and how often
- How the informant knows about the incident/s

17.5 Where a child or young person makes an allegation of abuse (relating to now or in the past) by a member of BTHC team members or a volunteer, the recipient of the allegation should:

- Let the child speak but should not ask any prompting or leading questions. (Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so don't do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation, such as asking leading questions)
- Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing in talking to you, but avoid interrupting a child who is freely recalling events.
- Listen carefully; remembering that children may not necessarily have the vocabulary to explain clearly what it is that distresses them.
- Never promise a child or young person that you can keep an allegation secret.
- Record what the child has said, including any times or dates mentioned, and details of any significant marks or behaviour that were observed. Also note the names of any witnesses to what has been said or observed. (see Beyond the Horizon Charity guidance on recording)
- Explain to the child what you have to do next and who you are going to speak to.

**17.6 The concern may be received in the form of a complaint from a child, young person or parent. In these circumstances, once it has been established that a child may have been harmed (or could have been harmed due to a failure to put Safeguarding measures in place) and that a member of BTHC team is implicated, the complaints procedure is no longer appropriate, and this procedure must be followed.**

17.7 As soon as possible after the receipt of the information the BTHC team member must share the information with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to enable an assessment to be made of any immediate danger to the child.

17.8 In exceptional circumstances, when it is judged that the child or young person is viewed as being in immediate danger, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should take steps to keep them safe until appropriate action can be taken by Children's Services. A decision to take such action requires immediate discussion with the CEO, or the Chair of Trustees.

17.9 In the case of an allegation being made against the Designated Safeguarding Lead the information must be taken to the CEO or Chair of Trustees.

## **18 Reporting an allegation of abuse made against a member of BTHC team**

18.1 Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships (LSCP) are responsible for ensuring that allegations against people working with children and young people are managed appropriately; each LSCP appoints a Designated Officer (titled Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO) who is responsible for this work that includes monitoring and reviewing incidents and sharing statistical information with the LSCP.

When any allegation is made against a member of BTHC team members), the CEO or Chair of Trustees, will decide whether or not the LADO needs to be informed.

The LADO team can be contacted on 0121 675 1669 or email:

[Ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:Ladoteam@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

18.2 Following receipt of a concern that a child may have been harmed by a worker or volunteer who is within their service, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must:

- Liaise with the CEO, who will inform the Chair of Trustees.
- The CEO will take the member of BTHC team to one side and inform them that an allegation has been made.
- At this point, they must not tell the BTHC team member the nature of the allegation

- Where the LADO has been consulted and advised that a referral to Children's Services is required, do this without delay and provide relevant information, including:
  - Your name, the organisation's name, your job title and contact details
  - The full name, date of birth and address of the child (and any other names they may be known by)
  - The child's current whereabouts and any information about their physical or emotional state
  - The child's ethnic origin, language of choice and any communication difficulties
  - The names, dates of birth (or ages) of all other members of the household, both adults and children (including any other names they may be known by)
  - The names, ages and addresses of the child's main carers and of all those with parental responsibility, and whether they present any safety issues for BTHC team members
  - Information on whether those with parental responsibility are aware of the referral
  - The child's legal status, placing local authority, name of social worker and contact details
  - Details of any significant family members (or others) who are not members of the child's household
  - The name and job title of the BTHC team member to whom the allegation was reported
  - The name, age and address of the member of BTHC team member who has had the allegation made against them
  - Details of the nature of the alleged abuse, suspected abuse or general concerns
  - If other children are known to have contact with the alleged abuser, give their names, addresses and dates of birth
  - Details of the date, time and place where the abuse is alleged to have occurred
  - The name, address and contact details for the child's GP, health visitor/school nurse and any other medical professional involved with the family
  - The names and contact details for all other professionals involved with the child
- Where a referral has been forwarded to Children's Services, it is likely that the BTHC staff team member will be suspended (on full pay) to allow further investigation to take place. Once a member of BTHC team member has been informed verbally of the need to stay away from work (be suspended) this will be followed up in writing.
- In cases where it has been agreed that a referral to Children's Services is not required, agreement will be reached about the action that should be taken in relation to the employee or volunteer. An action plan will then be agreed between the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the CEO.
- Pass the information to any relevant external body, as required (Ofsted in respect of Early Years and the relevant Local Authority where any allegation relates to a 'Looked After' child).

