

## **BiG (Besty's Inspirational Guidance)**

### **Safeguarding Children Policy**

BiG is committed to providing a secure environment for all young people, where children feel safe and are kept safe. All adults and volunteers at BiG recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility irrespective of the role they undertake or whether their role has direct contact or responsibility for children. In adhering to this policy, and the procedures therein, BiG officials, and all those who are representing BiG will promote a climate where children and adults will feel confident about sharing any concerns that they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others and will contribute to BiG's delivery of the 4 outcomes and 6 design principles of Lambeth's Children and Young People Plan, and helping all children achieve. This Child Protection Policy is one element in BiG's whole arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children in line with our statutory duties set out at s175 of the Education Act 2002.

BiG's Safeguarding Children Policy also draws upon the guidance contained in the "London Child Protection Procedures" and 'Safeguarding Children and Safer recruitment'. These documents are accessible on the [London Safeguarding Children Board](#) website.

We recognise that safeguarding is more than contribution to Child Protection matters and we will use all programmes and services delivered and provided by BiG to ensure all young people recognise risk and build resilience to manage any such risk themselves where appropriate. Young people will be encouraged to raise any issue of safety in confidence. We also recognise and accept that young people have a right to be heard and will additionally facilitate this by making ourselves available to listen to all children's concerns or issues verbally and in writing, or if they prefer, anonymously by placing their issues in suggestion and concern boxes which will be available at premises where BiG services are delivered. Where applicable we will review and modify our policies accordingly. Additionally we will work in partnership with parents and carers and will encourage parents to comment on and contribute to the evolution of our policies by giving them the opportunity to complete paper base and electronic feedback forms offering their views.

In liaising with parents and carers we will ensure that they are reminded that BiG has a duty to report concerns that we may have over the safety or well-being of a child as part of our statutory duties to protect children from significant harm and/or neglect. Parents and carers will also be reminded that, where appropriate, any referral will be discussed with parents and carers before the referral is made, however parents and carers will not be contacted nor will the referral be discussed where it is felt that to do so will place the child at an increased risk of harm. In any event parents and carers will be reminded that all referrals are made in the best interest of the child.

In delivering our responsibilities as set out in this policy BiG will develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate with their child protection enquiries as appropriate, this will include attendance at Child Protection Conferences and Reviews, Core Group Meetings, and LAC Reviews as necessary.

## **Child Protection**

All officials and volunteers at BiG must recognise and accept that children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. In upholding this fundamental right we recognise that there are four definitions of child abuse, including neglect, as defined in the London Child Protection Procedures and as précised in this policy, which should be consulted as a reference document for full details of the definitions and recognition & response.

The four categories of child abuse are as follows:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional and Psychological Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse, and
4. Neglect

### Physical Abuse

*May include:* Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child including the deliberate fabrication or causation of illness in a child.

*May be recognised by:* Physical injury such as bruising, bite marks, burns and scalds, fractures but also by aggressive behaviour or learning difficulties due to neurological damage. It may also be an indicator of concern where a parent gives an explanation inconsistent with the injury or gives several different explanations for the injury.

It is not appropriate for any official of or volunteer of BiG to undress, photograph or body map any child in an attempt to see physical injury, this is the role of child protection and investigating agencies.

### Emotional and Psychological Abuse

*May Include:* The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development, mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. This may be caused by conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or unvalued or by inappropriate expectations being made or by causing children to frequently feel frightened or the exploitation or corruption of children.

*May be recognised by:* Developmental delay, attachment issues, aggressive behaviour, appeasing behaviour, watchfulness or stillness, low self-esteem, withdrawn or a loner, or having difficulty in forming relationships. Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. Signs of emotional abuse may be associated or similar to other forms of abuse so presence of emotional abuse may indicate other abuse is prevalent as well.

### Sexual Abuse

*May Include:* Involving or forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Such activities may involve sexual acts (penetrative or non-penetrative) or may include involving children in watching or taking part in pornographic material or to encourage children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. May also include Child sexual exploitation which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status and grooming where children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - a family member, friend or professional.

*May be recognised by:* Inappropriate sexualised conduct, age inappropriate sexualised play or conversation, sexually harmful behaviour - contact or non-contact, self-harm, eating disorders, continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation, anxiousness or unwillingness to remove clothes - sports / PE etc, pain or itching in genital area, blood on underclothes, bruising in genital region and / or inner thighs etc.

A sexually abused child may also be recognised by disturbed behaviour such as sadness, depression or loss of self-esteem, and could children and young people could develop harmful sexual behaviour that could lead to them harming themselves and others. Disclosure of sexual abuse must be taken seriously as it is recognised that children are frequently scared to disclose due to guilt or fear,.

