



BYC Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure

Policy statement

The British Youth Council (BYC) is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all young people, by taking all reasonable steps to protect them from neglect, physical, emotional and sexual harm.

BYC believes that safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all the young people we work with is the responsibility of everyone, paid staff (full and part-time) voluntary staff, sessional or contractual staff, trustee board and young people.

BYC staff and volunteers must at all times show respect and understanding for the rights of young people, their safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects this.

BYC will support anyone, (children, young people, staff, volunteers, parents, key workers) who raises any concerns regarding the welfare or protection of young people. Any concerns raised will be taken seriously.

BYC accepts that the best interests of the young person must be paramount when considering any action concerning matters of child protection and safeguarding the welfare of young people.

Approval and review

Approved by	Trustee Board
Procedure owner	Risk Committee
Procedure author	Chief Executive Officer
Date	13 December 2018
Review date	December 2019 – Risk committee currently doing detailed review

Related policies and procedures

- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and safety policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

BYC will do this by:

- Ensuring that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected trained and supervised. (*Recruitment and volunteer policy, and Diversity and equality policy*)
- Assessing all risk carefully and taking all necessary steps to minimise and manage the risk. (*Health and safety policy*)
- Letting young people, children, parents and key workers know how to voice concerns or complaints about anything that they may not be happy with. (*Complaints and disciplinary policy*)
- Giving young people, children, parents and key workers information about what we do and what can be expected from us. (General BYC information materials).

BYC will review this policy and the relevant procedures regularly; together with all other policies and procedures BYC has in place.

Other policies and procedures that BYC has established to ensure that this policy is implemented are: child protection; health and safety; recruitment, volunteer and training; diversity; confidentiality; complaints and disciplinary and BYC codes of conduct.

BYC Definitions

- **Young people/person:** All safeguarding and child protection legislation and guidance recognises a child or young person as anyone up to the age of 18, this policy is in place to safeguard all the young people that BYC works with, which in some cases will be up to the age of 25 years. Some aspects of this policy, such as, code of conduct will be in place to protect all young people, regardless of age.
- **Vulnerable adult:** it is some one over the age of 18, who is considered 'vulnerable' for one reason or another. However there is no simple definition based on age or disability; not all those with a physical or other disability should be classed as 'vulnerable', some young people may experience periods of vulnerability.
- **BYC staff:** This policy applies to all full and part-time paid staff as well as volunteers at BYC, any contract or sessional paid staff or volunteers, all trustee board members and young people. For the purpose of this document any reference to BYC staff will include all those mentioned above.

Roles and responsibilities

The designated safeguarding officer(s) have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that this policy and procedures are disseminated, implemented and adhered to at all times.
- To be familiar with and have an understanding of relevant legislation and guidance relating to safeguarding and child protection.

- To receive all information from staff, young people, parents or carers about any child protection concern or issue, to assess this information promptly and take any appropriate actions and maintain records.
- To liaise with and be familiar with relevant staff in external child protection agencies, and to make referrals as and when necessary. When making a referral to do so having spoken to relevant member staff/CEO and the young person involved.
- To arrange appropriate training and support for all relevant staff.
- To provide support during and after incidents involving child protection.
- To monitor and maintain records to provide feedback to BYC on the number of safeguarding concerns and incidents, and the outcomes of these.

BYC designated officers are Jo Hobbs. Contact number: 020 7250 8381.

All staff has the following responsibilities:

- To adhere to all the points and procedures outlined within this policy,
- To report any incidents, concerns, suspicions and or allegations they have regarding a young persons well being and or safety, in-line with BYC reporting procedures (see later section), which include concerns about the conduct of staff / volunteers.
- To attend induction or any training courses including on-going training in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- To use support sessions, such as supervision, to discuss any child protection or safeguarding concerns or issues.

Recruitment and selection

- We practice safer recruitment, which involves taking up references for all staff and undertaking DBS checks where applicable. Please refer to BYC's recruitment and selection and also Diversity and equality policies and procedures.