18.3 Where circumstances dictate, Beyond the Horizon Charity will:

- Co-operate with any investigation undertaken by the police or local authority.
- Arrange for the provision of appropriate support to the child and carers of the child
- Consider and address the impact of any such allegations upon other children and parents receiving a service from the project
- Consider and address the impact of any such allegations upon the BTHC team members of the charity
- Review the existing safe working and Child Protection procedures

## **PART FOUR - APPENDICES**

### **1 Glossary – Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023**

**Abuse** - A form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse, including where they see, hear, or experience its effects. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or extra-familial contexts by those known to them or, more rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Child criminal exploitation** - As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

**Child death review partners** - A child death review partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under the Children Act 2004 as (a) the local authority, and (b) any integrated care board for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area. The 2 partners must make arrangements for the review of each death of a child normally resident in the area and may also, if they consider it appropriate, make arrangements for the review of a death in their area of a child not normally resident there. They must also make arrangements for the analysis of information about deaths reviewed

under this section. The purposes of a review or analysis are (a) to identify any matters relating to the death or deaths that are relevant to the welfare of children in the area or to public health and safety, and (b) to consider whether it would be appropriate for anyone to take action in relation to any matters identified.

**Child protection** - Part of safeguarding and promoting welfare. This refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

**Child sexual exploitation** - Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

**Children** - Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate, does not change their status or entitlements to services or protection.

**Controlling or coercive behaviour** - Also known as coercive control, controlling or coercive behaviour is a form of domestic abuse. In 2015, the offence of controlling or coercive behaviour was introduced under Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act as a criminal offence. Controlling or coercive behaviour is included in the definition of domestic abuse in section 1(3)(c) of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Controlling or coercive behaviour is a pattern of abuse (on two or more occasions) that involves multiple behaviours and tactics used by a perpetrator to (but not limited to) hurt, humiliate, intimidate, exploit, isolate, and dominate the victim. It is an intentional pattern of behaviour used to exert power, control, or coercion over another person. Controlling or coercive behaviour is often committed in conjunction with other forms of abuse and is often part of a wider pattern of abuse, including violent, sexual, or economic abuse.

Children can be used to control or coerce the victim, for example, by frustrating child contact and/or child arrangements, telling the children to call the victim derogatory names or to hit the victim, or by threatening to abduct the children.

This pattern of abuse causes fear, serious alarm and/or distress which can lead to a substantial adverse effect on a victim's day-to-day life. This can have a significant impact on children and young people.

Section 68 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 came into force on 5 April 2023 and removed the 'living together' requirement for the controlling or coercive behaviour offence, which means that the offence applies to partners, ex-partners or family members, regardless of whether the victim and perpetrator live together. More information about controlling or

coercive behaviour, including the impact on children can be found in the Controlling or coercive behaviour: statutory guidance and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021: statutory guidance.

**County lines** - As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy published by the Home Office, a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. This activity can happen locally as well as across the UK; no specified distance of travel is required. For further information see 'Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines' guidance.

**Domestic abuse** - The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced the first ever statutory definition of domestic abuse (section 1 of the Act). The statutory definition is clear that domestic abuse may be a single incident or a course of conduct which can encompass a wide range of abusive behaviours, including a) physical or sexual abuse; b) violent or threatening behaviour; c) controlling or coercive behaviour; d) economic abuse; and e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

Under the statutory definition, both the person who is carrying out the behaviour and the person to whom the behaviour is directed towards must be aged 16 or over and they must be "personally connected" (as defined in section 2 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021). The definition ensures that different types of relationships are captured, including ex-partners and family members.

All children can experience and be adversely affected by domestic abuse in the context of their home life where domestic abuse occurs between family members, including where those being abusive do not live with the child. Experiencing domestic abuse can have a significant impact on children. Section 3 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises the impact of domestic abuse on children (0 to 18), as victims in their own right, if they see, hear or experience the effects of abuse.

Young people can also experience domestic abuse within their own intimate relationships. This form of child-on-child abuse is sometimes referred to as teenage relationship abuse. Depending on the age of the young people, this may not be recognised in law under the statutory definition of domestic abuse (if one or both parties are under 16). However, as with any child under 18, where there are concerns about safety or welfare, child safeguarding procedures should be followed and both young victims and young perpetrators should be offered support.

