



Sendias Bathnes Safeguarding Policy

Children

1. Introduction

Sendias Bathnes (SB), provides children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), and their parents or carers with free, confidential and impartial information, advice and support (IAS) about matters relating to SEND, including matters relating to health and social care, as they relate to SEND. The service is commissioned by the Integrated Care Board and the local authority. The service is delivered in-house but at arm's length from the local authority. SB provides IAS with the aim of ensuring that children, young people and their parent/carers can make informed decisions about their own or their child's SEND. This is achieved by working in partnership with children, young people and their parent/carers and other services. 'Children' refers to those who have not yet reached their 18th birthday. SB works with children and young people from 0-25. For special educational needs, the Children and Families Act 2014 defines 'young people' as aged over compulsory school age and under 25.

2. Aims and Commitment

SB believes everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people, to keep them safe and to practise in a way that protects them from all forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and doing nothing is not acceptable. The welfare of children and young people is paramount.

We will give equal priority to keeping all children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe regardless of their age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

We recognise that some children, young people, and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

All staff and volunteers are expected to follow our safeguarding policies. As an in-house arm's length service, we adhere to the local authority's overarching safeguarding policies & refer to them throughout this policy. Working in partnership with children, young people, their parent/carers, and other agencies is essential in promoting the welfare of children and young people.

SB has no role or remit to assess whether abuse has or will occur, but all staff/volunteers **do** have a responsibility to pass on concerns in relation to the safety of a child or young person to the appropriate agency so that concerns can be assessed.

By understanding the warning signs, we aim to respond to problems as early as possible. We recognise that a warning sign doesn't automatically mean a child is being abused. There are several warning indicators which might suggest that a child may be being abused or neglected. These can be explored in more detail on



the Bath and North East Somerset Council Community Safeguarding Partnership website: <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/recognising-abuse>

3. Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to

- all children under 18 years old
- young people aged 16 and 17.
- all staff & volunteers.

(For young people aged 18-25, please refer to our vulnerable adult's policy)

The policy provides guidance to SB staff and volunteers on best practice to ensure safeguarding procedures when supporting families involved with the service. The policy follows Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) guidelines and procedures. BCSSP has produced an online web enabled procedures manual: <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/> together with protocols, policies, and procedures <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/professional-working-guidance-policies-procedures>. These are regularly reviewed and updated.

4. How we will meet our aims & commitments.

We will meet our commitment to keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by: -

- Listening to children, valuing, and respecting them
- Ensuring a named person (the Service Manager/ 'Designated Safeguarding Lead') takes lead responsibility for safeguarding within Sendias Bathnes.
- Following safeguarding and child protection guidance and procedures through Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership
- Making sure all staff and volunteers understand and follow the safeguarding and child protection procedures.
- Ensuring children, young people and their families know about the organisation's safeguarding and child protection policies and what to do if they have a concern.
- Building a culture where staff, volunteers and children know how they are expected to behave, and feel comfortable about sharing concerns, following the codes of conduct for staff and volunteers.
- Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures so that all staff and volunteers know about and follow our policies, procedures and behaviour codes confidently and competently. This will include using our safeguarding and child protection procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families, and carers appropriately.
- Recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made - following Safer Recruitment procedures.

- Recording, storing and using information professionally and securely, in line with data protection legislation and guidance.
- using our procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately.
- creating and maintaining an anti-bullying environment and ensuring that we follow policy and procedure to help us deal effectively with any bullying that does arise. <https://intranet.bathnes.gov.uk/harassment-and-bullying>
- ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place: <https://sendiasbathnes.org.uk/sen-support/sen-resources/complaints-https://intranet.bathnes.gov.uk/whistleblowing>
- 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.

5. Training

- Safeguarding is part of SB's induction and on-going training programme.
- SB Manager ('Designated Safeguarding Lead') & Senior I&A Officer (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) will attend safeguarding training, organised through BSSP as required.
- All staff will attend refresher training on 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' every two years.
- Volunteers will receive 'Basic Awareness' training accessed/delivered through Bath and North East Somerset Council, the BSSP or by the volunteer Coordinator and/or 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' every two years.