Training and support

- All new BYC staff, during their induction period, will receive information and briefing on this and other policies and any child protection issues.
- All existing staff will receive up to-date training and information regarding changes in legislation, guidance and procedures regularly from the designated safeguarding officer(s), including refresher training.
- Please refer to BYC Staff training and development policy for more details.

Code of conduct

BYC believe that all members of its staff have a clear understanding of the responsibilities and powers their positions of trust carry. This code of conduct has clearly outlined what is acceptable behaviour and what is not, and how to behave appropriately when working with young people, ensuring that the 'position of trust' is not abused. This will not only protect those in the positions of trust but also safeguards those being cared for.

Where a staff member breaches the code of conduct, then the staff member's line manager will investigate and if the staff member is considered guilty of misconduct or gross misconduct, BYC Disciplinary policy and procedure will be followed. (Please refer to BYC Disciplinary policy for more details).

BYC code of conduct

Staff must always:

- Treat everyone with respect and dignity
- Respect and be sensitive to individuals beliefs and religions
- Act as a good role model
- Respect a young person's right to privacy
- Assess the risks likely to be incurred in all situations, activities, building and trips to ensure all potential dangers have been identified and the risk minimised
- Plan to have more than one adult present on activities/trips
- Take any allegations, suspicions or concerns about abuse which a young person makes seriously (including those made against staff) and report them following appropriate procedures
- Provide an opportunity and environment for young people to talk to the relevant staff member about any concerns they may have
- Provide an environment that encourages young people and adults to feel comfortable and confident in challenging any attitudes, behaviours or language that may be discriminatory or inappropriate in any way. (i.e. racial, sexual, bullying, homophobic, disability, refugee/asylum status etc.).
- Remember that others may misinterpret behaviour and actions regardless of how well-intentioned they may be
- Show understanding and sensitivity when dealing with emotional issues

Staff must never:

- Permit or accept any abusive and/or discriminatory behaviour or by individuals or as peer-led activities, (e.g. initiation ceremonies, bullying, taunting)
- Engage in inappropriate behaviour, contact or language (e.g. physical, verbal, sexual, including horseplay)
- Allow or encourage others (staff, volunteers, trustee board or young people) to engage in inappropriate behaviour/contact (as above)
- Use inappropriate or demeaning language, via any method of communication, i.e. writing, phoning, texting, email and or via the Internet.
- Engage in any form of sexual relationship with a young people
- Make sexually suggestive comments towards a young people
- Give personal money to any young person they are working with
- Invite young people (they are working with) to their homes or into their rooms whilst away on residential
- Show favouritism to anyone
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts
- Use alcohol, drugs or other substances when working with young people
- Undermine or criticise others

- Deliberately put themselves or others in compromising or potentially dangerous situations
- Promote their religious or political ideas and beliefs
- Believe it could never happen, or trivialise abuse
- Rely on just their good name and or reputation to protect them against situations which could lead to allegations
- Promise to keep secrets
- Be alone with a young person unless necessary for the task and having let others know of the arrangement and the reason for it

NB: some of the team building activities carried out by BYC will involve physical contact amongst participants and staff (adult workers), this is fine so long as they are carried out in an open environment, (i.e. not in a situation where there is one adult worker alone with participant engaging in physical activities). Young people must be given the choice to not participate in an activity, should they not wish to.

Safe working practice for event or residential:

Staff should ensure that the ratio between young people and staff is adequate, and representative of the gender mix of the group. Please refer to *Off Site Activities Guidelines* and *Keeping it Safe* to find the appropriate ratio.