The 'Domestic Abuse Act 2021: statutory guidance provides further advice for frontline professionals who have responsibility for safeguarding and supporting victims of domestic abuse, including children. This guidance provides further information about the different forms of domestic abuse (including teenage relationship abuse and child to parent abuse) and the impact of domestic abuse on children.

**Education, health and care (EHC) plan** - An education, health and care (EHC) plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has SEN. See the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 (2015).

**Emotional abuse** - The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or 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, or 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 a 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.

**Extra-familial harm** - Children may be at risk of or experiencing physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and exploitation in contexts outside their families (see glossary definition of extra-familial contexts).

While there is no legal definition for the term extra-familial harm, it is widely used to describe different forms of harm that occur outside the home.

Children can be vulnerable to multiple forms of extra-familial harm from both adults and/or other children. Examples of extra-familial harm may include (but are not limited to): criminal exploitation (such as county lines and financial exploitation), serious violence, modern slavery and trafficking, online harm, sexual exploitation, child-on-child (nonfamilial) sexual abuse and other forms of harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children towards their peers, abuse, and/or coercive control, children may experience in their own intimate relationships (sometimes called teenage relationship abuse), and the influences of extremism which could lead to radicalisation.

**Extra-familial contexts** - Extra-familial contexts include a range of environments outside the family home in which harm can occur. These can include peer groups, school, and community/public spaces, including known places in the community where there are concerns about risks to children (for example, parks, housing estates, shopping centres, takeaway restaurants, or transport hubs), as well as online, including social media or gaming platforms.

**Extremism** - Extremism is defined in the Prevent strategy as the vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual

liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces.

**Family group decision making** - this is the umbrella term for family-led decision-making forums, where a family network has all the resources, adequate preparation, relevant information, a safe and appropriate environment, and private family time to make a plan to response to concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing. At pre-proceedings stage, successful family group decision-making also includes having an independent coordinator. Family group decision-making can take different forms. The Department for Education does not prescribe a specific model, but a process which follows the steps set out above.

**Family group conference** - this is one model of family group decision-making.

**Family network** - A group of people close to a child made up of relatives and nonrelated connected people (where connected people has the same definition used in the Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010 in addition to close family friends who have a connection with the child)  
A family network could include step-parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, godparents, or close family friends.

**Financial exploitation** - Financial exploitation can take many forms. In this context, we use the term to describe exploitation which takes place for the purpose of money laundering. This is when criminals target children and adults and take advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive them into facilitating the movement of illicit funds. This can include physical cash and/or payments through financial products, such as bank and cryptocurrency accounts.

**Kinship care** - Kinship care is any situation in which a child is being raised in the care of a friend or family member who is not their parent. The arrangement may be temporary or longer term.

The following are all types of kinship care arrangements however this list is not exhaustive:

- a. Informal kinship care arrangements (not approved foster care) including:
  - i. A private family arrangement in which a close family member who does not hold parental responsibility, raises the child and
    - the local authority has had no major role in making the arrangement for the child
    - where a Family Court has not made an order in respect to the care of the child.
  - ii. Where a child under the age of 16 is being provided with accommodation for less than 28 days by an individual in their own home who is not a close relative
  - iii. Where a 16 or 17 year old is being provided with accommodation by an individual who is not a close relative in their own home



- b. A private fostering arrangement in which someone who is not a close relative of the child looks after the child for 28 days or more (as per section 66(1)(a) and (b) of the Children Act 1989)
- c. Where a 'lives with' child arrangements order has been granted in respect of the child, in favour of someone who is a friend or family member but is not the child's parent.
- d. Where a special guardianship order has been granted appointing a friend or family member as the child's special guardian.
- e. Where a child is a 'looked after child' by virtue of either an interim or final care order or being accommodated by the local authority (usually under section 20 of the Children Act 1989) and each of the following apply (this may be described as 'kinship foster care' or 'family and friends foster care'):
  - i. The child is being cared for by a friend or family member who is not their parent, and
  - ii. The friend or family member is approved as a local authority foster carer on a temporary basis or following full assessment.
- f. Where an adoption order has been granted in respect of the child and, prior to the making of the order, the adopter was a friend or family member.