### *Neglect*

*May include:* 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 (growth and intellect) such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter (including keeping children safe), clothing, or neglect of or unresponsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

*May be recognised by:* Being constantly hungry; constantly tired; have a poor state of clothing; be emaciated; have untreated medical problems; be frequently late or have poor or non-attendance at school; have low self-esteem; display neurotic behaviour and/or have poor social relationships, have poor personal hygiene. A neglected child may also be apathetic, fail to thrive, or be left with or in the care of adult's under the influence of alcohol or drug misuse.

## Bullying

Bullying is a specific form of abuse which may be prevalent in schools and is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time where it is difficult for the victims to defend themselves. The extent of bullying can include emotional and / or physical harm to such a degree that it constitutes significant harm, as set out in the definitions above, due to the extent to which it affects the health or development of the child subject to the bullying behaviour. Bullying may also be perpetrated within digital or ICT based environments, sometimes known as 'cyber-bullying' which must be treated as seriously as any other form of bullying and dealt with accordingly. This could happen anywhere - at school, at home or online / on the web, whether through social networks, playing online games or using mobile phones. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally, other ways known as Online abuse.

It must be noted that bullying **may** also constitute criminal behaviour and therefore instances of bullying **may** need to be reported to the police.

BiG takes all the above forms of child abuse seriously and therefore wants to spell out specific forms of abuse which will fall under one of the above. They include:

Please refer to our separate code of conducts for 'Officials and Volunteers' and 'Participants'.

## Responsibility and Immediate Action

All officials and volunteers working, delivering programmes and providing services for BiG are required to report instances of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect, or safeguarding concern to the official with responsibility for child protection. In BiG the reporting arrangements are to communicate the issue to the Designated Senior Person for Child protection immediately including completing the [BiG incident, accident and allegation](#) form.

## The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection is: Lionel Best

Where there are signs that a child is suffering significant harm or is likely to suffer significant harm or is being neglected the Designated Senior person for Child Protection may take advice before making a referral to Lambeth Children and Young People Services (CYPS) from Early Help and Child Protection Team (0207 926 3100, email to [helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:helpandprotection@lambeth.gov.uk)), and when need be, will follow the stages set out in the [quick referral flowchart](#).

Where there are any doubts as to the seriousness of this concern or disagreement between the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection and the official / volunteer reporting the concern, advice will also be sought from Lambeth CYPS Duty Team and/or the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer for Youth Services or colleagues.

In circumstances where a child has a suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the Child Protection referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency assistance. If a child is thought to be at immediate risk (because of parental violence or intoxication, for example) urgent police intervention may be requested. Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of children who are subject

to a Child Protection Plan or looked after by the Local Authority and any incidents or concerns involving these children will be reported immediately to Social Care (and confirmed in writing). In all cases of injury to a child consideration will always be given as to whether an urgent paediatric medical assessment is required to document injuries or to protect any forensic evidence.

Where it is suspected that a child may be at further risk of significant harm if the parent is spoken to, nothing will be said to the child's parent/carer without first discussing the matter with the Early Help and Child Protection Team.

### **Role of the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection**

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection works in line with the responsibilities as set out in London Child Protection Procedures and Working Together to Safeguard Children in respect of referrals, training and awareness raising. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection is the focus person and local 'expert' for BiG officials and volunteers, and others, who may have concerns about an individual child's safety or well-being and is the first point of contact for external agencies that are pursuing Child Protection concerns. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection also co-ordinates BiG representation at Child Protection conferences and the submission of written reports for conferences (a meeting of all relevant agencies). When an individual concern/incident is brought to the attention of the Designated Senior Person they will be responsible for obtaining advice from Lambeth CYPS Youth Service's Safeguarding Manager and/or consulting with Social Care as appropriate to decide whether or not this should be formally referred to social care.

The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will ensure that all child protection records are kept separately from participant records and stored securely, by encryption and/or password protecting electronic files or ensuring that paper records are secured in a locked cabinet with restricted access.

## **Training**

BiG in-service training will be organised for officials and volunteers at least every three years and will comply with the prevailing arrangements agreed by the Local Authority and LSCB and will be in line with the training Groups outlined in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015'. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will attend Lambeth CYPS and other training courses as necessary and the appropriate inter-agency training organised by organisations such as the Lambeth Safeguarding Children Board at least every two years.

All BiG officials including volunteers will be signed posted to a copy of this policy document on the BiG website, and other relevant policies on arrival, and the procedures for recording and reporting Child Protection concerns specifically in connection with BiG services will be signed posted by Lionel Best to the official.