BYC's *Off Site Activities Guidelines*, states that the appropriate level of supervision will be based on the outcome of the risk assessment. The factors to be taken into consideration include:

- Gender, age and ability of the group;
- Young people with special educational/medical needs;
- Nature of activities;
- Experience of leaders/volunteers in off site supervision;
- Duration and nature of journey;
- Competence and behaviour of young people.
- Staff should plan to have at least one other staff member present, preferably of a different gender.
- Any late nights or overnight must be agreed with your line manager
- All relevant consent, emergency contact details and health and medical forms to be completed by parents/careers for those under 18 years or by those over 18 themselves, before the activity or event. These must be kept in a safe and confidential place.
- That risk assessment forms are completed before any activity or event, and that risk assessing is on going throughout the event/activity.

Confidentiality

Whilst BYC staff will ensure that young people's rights to privacy and confidence is respected, there may be times when this confidence is breached. If a young person discloses information about him/herself or another young person, which raises child protection concerns, then these concerns will be reported in line with BYC reporting concerns procedure available from BYC. BYC will ensure that the young person is involved,

consulted and kept informed about what action, if any, is to be taken, and during each step of the reporting procedure.

Any personal information gathered about a young person will be stored in a safe and confidential place, only those who need to know will have access to this information, (i.e. staff member involved, designated safeguarding officer and line manager/chief executive). It may be necessary to pass this information on to the relevant authorities, such as, social services, police, NSPCC, and either parents/guardians or carers when a child protection concern has been raised. When doing so, BYC will where possible ensure that the young person is involved and gives consent in making that decision, however there may be occasions where this is not possible as information has to be passed on against the young person's will and without their consent. The only situation when a referral can and will be made without the consent of the young person will be if that young person is at serious risk of harm (e.g. significant harm).

BYC staff will ensure that any information gained or given will be treated with the strictest of confidence. Young people will be consulted and involved in the decision-making process. For further details please refer to BYC confidentiality policy.

Child protection

What is abuse?

Child abuse occurs when a child or young person has suffered from, or is at significant risk of suffering from ill-treatment or impairment of development, by any persons who knowingly collude with or fail to prevent the ill-treatment of the child by ensuring reasonable standards of care and protection.

- All staff and volunteers should be aware that abusers are not just strangers; they can include parents, carers, family members, friends, people in positions of trust/authority, other children and young people, anyone who has contact with children and young people.
- It is also important to remember that although most abusers are men, women also abuse. Abusers come from all backgrounds, races, classes and professions.
- Children and young people who are abused are often abused by an adult they know and trust.
- Disabled children and young people are more vulnerable to abuse. They are more dependant on intimate care and occasionally they may be less able to tell someone about or escape from abusive situations.
- Misunderstandings and misinterpretations of different cultural and religious beliefs and practices often means that children and young people from these communities may be more vulnerable to abuse going undetected and often statutory services fail to meet the needs or deliver appropriate services to these children and young people.

Definitions of abuse

Four categories of abuse have been defined, although it is important to remember that abuse will often fall into more than one category at any one time:

- 1) Neglect – the persistent or severe neglect of the child/young person, including failure to meet the child's basic physical and psychological needs, i.e. food, warmth, shelter, clothing, care and protection.
- 2) Physical – any form of non-accidental injury, or failure to protect from injury to a child/young person, this may involve, hitting, shaking, poisoning, throwing, burning/scalding.
- 3) Emotional – severe or persistent rejection or emotional ill treatment of the child/young person, which would negatively affect the emotional or behavioural development of the child/young person.
- 4) Sexual – the actual or likely sexual exploitation of the child/young person by any person, whether or not that child/young person is aware of what is happening. This would include physical contact (penetrative or non-penetrative) and non-physical contact (looking at pornographic materials, watching sexual activities).

It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

Attention must be drawn to other sources of stress young people and their families such as social exclusion, domestic violence, and mental illness or drug/alcohol misuse. As these areas may have a negative impact on the young person's health and development, if you notice that a young person's well being is being adversely affected, then the same procedures must be followed.