**Local authority designated officer (LADO)** - County level and unitary local authorities should ensure that allegations against people who work with children are not dealt with in isolation. Any action necessary to address corresponding welfare concerns in relation to the child or children involved should be taken without delay and in a coordinated manner. Local authorities should, in addition, have designated a particular officer, or team of officers (either as part of multi-agency arrangements or otherwise), to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children. Any such officer, or team of officers, should be sufficiently qualified and experienced to be able to fulfil this role effectively, for example, qualified social workers. Any new appointments to such a role, other than current or former designated officers moving between local authorities, should be qualified social workers. Arrangements should be put in place to ensure that any allegations about those who work with children are passed to the designated officer, or team of officers, without delay.

**Maltreatment** - All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

**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 maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or

abandonment)

- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment
- provide suitable education

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs

**Parent carer** - A person aged 18 or over who provides or intends to provide care for a disabled child for whom the person has parental responsibility

**Physical abuse** - A form of abuse which 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.

**Relative** - The Children Act 1989 (section 105) defines a relative as in relation to a child, meaning a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether of the full blood or half blood or by marriage or civil partnership) or step-parent. This guidance uses this definition and includes cousins when referring to relatives.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** - Defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge
- protecting children from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online
- preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- promoting the upbringing of children with their birth parents, or otherwise their family network through a kinship care arrangement, whenever possible and where this is in the best interests of the children
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes in line with the outcomes set out in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

**Safeguarding partners** - A safeguarding partner in relation to a local authority area in England is defined under the Children Act 2004 as: (a) the local authority, (b) an integrated care board for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area, and (c) the chief officer of police for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area. The three safeguarding partners should agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services, act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others, and implement local and national learning, including from serious child safeguarding incidents. To fulfil this role, the 3 safeguarding partners must set out how

they will work together and with any relevant agencies as well as arrangements for conducting local reviews.

**Serious violence** - Serious violence covers specific types of crime, such as homicide, knife crime, and gun crime, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in gangs and county lines drug dealing. It also includes crime threats faced in some areas of the country such as the use of corrosive substances as a weapon. For the purposes of the Serious Violence Duty, as per section 13 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, Serious Violence in the local area is violence that is serious in that area, taking account of: the maximum penalty which could be imposed for the offence (if any) involved in the violence, the impact of the violence on any victim, the prevalence of the violence in the area and the impact of the violence on the community in the area.

**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. 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, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

**Young carer** - A young carer is a person under 18 who provides or intends to provide care for another person (of any age, except generally where that care is provided for payment, pursuant to a contract or as voluntary work). Young adult carers are aged 16 to 25 and may have different support needs as they transition to adulthood.

## **2 Beyond the Horizon Code of Conduct**

### **Beyond the Horizon Code of Conduct**

This behaviour code outlines the conduct that Beyond the Horizon (BTH) expects from all our staff, partnership therapists and volunteers. This includes trustees, agency staff, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

The Code of Conduct is there to help us protect children and young people from abuse. The CEO is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of conduct, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

In your role at Beyond the Horizon you are acting in a position of trust and have a duty of care towards the children/young people and families we work with.

We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

### **Responsibility of staff, partnership therapists and volunteers.**

You are responsible for:

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
- Having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate
- Following the Beyond the Horizon Safeguarding, Child Protection and Whistleblowing policies and procedures
- Staying within the law at all times
- Modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- Challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to the CEO or Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures. This includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

### **Respecting Children and Young People**

Beyond the Horizon Charity seeks to have a child-centred approach to its work and recognises the need to:

- listen to children
- value and respect children as individuals and take their contributions seriously
- involve children in decision making and planning activities wherever possible
- encourage and praise children
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible. If you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

### **Diversity and Inclusion**

You should:

- Treat children/young people and families fairly and without prejudice or discrimination

- Understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable

### **Appropriate relationships**

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- be patient with others
- exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- only provide personal care in an emergency (and if the child/young person is unable to do this themselves) and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible, unless it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

### **Inappropriate behaviour**

When working with any BTH client (child/young person, parent carer or other family member) you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships
- make inappropriate promises
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a BTH client or a member of their family
- let them have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account

- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive, including engaging in rough physical games/play
- patronise or belittle children and young people
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of a BTH client or a member of their family

#### *Guidelines for BTHC team members*

- All therapy appointments (face to face, online and telephone) should have ended by 6pm each evening. This is to ensure availability of the DSL and allow sufficient time in the evening should safeguarding action be necessary.
- BTHC will only use community venues for therapy sessions which are staffed and which are supported by someone who has responsibility for overseeing the safety and security of the venue.
- BTHC team members should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others.
- Meetings with individual children or young people should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should have a see-through glass panel and other BTHC team members informed of the meeting.
- BTHC team members and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. There may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing comfort and reassurance for a distressed child, or physical support, for example in sports activities.
- In all cases, physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child or young person.
- It is not good practice to take children alone in a car on journeys, however short. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents/carers and the DSL or CEO.
- BTHC team members should not meet with children outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents/carers and the CEO/Chair of Trustees.