## **Recruitment**

The arrangements for recruiting all officials and volunteers to BiG will follow the DFE guidance - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2015. This will mean that all officials will be subject to reference and Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) checks and a single central record (SCR) will be kept of all vetting checks, which will also include verification of identity, any relevant qualifications and permission to work for non-EU nationals. In BiG we will ensure that when appropriate, DBS checks are renewed every three years for all officials (where appropriate), and will be a condition of service. The single central record will include the date these checks were made. BiG will only use employment agencies that positively vet their supply staff and confirm in writing that DBS checks have been carried out. Personnel joining BiG on an official or volunteer basis will be informed of the Child Protection policy and BiG's Safeguarding arrangements as part of induction.

## **Volunteers & work experience candidates**

In line with the DFE guidance on safer recruitment it will be necessary for any parent/carer/ or other person seen by the children as a trusted adult and who work for, or is delivering BiG services including BiG programmes on a regular basis to be DBS checked at an enhanced level. These checks are required to be updated regularly and at least every three years as they are for officials.

Work experience candidates will work under the direct supervision of the Programmes Director and will be subject to BiG's code of conduct for 'Officials and Volunteers'. BiG will provide Work experience candidates with appropriate induction who will have a 'job description' pertaining to the role they are to perform.

All BiG officials, work experience candidates and volunteers will be inducted which will include the provision of BiG's policies and procedures, and participate in a Safeguarding Risk Assessment session.



## **BiG Official's Code of Conduct**

All officials (paid and voluntary) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with young people and their families. Children will be treated with respect and any rewards and sanctions should follow those detailed in BiG's Code of conduct for officials and volunteers. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, officials should avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Physical intervention should only be used as a last resort. Where incidents occur that might otherwise be misconstrued or where it becomes necessary to physically restrain or use force to control a child, for their own or others' safety, the safety of others, to prevent a criminal act or to maintain good order, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the BiG Programmes Director and parents in line with updated DFE Guidance: Use of Reasonable Force.

For their own safety and protection, officials should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with children.

BiG officials should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from contact with young people outside premises where BiG services are provided, including contact when using digital technologies. The Programmes Director must always be made aware of any such contact.

First Aid should only be administered by qualified first aiders and, if it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for this treatment, there should be, wherever possible, another adult present. If a child needs help with toileting or washing after soiling themselves, another adult should be present or within earshot. When children are enrolled onto any BiG programmes, parents/carers will be asked to give permission for changing their wet or soiled clothes at premises where the services are provided.

## **Changing arrangements for coaching sessions**

Where applicable, participants will be given the opportunity to change for coaching sessions in single sex areas.

## **Complaints / allegations made against officials / volunteers**

BiG takes seriously all complaints or allegations made against any officials or volunteers. Mechanisms are in place for children, parents/carers and officials/volunteers to share any concerns that they might have about the actions of any officials or volunteers of BiG. All such allegations will be dealt with efficiently and effectively in line with our 'Allegations Against Officials / Volunteers Policy' and must be brought immediately to the attention of the Programmes Director, **who is** the Designated Senior Person for Child protection in order that the appropriate procedures may be followed.

All allegations will be dealt with in line with Chapter 7 of the 'London Child Protection Procedures' - 'Allegations against staff or volunteers, who work with children'.

Parents should also be advised of their independent right to make a formal complaint to the Police.

Officials / Volunteers who are formally disciplined for any abuse of participants (or who resign before disciplinary action can be instigated) will be notified to the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer and Disclosure and Barring Service.

## **Records**

Accurate written notes will be kept of all incidents or Child Protection concerns relating to individual children. If an official or volunteer have a child protection concern they should ensure that they complete the [BiG incident, accident and allegation](#) form and these will be kept on the children's Child Protection file.

Child Protection records are not available to children or parents. Child Protection records are kept by the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection, separately from BiG programmes/participants records, and can only be accessed by the Designated Senior Person.

All Child Protection records or files will be kept for archiving in line with the prevailing timescales for keeping such records which are published from time to time.

## **Policy Adoption, Monitoring and Review**

This policy was considered and adopted by the Programme Director in line with his overall duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children as set out in the Local Authority / Government guidance.

Parents will be issued with a hard copy of this policy on request. This policy will also be made available to parents on the BiG website.

For BiG the Programmes Director will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring the officials and volunteers understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as their overall duty to safeguard children. This may include monitoring the appropriateness of cases referred internally to the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection and whether those cases referred to Lambeth CYPS Social Care met their threshold and taken forward.

Policy Adopted by Programmes Director on: July 2011

Policy Last Reviewed on: May 2018

Policy Due for Review on: May 2020