Recognising abuse

The following information is designed for you to use as a guide to help you become more alert to and aware of the signs of possible abuse, *it isn't intended to turn you into an expert.*

Recognising possible abuse is a complex and complicated procedure and **it is not your responsibility** to decide whether a young person has been abused or is at significant risk. However **you do have a responsibility to act on any concerns and report them** in accordance with your reporting procedures.

1) Neglect – this can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, and yet it can have some of the most lasting and damaging effects.

The physical signs and changes in behaviour that may indicate neglect may include:

- **Constantly hungry, perhaps food being stolen from others**
- **Constantly dirty or in an unkempt, unwashed state**
- **Inappropriately dressed for the weather conditions**
- **A loss of weight or being constantly underweight**
- **Being tired all the time**
- **Failure to attend medical appointments or not requesting them**
- **Mentioning of being left alone or unsupervised**

2) Physical abuse – it's quite normal for young people to get cuts and bruises as part of their daily life, however some young people will have bruising or cuts that could only have been caused non-accidentally. Important indicators are where on the body the bruises or injuries occur, whether an explanation was given or the lack of explanations fits the injury, and also whether there was a delay in seeking medical treatment when treatment may be quite necessary.

The physical signs and changes in behaviour that may indicate physical abuse may include:

- Injuries that can not be explained on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips from slapping or pinching
- Cigarette burns, bite marks, broken bones, scalds
- A fear of approaching parents for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts
- Flinching when touched or approached
- Depression, withdrawn behaviour
- Running away from home
- Reluctance to get changed

3) Emotional abuse – again this can be very difficult to identify, often those who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being put down or belittled. Also some young people may be receiving little or no love, affection and/or attention from their parents/guardians/carers. Also those not allowed to mix/play with others may be experiencing emotional abuse.

The physical signs and changes in behaviour that may indicate emotional abuse may include:

- A failure to thrive or grow
- Sudden speech disorders
- Delayed development either physically or emotionally
- Exhibiting neurotic behaviour such as hair twisting or rocking
- Reluctance to have their parents/guardians contacted or approached regarding their behaviour
- Exhibiting a lack of confidence or the need for approval or attention
- Fear of making mistakes
- Exhibiting self harming behaviour

4) Sexual abuse – adults who exploit their power and use young people to gratify their own sexual needs abuse both girls and boys of all age's cultures and abilities, including babies, toddlers and young people. More often than not the young person's behaviour will cause you to become concerned; however there are physical signs which highlight concerns. In all cases young people who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop. Therefore it is vitally important that they are listened to and taken seriously.

The physical signs and changes in behaviour that may indicate sexual abuse may include:

- Stomach pains, discomfort when walking or sitting down
- Bruising or injuries to parts of the body that are not normally seen
- Pregnancy
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour and/or mood, e.g. becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- Nervousness or fear of being left with specific persons or groups
- Acting in a sexually inappropriate way with peers/adults
- Sexual knowledge/drawings/language which are beyond their development age or level
- Running away
- Self harm/mutilation, suicide attempts
- Eating disorders such as bulimia or anorexia
- Indicating that they have secrets which cannot be told to anyone
- Bedwetting
- Substance abuse (drug and alcohol)

It is important to know and remember that these lists are not definitive but should act as a guide to assist you in becoming more aware. Young people may show some of these indicators at some time, but the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring or has occurred. As mentioned it is not your responsibility to

determine whether abuse has/is taking place, your responsibility lies with reporting any and all concerns to the relevant and appropriate people.

There may be other factors (within the family) for reasons in sudden or noticeable changes in behaviour, such as death, the birth of a new sibling etc.

Responding to any suspicions, concerns or allegations

Concerns about a staff member's behaviour, volunteers, young persons or trustee board member (whistle-blowing)

Action to be taken

- Any concerns must be raised with the staff members' line manager and/or the safeguarding designated officer, immediately.
- All staff has the right to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about another member of staff in confidence and free from harassment, being treated unfairly or being penalised.
- Where an allegation has been made about a member of staff they will receive support throughout the process and thereafter is necessary, as agreed with their line manager.
- All procedures will adhere to BYC disciplinary policy, support mechanisms put in place by BYC must not jeopardise any investigation or put young people at risk.