6. Roles and responsibilities

- The Service Manager & Senior Information & Advice Officer, ('Designated Safeguarding Lead' & 'Deputy Safeguarding Lead' within the service) are required to:
- Attend relevant training to ensure that they can recognise the signs and symptoms of Child Abuse;
- Attend relevant training every two years to ensure support can be given to staff or volunteers.
- Ensure 'Basic Awareness' safeguarding training is undertaken as part of induction for staff and volunteers and is renewed every 2 years.
- Collate, or support staff to collate, all relevant information regarding any safeguarding concern.
- In conjunction with staff or volunteers, consider the appropriateness of speaking with or involving parent/carers in any safeguarding concern.
- Be aware of the practical and emotional impact of the situation and offer support to the member of staff or volunteer involved and/or support them to access appropriate support.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy may wish to consult with/draw on expertise from those within the local authority. Contact can be made through the Triage Team: Children's Social Care, 01225 396312 / 396313. The Disabled



Children's Team Contact our Disabled Children's team can be contacted on [01225 39 69 67](tel:01225396967), or by email at [ChildCare Duty@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:ChildCareDuty@bathnes.gov.uk)

- Ensure that a written record/report of the situation is made, including any action taken.
- Support staff to report concerns or report concerns.
<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/report-concern-about-child>

7. All staff are required to:

- Attend relevant training to ensure that they can recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse.
- The Volunteer Coordinator, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy should attend relevant training at least every two years to ensure that support can be given to volunteers and staff.
- Make themselves aware of the SB Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Report any safeguarding concerns, allegations, or disclosures to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Volunteers should report concerns to the Volunteer Coordinator or to the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy if the coordinator is not available. The Volunteer Coordinator will pass on any concerns to the safeguarding lead or to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- Keep written details of the situation and relevant action taken. Where possible staff should record exactly what is said where this gives rise to a safeguarding concern.

8. Volunteers are required to:

- Attend relevant training (Basic Awareness) every two years to ensure that they can recognise signs and symptoms of child abuse.
- Make themselves familiar with the volunteer handbook and associated policies, including the Sendias Bathnes Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Report any safeguarding concerns, allegations or disclosures to the Volunteer Coordinator. (If the Volunteer Coordinator is not available, volunteers should contact the Service Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead. In the Service Manager's absence, contact the Senior Information and Advice Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- **Call the police on 999 if a child or young person is being abused or is in immediate danger.**
- Keep written details of any action taken.

9. Safeguarding procedures

- If a child, young person, or a parent/carer discloses a safeguarding concern or issue, or a staff member or volunteer suspects a child or young person is at risk of harm or a staff member or volunteer witnesses an abusive situation involving another practitioner, SB safeguarding procedures must be followed.
- If staff or volunteers have general concerns about a child that they do not feel come within the descriptions of abuse, they should discuss them with the



Volunteer Coordinator, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

- In all cases a Sendias Bathnes safeguarding form should be completed. This is an internal form which assists in recording and determining what response to make.
- If, after consideration, as described in this policy, it is agreed that there is concern about the safety of a child - the Service Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead or Senior Information and Advice Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Lead and member of staff dealing with the case, will pass on the concern to the relevant statutory agency (in line with Local Authority Safeguarding procedures).
- The actual referral form for the LA may be completed by the member of staff dealing with the case or the Service Manager/Designated Safeguarding Lead or Senior Information and Advice Officer/Deputy Safeguarding Lead supporting. This should first be discussed and agreed between the members of staff. Relevant information should be recorded and made available at the point of referral using the Sendias Bathnes safeguarding reporting procedure and form.

10. Making a referral/raising a concern

- Referral means sharing information about concerns with outside agencies. If staff are concerned about the safety of the child, young person, or adult at risk, information must be passed on to the Service Manager, or Senior Information and Advice Officer. It is important to remember that referrals are made to protect the welfare of the individual and not to 'report' a parent or carer.
- A referral is normally carried out with the agreement of the Service Manager or other senior staff member. Reference should be made to the B&NES, Threshold of Need Matrix [Opportunities for Support. A Guide to thresholds in B&NES](https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/BNES_threshold_of_needs_matrix_Jan_23.pdf)(https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-01/BNES_threshold_of_needs_matrix_Jan_23.pdf)



If a child or young person is in immediate danger then dial 999 and ask for police assistance.

