



The Safeguarding Policy

SECTION 1

Details of the place of worship / organisation

Name of Organisation: The Bridge Project

Address: Manor Farm, St Joseph Street, Tadcaster, LS24 9HA

Tel No: 07530066440

Email address: kate@bridgeproject.info

Charity Number: 1166825

Company Number: N/A

Insurance Company: Ansvar Insurance. Public Liability Insurance number: ccp 2163018

The following is a brief description of our organisation and the type of work / activities we undertake with children and young people.

The Bridge Project is a faith based provider of youth and children's and young adult work. We run weekly clubs for primary aged children, for 11-14's and 14's - 18's. We also run parent and toddler groups a week, do assemblies in local schools and self esteem courses both in schools and at the centre. We have an annual holiday club for primary aged children run by us and our young helpers.

Our commitment

As a Leadership we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. We acknowledge that children, young people and adults can be the victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and neglect. We accept the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the

International Covenant of Human Rights, which states that everyone is entitled to “all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. We also concur with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that children should be able to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. They have a right to be protected from “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s), or any other person who has care of the child.” As a Leadership we have therefore adopted the procedures set out in this safeguarding policy in accordance with statutory guidance. We are committed to build constructive links with statutory and voluntary agencies involved in safeguarding.

The policy and attached practice guidelines are based on the ten **Safe and Secure** safeguarding standards published by Thirtyone:Eight.

The Leadership undertakes to:

- Endorse and follow all national and local safeguarding legislation and procedures, in addition to the international conventions outlined above.
- Provide on-going safeguarding training for all its workers and will regularly review the operational guidelines attached.
- Ensure that the premises meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and all other relevant legislation, and that it is welcoming and inclusive.
- Support the Safeguarding Coordinator(s) in their work and in any action they may need to take in order to protect children and adults with care and support needs.
- The Leadership agrees not to allow the document to be copied by other organisations.

SECTION 2

Recognising and responding appropriately to an allegation or suspicion of abuse

Understanding abuse and neglect

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm, or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

In order to safeguard those in our places of worship and organisations we adhere to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and have as our starting point as a definition of abuse, Article 19 which states:

- 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect*

or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

Also for adults the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with particular reference to Article 5 which states:

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Detailed definitions, and signs and symptoms of abuse, as well as how to respond to a disclosure of abuse, are included here in our policy.

The four definitions of abuse below operate in England based on the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)'.

What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example, via the internet. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse 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.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children 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 the 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 cyberbullying), 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.

Sexual abuse

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 (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect

Neglect is 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 care-givers); or
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

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

These are the guidelines that we would use if we were responding to a child who was wishing to disclose some abuse.

A worker with children or young people will need to:

- Listen carefully if someone is telling you about abuse – physical, sexual, emotional or neglect
- Not ask questions – it could prevent them from saying more or you might put things in their mind that were not already there
- Show acceptance of what you are told – even if it seems unlikely or too awful to be true
- Reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you and you are taking the information seriously
- Not promise to keep the matter secret but explain that you may have to share what they say with others on a 'need to know' basis only. It will be the named people in your safeguarding policy
- Explain what you intend to do and don't delay in taking action
- Ensure the immediate safety of the individual
- Write notes stating what the person said, what you said in response, and an explanation of how the conversation took place. Include the date, time and your signature
- Keep the notes, even if typed up, as they could be used as material evidence in court.

If the concern is about what has been observed, for example bruises, marks, suspicions of neglect or sexually explicit/ abusive behaviour, then it is important to write a full account of what was seen. Include:

- Size, shape, colour, position on the body of any bruises or marks
- Person's appearance eg ragged or dirty clothing, smell, emaciated body, pain or difficulty in moving
- Description of sexually explicit or abusive behaviour
- The date and time of your report and your signature.

Safeguarding awareness

The Leadership is committed to on-going safeguarding training and development opportunities for all workers, developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone. All our workers will receive induction training and undertake recognised safeguarding training on a regular basis through either online learning or DVD training. We will also provide in house training, looking at relevant scenarios and ensuring that all paid and unpaid workers are aware of Safeguarding.