Concerns about a young person and responding to disclosure

Action to be taken if you have a concern about a young person's safety and well-being:

- Act immediately.
- Follow the steps outlined in the section below 'if a young person confides in you, you must'.
- Inform the designated safeguarding officer and your line manager with as much information/details as soon as possible.
- Keep a detailed record of what you witnessed, heard or were told.

Action to be taken by the safeguarding designated officer and or manager:

- Act immediately.
- Consider if the young person is in immediate danger, if so; contact the police, social services and or parents. Follow procedure as above.
- If the young person is not in immediate danger, find out as much as possible about the situation or incident from the young person, do not ask interrogating questions, and just ask questions for clarification only as further questioning may jeopardise any future investigation.
- Allegations or suspicions made about a member of staff must be dealt with in accordance with BYC disciplinary policy and procedure.
- Contact the local social services team relevant to the young person. You can obtain their details from www.direct.gov.uk

- You may also need to agree with the local social services team about ongoing support for the young person, once any concerns have been made.
- Make records of the disclosure as soon as practical on an incident recording form, in as much detail as possible and in the young person's words rather than interpreting them. Ensure these records are kept securely and confidentially.

Action to be taken if the young person is in immediate danger:

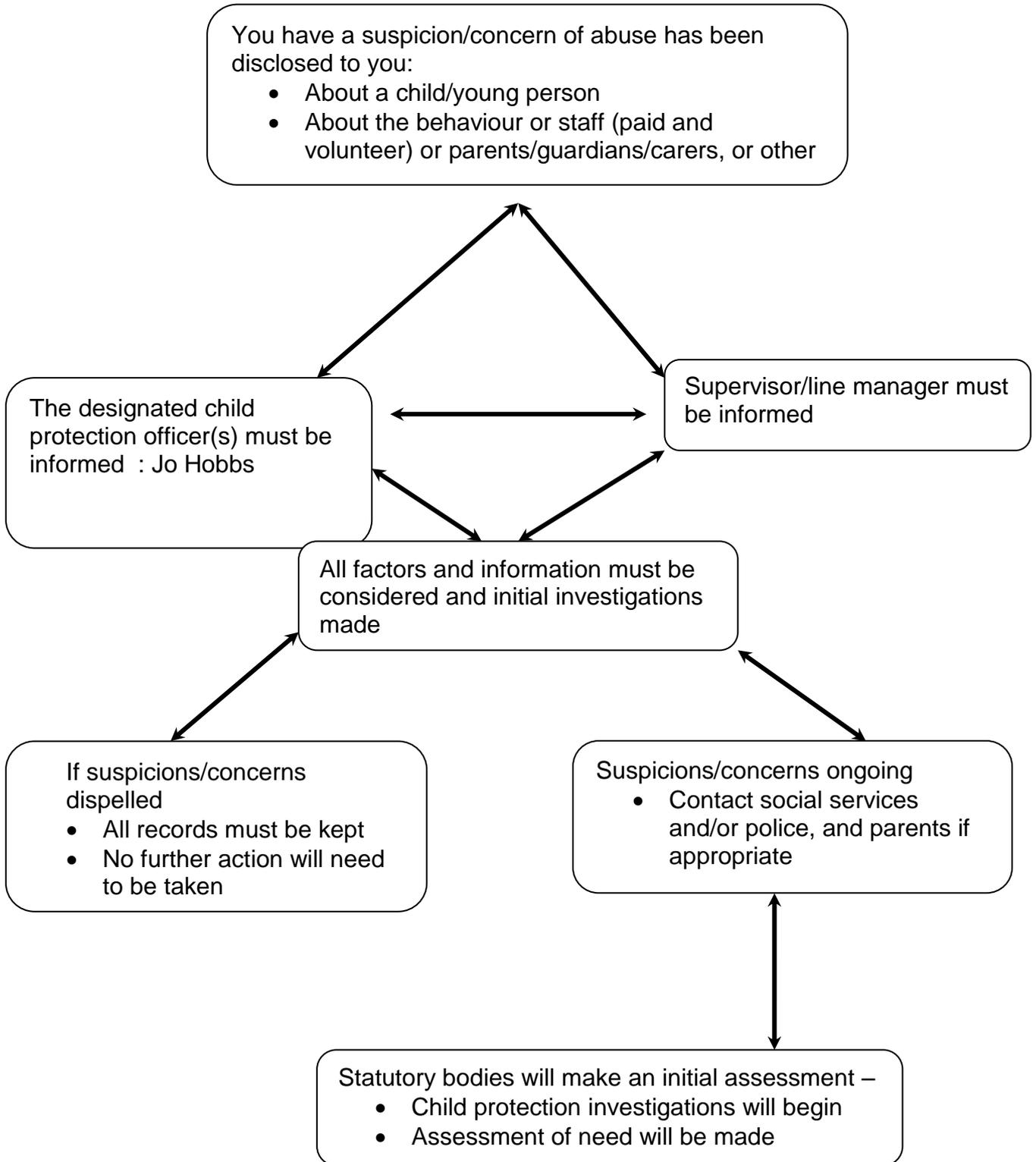
- Contact the police by dialling 999.
- Get medical help if necessary.
- Refer the young person to the local social services team or emergency duty team (if out of normal office hours). Give them as many details as you know, and what any future action may be.
- Contact parents or carers. DO NOT contact them if this will place the young person or others in the household at further risk of harm. If this is the case contact the police.
- As soon as possible inform the safeguarding designated officer and your line manager.
- Record all the details on the relevant incident/disclosure forms.