If you think a child or young person is at risk of significant harm, and it's out of hours, call the Emergency Duty Team on [01454 61 51 65](tel:01454615165)

If there is no immediate danger then to report a concern, use the: [Online form](#):

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/webforms/concerned-about-a-child-or-family/>

You need the following information:

- the name, date of birth (or estimated date of delivery) and address for each child you are including in the referral
- the name and contact details for each parent or carer
- information about what support has been offered to the family

To report a concern about a child who already has a social worker, contact the social worker or team involved or email: ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk

11. Confidentiality – the referral process

Further useful contact points:

Disabled Children's team

For a child with disabilities or additional needs:

01225 39 69 67,

ChildCare_Duty@bathnes.gov.uk

For parents & carers who wish to raise a concern **during office hours** they can:

1. Call Children's Social Work Services on **01225 39 61 11** or **01225 47 79 29** (weekdays, 8.30am to 5pm, except Fridays when closed from 4.30pm)
2. Drop into the Keynsham One Stop Shop and ask for the duty children's social worker

Out of office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on **01454 61 51 65**

- A child, young person or parent/carers **permission must be given before sharing information** with anyone outside Sendias Bathnes, **except in exceptional circumstances, when there is a duty to disclose** certain information to others.
- The exceptional circumstances when Sendias Bathnes would have a duty to divulge information would be:
 - if there is risk of significant/ suspected harm to the parent/carer, child, or other member of the family; and/or
 - in order to prevent/avoid a serious criminal act.
- The staff dealing with the issue should ensure that the family is aware of concerns and how they are being dealt with **unless this would put the child at risk**, e.g., in the case of suspected sexual abuse. If this is the case, a referral will be made without reference to the family. The Sendias Bathnes, safeguarding reporting form & a copy of any referral made should be uploaded to the relevant record on Crossdata (confidential database) under the safeguarding tab. The case should be flagged using the system available on Crossdata.
- Explaining to a parent/carer or a child or young person that there are safeguarding concerns can be difficult. Staff may have a close relationship with these people and may feel, uncertain about reporting the matter, nervous about how the parent will react or worried whether what they suspect/ or have heard is really abuse or not. Nevertheless, staff should aim to inform anyway. It is important to make the parent/carer/young person understand there is a policy in place which must be followed. Staff should inform families what our safeguarding policies are, and, how they can access them.
- If the conversation with the family informing them of the concerns and how they are going to be dealt with is likely to be challenging, the Service Manager or Senior I & A Officer who is supporting the staff member, should take responsibility for that communication wherever possible. The Service Manager should always be made aware of safeguarding concerns and action taken.

12. Cooperation with investigations.

Where information is requested by Children's Social Care, the staff member, supported by the Service Manager or Senior Information and Advice officer, in discussion with Children's Social Care, will ensure that the child or young person or parent/carers are made aware of the content of any written contribution. They will ensure that information passed on is relevant. The service will cooperate by providing relevant information but will not investigate or be able to offer any professional or expert opinion.

13. Concern about member of staff or volunteer presenting risk

Where there is a concern that a member of staff or volunteer may be a risk to children or young people or where a child; young person or parent/carer has made an allegation against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or if they are not available to the Deputy



Safeguarding Lead. If the allegation is about the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' the report should be made directly to Children's Social Care. **In all other cases**, it is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Safeguarding lead to report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegation management (LADO).

Contact details:

The Bath & North East Somerset Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be contacted on Tel: 01225 396810. Information may then be requested to be sent to, e-mail: LADO@bathnes.gov.uk.

Further information relating to allegations against staff or volunteers is available here:

Bath & North East Somerset's [protocol for managing allegations against staff or volunteers who work with children](#). This process involves contact with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Also check the [South West Child Protection Procedures](#).

Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership:
website: <https://bcssp.bathnes.gov.uk/>



References

Relevant internal documentation

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- SB Safeguarding reporting procedure and form
- SB Confidentiality policy
- Bath&NES Safer Recruitment Policy
- GDPR Policy & procedures
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Bullying Policy and Procedures
- Lone Working Policy & working with children

Relevant Legislation and References

- Children and Families Act 2014 Children Act 1989/2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018,
- Health and Social Care Act 2008
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Safeguarding Procedures
- GDPR (2020)