The Leadership will also ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are provided with information on where to get help and advice in relation to abuse, discrimination, bullying or any other matter where they have a concern.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

Under no circumstances should a worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Following procedures as below:

- The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to Kate Ellarby (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator") tel. no: 07530066440 who is nominated by the Leadership to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.
- In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to Priscilla Smith (hereafter the "Deputy ") tel no: 07592414579. If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (Thirtyone:Eight) PO Box 133, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7UQ. Telephone 0303 003 11 11. Alternatively contact Social Services or the police.
- Where the concern is about a child the Safeguarding Co-ordinator should contact Children's Social Services. Where the concern is regarding an adult in need of protection, contact Adult Social Services or take advice from Thirtyone:Eight as above.

The local Children's Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is 01609 780780. The out of hours emergency number is 01609 780780.

The local Adult Social Services office telephone number (office hours) is 01609 780780. The out of hours emergency number is 01609 780780.

The Police Protection Team telephone number is 999.

- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator **may** need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern (for example the Chair of Trustees to log that a safeguarding concern is being dealt with, Insurance company to log that there is a possibility of a serious incident concerning safeguarding or a Designated Officer (formerly LADO) if allegations have been made about a person who has a role with under 18's elsewhere or another denominational officer e.g. Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser or similar).
- Suspicions must not be discussed with anyone other than those nominated above. A written record of the concerns should be made in accordance with these procedures and kept in a secure place.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services, the Police or taking advice from Thirtyone:Eight.
- The Leadership will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role, and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need to know basis.
- It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies or seek advice from Thirtyone:Eight, although the Leadership hope that members of the organisation will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the Leadership demonstrate its commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection everyone; children and adults who may be at risk of harm or abuse.

The role of the safeguarding co-ordinator/ deputy is to collate and clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies that have a legal duty to investigate.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services (or Thirtyone:Eight) for advice in cases of deliberate injury, if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.
- Seek and follow advice given by Thirtyone:Eight (who will confirm their advice in writing) if unsure whether or not to refer a case to Children's Social Services.
- Seek advice from NYCC colleagues, or NYY colleagues.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.
- Seek and follow the advice given by Thirtyone:Eight if, for any reason they are unsure whether or not to contact Children's Social Services/Police. Thirtyone:Eight will confirm its advice in writing for future reference.

Detailed procedures where there is a concern that an adult is in need of protection:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including: physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse. Alternatively Thirtyone:Eight can be contacted for advice.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will need to liaise with Children's Social Services in regards to the suspension of the worker, also making a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The leadership will consider whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service which manages the list of those people deemed unsuitable for working with children or adults.

SECTION 3

Prevention - Safer recruitment

The Leadership will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with government guidance on safe recruitment. This includes ensuring that:

- There is a written job description / person specification for the post
- Those applying have completed an application form and a self declaration form
- Those short listed have been interviewed
- Safeguarding has been discussed at interview
- Written references have been obtained, and followed up where appropriate
- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of applicants and the handling of information)
- Qualifications where relevant have been verified
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant has completed a probationary period
- The applicant has been given a copy of the organisation's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

When recruiting volunteers:

- they will sign a self declaration form before they can work in a club
- they will be given a copy of the code of conduct for workers and asked to sign and agree to it
- a DBS will be carried out before they are allowed to work regularly within the organisation
- they will be made aware of who is leading the session and who is managing them.

Management of Workers – Codes of Conduct

As a Leadership we are committed to supporting all workers and ensuring they receive support and supervision. All workers have been issued with a code of conduct towards children and young people.

SECTION 4 - ONLINE ABUSE

When this policy refers to 'online', this means somebody using a device to gain access to the Internet. How somebody accesses the Internet or 'gets on line' will vary due to technological advancements so this list outlines some common examples of internet use but is by no means exhaustive.