If a young person confides in you, you must:

- Stay calm and approachable; do not let your shock show.
- Listen very carefully to what is being said without interrupting.
- Explain at an appropriate time as early as possible that the information being given by the young person will need to be shared and passed on to others – but stress only to those who need to know. Do not in any circumstances promise to keep it a secret.
- Make it clear that you are taking them seriously and acknowledge how difficult this must be.
- Allow the young person to speak at their own pace.
- Reassure the young person that they are doing the right thing in telling you.
- If you need to ask questions, then only ask questions for clarification, avoid asking questions that suggest particular answers, avoid asking probing questions – you do not need to know all the details that is the job of the experts and you might jeopardise a future investigation.
- Let the young person know what will happen next, who you will report the information to, what will happen once it has been reported.
- Record all the details of what was said, use the exact wording used by the young person, do not try to interpret any of the information yourself, record details such as names mentioned, dates, times, who the information went to, what action was taken next, don't forget to sign and date the form (see incident/disclosure form).

BYC staff will always ensure that the young person's welfare is paramount when considering what action will be taken. BYC will also take into account the age and maturity of the young person, involving them in any decisions being made concerning them.

The procedure for reporting child protection concerns



Code of Practice for Working with Children and Young People.

Policy statement

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BYC will do this by:

- Ensuring that all our staff and volunteers are carefully selected trained and supervised. (*Recruitment and volunteer policy, and Diversity and equality policy*)
- Assessing all risk carefully and taking all necessary steps to minimise and manage the risk. (*Health and safety policy*)
- Letting young people, children, parents and key workers know how to voice concerns or complaints about anything that they may not be happy with. (*Complaints and disciplinary policy*)
- Giving young people, children, parents and key workers information about what we do and what can be expected from us.

BYC will review this policy and the relevant procedures regularly [Feb 2016]; together with all other policies and procedures BYC has in place.

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aspects of this policy, such as, code of conduct will be in place to protect all young people, regardless of age.