#### **Upholding this code of behaviour**

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you might be asked to leave Beyond the Horizon. We might also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services. If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to the CEO or a Designated Safeguarding Lead. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

### **3 Information Sharing**

Sharing information is vital to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. A key factor in many serious case reviews has been a failure to record information, to share it, to understand the significance of the information shared, and to take appropriate action in relation to known or suspected abuse or neglect.

It is critical that all those working with children and young people are in no doubt that where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child or a young person may be suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, they should always consider referring their concerns to Children's Services. While, in general, you should seek to discuss any concerns with the family and, where possible, seek their agreement to making referrals to Children's Services, this should only be done where such discussion and agreement – seeking will not place a child at increased risk of significant harm or lead to interference with any potential investigation. The child's interests must be the overriding consideration in making any such decisions.

Six key points on sharing information:

- BTHC team members should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime.
- BTHC team members must always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare must be the overriding consideration.
- BTHC team members should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. BTHC team members may still share information, if in their judgement on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need to override that lack of consent.

- BTHC team members and volunteers should seek advice where they are in doubt, especially where the doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.
- BTHC team members and volunteers should ensure that information shared is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.
- BTHC team members and volunteers should always record the reasons for decisions taken – whether it is to share information or not.

#### From Working Together to Safeguard Children:

Effective sharing of information between practitioners and local organisations and agencies is essential for early identification of need, assessment and service provision to keep children safe. Serious case reviews (now the responsibility of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel – CSPRP) have highlighted that missed opportunities to record, understand the significance of and share information in a timely manner can have severe consequences for the safety and welfare of children.

Practitioners should be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children, whether this is when problems are first emerging, or where a child is already known to local authority children’s social care (e.g. they are being supported as a child in need or have a Child Protection plan). Practitioners should be alert to sharing important information about any adults with whom that child has contact, which may impact the child’s safety or welfare.

Information sharing is also essential for the identification of patterns of behaviour when a child has gone missing, when multiple children appear associated to the same context or locations of risk, or in relation to children in the secure estate where there may be multiple local authorities involved in a child’s care. It will be for local Safeguarding partners to consider how they will build positive relationships with other local areas to ensure that relevant information is shared in a timely and proportionate way.

Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare, and protect the safety, of children, which must always be the paramount concern. To ensure effective Safeguarding arrangements:

- all organisations and agencies should have arrangements in place that set out clearly the processes and the principles for sharing information. The arrangement should cover how information will be shared within their own organisation/agency; and with others who may be involved in a child’s life.



- all practitioners should not assume that someone else will pass on information that they think may be critical to keeping a child safe. If a practitioner has concerns about a child's welfare and considers that they may be a child in need or that the child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm, then they should share the information with local authority children's social care and/or the police. All practitioners should be particularly alert to the importance of sharing information when a child moves from one local authority into another, due to the risk that knowledge pertinent to keeping a child safe could be lost
- all practitioners should aim to gain consent to share information, but should be mindful of situations where to do so would place a child at increased risk of harm. Information may be shared without consent if a practitioner has reason to believe that there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the Safeguarding of a child in a timely manner. When decisions are made to share or withhold information, practitioners should record who has been given the information and why.

Practitioners must have due regard to the relevant data protection principles which allow them to share personal information, as provided for in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). To share information effectively:

- all practitioners should be confident of the processing conditions under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR which allow them to store and share information for Safeguarding purposes, including information which is sensitive and personal, and should be treated as 'special category personal data'
- where practitioners need to share special category personal data, they should be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 contains 'Safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent, or if to gain consent would place a child at risk

Whenever a Subject Access Request is made by an individual requesting that Beyond the Horizon Charity discloses the personal data held about that individual, Beyond the Horizon Charity's Data Protection Officer must be informed immediately. The Data Protection Officer is responsible for any decision as to whether or not to disclose data, and will generally liaise directly with the individual making the request. Beyond the Horizon Charity's Data Protection Officer is the CEO.