- Computers, PCs, Laptops, iPads, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) etc.
- Mobile phones, Smartphones, 3G phones etc;
- Through WiFi connections available in restaurants, cafes, hotels etc;
- iPods, MP3s etc.
- E-mail, Instant messaging, Texts, Blackberry Messenger;
- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Twitter;
- Video hosting websites e.g. Youtube;
- Games consoles e.g. Xbox Live, PlayStation Network, Nintendo Online;
- Chatrooms and Blogs;
- Webcams and video calling software such as Zoom or Google Hangouts

At the Bridge Project, young people do not have access to the WIFI in our building and therefore we have no need for an acceptable use policy for our service users to adhere to. However, some of our services are now provided online so Appendix 2 contains video calling permission form and guidelines on acceptable conduct within this context. Staff will be expected to adhere to our e-safety policy which is reviewed and updated regularly.

When there are concerns about the welfare of a child which have occurred online then the agency should use its usual safeguarding children procedures and good practice to respond to these. In this sense the context of the abuse / harm occurring online is no different to other situations where there is a concern about a child's welfare.

If there is a concern about actual Significant Harm or the risk of Significant Harm to a child arising whilst online then the agency should immediately activate its own safeguarding children or child protection procedures outlined in this section, and make a referral to Children's Social Care. Again this is no different to concerns in other situations. **If a child or young person is in immediate danger then contact the Police on 999.**

When an incident raises concerns both about Significant Harm and unacceptable use, the first and paramount consideration should always be the welfare and safety of the child directly involved.

To assist Police in any subsequent investigations, where possible, staff who are made aware of online abuse or inappropriate activity should try to preserve copies or records of offending material and obtain any relevant passwords to accounts or websites, where possible.

Suspected online terrorist material can be reported through www.gov.uk/report-terrorism. Reports can be made anonymously, although practitioners should not do so as they must follow the procedures for

professionals. Content of concern can also be reported directly to social media platforms – see UK Safer Internet Centre, Social media help website.

If images or video of children engaged in sexual activity or in revealing poses are known to have been posted online, the following guidelines should be followed:

- The Police should be contacted immediately. The police will be in a position to make judgments about how matters are pursued in relation to offences and offenders. Where young people are voluntarily sending/sharing sexual images or content with one another the police may use the 'outcome 21' recording code to record that a crime has been committed but that it is not considered to be in the public interest to take criminal action against the people involved. This reduces stigma and distress for children and helps to minimise the long term impact of the situation.
- The nominated person for child protection/safeguarding should initiate an Early Help Assessment (EHA). Through the EHA process judgments will be made about the best means of supporting the child;
- Sites or networks on which the images appear should be alerted to the existence of illegal material. It is important that material online be removed as soon as possible, but staff must not put themselves at risk of illegality. Once the matter has been reported to the police their advice on this must be followed;
- Any young people who have themselves posted potentially illegal material should be told to remove the items, and warned that police action may follow if they do not. Through the EHA process, parents may also be involved;
- In some cases there may not be an obvious means of flagging or reporting the image. Even in these circumstances the existence of the image should be notified to the network provider and police action may be necessary to ensure its removal or engage the co-operation of the young person who has control of the image;
- The incident should be reported to the Safeguarding Co-Ordinator and recorded using the report forms located on the office notice board.
- Appropriate educational/pastoral work should be undertaken with all young people involved.

Allegations of online abuse by staff members

If staff (paid/unpaid) behave in ways online that cause concern then this will usually be dealt with according to the E-Safety Policy. This policy defines what behaviour is acceptable when accessing the internet at the Bridge Project and should be in place to help everyone understand all aspects of their duties when technology is involved.

If the conduct by staff or volunteers amounts to a concern about an abusive relationship with, or harmful behaviour towards, a child or young person then it should be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the person reporting it will be asked to record it on an incident form. The safeguarding co-ordinator will then follow the steps outlined above.

