

Child Protection Policy

Back Up believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people, by a commitment to a practice which protects them.

Whilst we acknowledge that Education and Health and Care plans can be applicable to the age of 25 for disabled young people, for the purpose of this document, anyone aged 17 years or younger will be considered as a child.

We aim to provide young people and children with a safe and supportive environment in which they can realise their full potential. Back Up, including our volunteers, uses our values to guide everything we do, including our partnership with each-other:

*Driven by the needs of people with spinal cord injury, we are **passionate** about transforming lives. Through **challenge** and **fun** we open up possibilities; to develop, achieve and get the most out of life. We **respect** individuality and embrace diversity. We strive for quality and **excellence** in all we do.*

We recognise that:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- All children regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or identity have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare
- Disabled children and young people are 3.4 times more likely to experience abuse

The purpose of the policy and additional safeguarding procedures are:

- To safeguarding children and young people who receive Back Up's services, including the children of adult members or users, by:
 - protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
 - ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child or young person may be experiencing, or at risk of, harm.
- To provide staff and volunteers with guidance on appropriate interaction and communication with under 18's through face to face, on the telephone and online contact.

This policy applies to all staff, including senior managers and Board of Trustees, paid staff, volunteers and sessional workers, agency staff, students or anyone working on behalf of Back Up. It has been informed by guidance from the NSPCC and consideration of the legal and rights framework including:

- The Children Act 1989 & 2004
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- United Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Special educational needs and disability (SEND) code of practice: 0 to 25 years – Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities: HM Government 2014

- Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people and carers: HM Government 2015
- Working together to safeguarding children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children: HM Government 2018 (with updates December 2020)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- The Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003

The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. 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.’ (WTSC page 19).

This policy should be read alongside our child protection procedures; code of safe conduct; guidance for data sharing; safer recruitment procedures and our health and safety policy.

We will endeavour to safeguard children and young people by:

- Valuing, listening to and respecting them
- Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- Appointing a designated person for safeguarding, a deputy and a lead trustee
- Implementing an effective e-safety policy
- Recruiting staff and volunteers safely ensuring all necessary checks are made. We request DBS checks on a 3 year basis/or we use the DBS update service (with staff consent) to re-check staff’s criminal history and suitability to work with children. We also request two written references as part of safe recruitment, before someone begins their role.
- Sharing information about child protection policy and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers (e.g. avoid spending time with young people unobserved)
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training
- Using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately
- Creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring we have a procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise
- Ensuring we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
- Ensuring that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance
- Actively working to build and maintain a safe culture in our organisation, so that all members of our workforce and all involved feel able to share concerns
- Provide annual child protection training for all staff, volunteers and Trustees, highlighting the reasons disabled children are at increased risk of abuse and neglect and why additional safeguards are needed to protect them

Contact details

Designated safeguarding person (DSP) for children and young people

Ella Provan

020 8875 1805 / ella@backuptrust.org.uk

Designated safeguarding person (DSP) for adults

Andy Adamson

020 8875 1805 / andy@backuptrust.org.uk

Senior Lead for Safeguarding (on board of trustees)

Clair Turnbull

07989 343683

Designated person in local authority for managing allegations against staff

Currently under review

020 8871 7208 / LADO@wandsworth.gov.uk

CEOP

www.ceop.police.uk

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000