(Also see Beyond the Horizon Charity policy on Data Protection)

### **The European Convention on Human Rights**

Article 8 of the convention states that "everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence."

There can be no interference with the exercise of this right except, amongst others, for the protection of health and morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedom of others. Disclosure should be appropriate for the purpose and only to the extent that it is necessary to achieve that purpose.

#### **4 Review**

The Board of Trustees has responsibility for reviewing this Policy on an annual basis.

#### **5 West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures**

Alongside this Policy the organisation must also give consideration to the West Midlands Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures Manual which can be found at:

<http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/page/contents>

This Manual contains the Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures for nine Local Safeguarding Children Boards in the West Midlands and are effective from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

## 6 Process for Recording Safeguarding Concerns

Team member discusses concern with BTH DSL over telephone in the first instance (not via email).

Team member to record their concern on Safeguarding Record Sheet and file in clients file on Sharepoint. Team member to notify DSL as soon as this has been done giving the client number.

DSL to review this and record their response on the Safeguarding Record Sheet.

(DSL will need to create a Safeguarding folder within the clients sharepoint file if one does not already exist and name it “\*Client No.\* Safeguarding”).

**All emails regarding safeguarding should be copied and pasted into the Safeguarding Record Sheet. All telephone or face to face discussions with parents/carers and other professionals should also be recorded.**

Is the concern being escalated to an agency external to BTH?

(This should be decided by the DSL with information provided by the person raising the concern and in consultation with the Chair of Trustees or another DSL where necessary)

YES

NO

DSL to record this decision and any action taken on the Safeguarding Record Sheet. DSL to enter onto Safeguarding Action Log with date, client number, who reported the concern, whether it is open or closed and name of person responsible for following up.

A copy of any external referral sent should be saved to the clients file in a “Safeguarding” Folder alongside the Safeguarding Record Sheet.

DSL to keep log of all action/discussion within the Safeguarding Record Sheet and escalate where a satisfactory response is not received.

Any follow up needed should be diarised by the DSL.

DSL to check clients file on Sharepoint and record on the Safeguarding Record Sheet that they have seen the record (e.g. initials and date) and any further comments.

DSL to note client number and enter onto “Safeguarding Considerations” Log with date, client number, who reported the concern, whether it is open or closed and name of person responsible for following up.

Any follow up needed should be diarised by the DSL.

In both instances the DSL/CEO should report how many “Safeguarding Action Logs” and how many “Safeguarding Considerations” have been reported at Trustee Meetings. Any significant safeguarding concerns will be discussed at Trustee meetings including those raised with the LADO.

**DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD CONTACT DETAILS:**

**In the first instance: Jenny Graham – CEO, 07906621345 or 0121 444 5454 or 07752075703.**

Ruth Wilton – Therapy Services Manager – 07934167657 or 0121 444 5454

Ayesha Banks – Parent Project Manager – 07593584064 or 0121 444 5454

Alan Clee – Chair of Trustees – 0121 444 4480

## 8 BTHC Safeguarding Record Sheet

### Safeguarding Record Sheet

Client Number:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Please record newest contact at the top (add a new row when needed)</b>	<b>Entry Completed By</b>

## 9 Safeguarding Action Log

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Safeguarding Action Number:</b>	<b>Client Number:</b>	<b>Reported by:</b>	<b>Date Reported to Trustees:</b>	<b>Open or Closed? (include initials of who is following up):</b>
E.g. 01/1/23	01-2023	9001-2023	Sam Smith	31/03/23	Open (JG)

## 10 Safeguarding Considerations Log

<b>Date Incident Reported to DSL</b>	<b>Client Number</b>	<b>Date Trustees Informed</b>	<b>Reported by:</b>	<b>Open or Closed? Include initials of who is following up</b>
E.g. 09/01/2023	9002-2023	19/01/23	Jane Eyre	Closed

“It should be noted that whilst every attempt has been made to quote the correct statute and/or legislation, you should be aware that we may not have checked the current status of the statute/legislation quoted in this document and subsequent changes may also have been legislated. Consequently, you may wish to make your own checks, if you have any case of doubt or difficulty.”