SECTION 5

Pastoral Care

Supporting those affected by abuse

The Leadership is committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of the organisation. We would provide this support using a mentor (female or male youth worker) for the young person who has been affected by abuse. They would provide on-going pastoral support. If it was necessary we would use local counselling agencies

SECTION 6

Practice Guidelines

As an organisation working with children and young people with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable workers to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

As well as a general code of conduct for workers we also have specific good practice guidelines for the activities we are involved in. See Good Practice Policy

Working in Partnership

The diversity of organisations and settings means there can be great variation in practice when it comes to safeguarding children, young people and adults. This can be because of cultural tradition, belief and religious practice or understanding, for example, of what constitutes abuse.

We therefore have clear guidelines in regards to our expectations of those with whom we work in partnership, whether in the UK or not. We will discuss with all partners our safeguarding expectations and have a partnership agreement for safeguarding. It is also our expectation that any organisation we work with on or off premises, including schools, churches and other youth work organisations will have their own policy that meets Thirtyone:Eight's safeguarding standards.

Good communication is essential in promoting safeguarding, both to those we wish to protect, to everyone involved in working with children and adults and to all those with whom we work in partnership. This safeguarding policy is just one means of promoting safeguarding.

We are helping to promote safeguarding by displaying our safeguarding policy in a prominent place within the building.

Signed by: _____ **Role:** _____

Signed by: _____ Role: _____

Date: _____

Last Reviewed 10/11/2020

To be reviewed January 2022



Code of Conduct for Bridge Project Workers (paid and volunteers)

You should:

- Treat all children and young people with respect & dignity.
 - Ensure that your own language, tone of voice and body language is respectful.
 - Always aim to work with or within sight of another adult.
 - Ensure another adult is informed if a child needs to be taken to the toilet. Toilet breaks should be organised for young children.
 - Ensure that children and young people know who they can talk to if they need to speak to someone about a personal concern.
 - Respond warmly to a child who needs comforting but make sure there are other adults around.
 - Administer any necessary First Aid with others around.
 - Obtain consent for any photographs/videos to be taken, shown or displayed.
 - Record any incidents of concern and give the information to your Group Leader. Sign and date the record.
- Concern forms can be found in the office on the notice board.
- Always share concerns about a child or the behaviour of another worker with your group leader and/or the safeguarding representative (Kate Ellarby)

You should not:

- Initiate physical contact. Any necessary contact (e.g. for comfort, see above) should be initiated by the child.
- Invade a child's privacy whilst washing or going to the toilet.
- Play rough physical or sexually provocative games.
- Use any form of physical punishment.
- Be sexually suggestive about or to a child even in fun.
- Touch a child inappropriately or obtrusively.
- Scapegoat, ridicule or reject a child, group or adult.
- Permit abusive peer activities e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing or bullying.
- Show favouritism to any one child or group.
- Allow a child or young person to involve you in excessive attention seeking that is overtly physical or sexual in nature.
- Give lifts to children or young people on their own or on your own.
- Smoke tobacco or Drink alcohol in the presence of children.
- Share sleeping accommodation with children.
- Invite a child to your home alone.
- Arrange social occasions with children (other than family members) outside organised group occasions.
- Allow unknown adults access to children. Visitors should always be accompanied by a known person introduced to the leader and given a lanyard.
- Allow strangers to give children lifts

Touch

We aim to provide a warm, nurturing environment for children and young people whilst avoiding any inappropriate behaviour or the risk of allegations being made. All volunteers must work with or within sight of another adult.

Very occasionally it may be necessary to restrain a child or young person who is harming her/himself or others. Use the least possible force and inform the parents as soon as possible. Guidance for this is in the worker and volunteer handbook. All such incidents should be recorded and the information given to the

Safe guarding officer- Kate Ellarby. **We do not condone the use of physical force to make a young person do what we want them to do.** All physical contact should be an appropriate response to the child's needs not the needs of the adult. Colleagues must be pre- pared to support each other and act or speak out if they think any adult is behaving inappropriately.