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- **BYC staff:** This policy applies to all full and part-time paid staff as well as volunteers at BYC, any contract or sessional paid staff or volunteers, all trustee board members and young people. For the purpose of this document any reference to BYC staff will include all those mentioned above.

Compliance with the provisions of this code of code is a requirement of all staff/volunteers to ensure the highest standards of integrity, honesty and appropriate behaviour in all our work with children and young people.

If any employee / volunteer are uncertain concerning any particular situation, advice should be obtained in the first instance from their line manger, who may seek clarification from the CEO.

Staff / Volunteers should read careful the Standards of Conduct, as a breach of any part of the code may lead to disciplinary proceedings or dismissal. In the event of any criminal offence being committed, staff / volunteers may be liable to prosecution.

Staff / Volunteers should be aware that in respect of their work with children and young people they are never "off duty" during events as a child or young person may require their assistance at any time during the event. To ensure the safety and protection of children and young people staff must be alert and aware of potential risk, harm or danger at all times.

Staff/ volunteers should be aware they are required to be positive role models for children and young people and therefore;-

- a) Never create or develop an inappropriate relationship with any individual or group of children and young people. Staff must be aware that as adults they have a powerful influence over young people and any of that power should not be used in an inappropriate manner.
- b) Must not use unacceptable language when engaging with children and young people. Staff/volunteers should not swear, use or tell inappropriate jokes, or use racist, sexist, homophobic or other discriminatory language. Staff/volunteers should never "put down" children and young people when they are talking to them. Staff/volunteers should actively encourage the use of positive language and praise when working with children and young people.

- c) Should be aware that whilst casual dress is often vital for work with children and young people, their choice of clothes should be appropriate for the work they are undertaking.
- d) In addition to the health and safety issues addressed in “a-c” above staff/ volunteers must also be aware that that young people growing into adulthood are undergoing physical changes which might make them vulnerable to certain suggestions and aware of the visual appearance of others.
- e) Staff / volunteers should not force their views and opinions on children and young people but give them the space and time to work things out in their mind; challenge should lead to their learning and growth, rather than conflict or tension.
- f) Personal grievances and personal issues between staff/ volunteers should on no account be discussed with children or young people. Any grievance between staff should be resolved by following the grievance procedures.
- g) Staff/ volunteers should not become overly familiar , with respect to physical contact or a sexual relationship, with children and young people and must be aware of the dangers of leaving themselves open to accusations. Care must be taken to ensure adequate adult supervision and staff/ volunteer gender balance in relation to activities. All Staff / volunteers must consider situations where they could be in vulnerable one to one situations and try and avoid them or implement control measures, e.g. being alone with a child or young person at the end of an event, where the child or young person is of the opposite gender to the staff member/volunteer.

There is recognition by BYC that the nature of some specialist work will need to be carried out in on-to-one situations.

- h) Staff / volunteers must be alert to situations outside of work. Where a worker / volunteer may meet a young person in a social context, who is known to them through work, the worker must remember that they are never off-duty i.e. they are still working and must adhere to this code of conduct.
- i) Any inappropriate relationship with children or young people where a worker/volunteer arranges to be alone with child or young person (whether in work or outside) is an abuse of power and a dismissible offence.
- j) Dealing with conflict- never use physical force against children or young people. Staff should be aware of tensions building up and potential situations at the earliest possible point. Sanctions and restraint may be necessary in extreme situations; however staff will receive training during the induction period in dealing with conflict. It

is important to remember that the protection of other children/young people, staff and volunteers and the designated officer's own safety is a priority in situations of conflict.

Confidentiality Issues with Children and Young People:

Staff/ volunteers must never indicate to a child or young person that you would keep secrets. A feature of sexual abuse in particular is the secrecy that exists between perpetrator and young person. Staff/Volunteers can find themselves pulled into this relationship in a destructive way. Consequently, support workers must discuss their concerns with BYC's designated staff member with responsibility for Child Protection at the earliest opportunity.

Approaches from young people along the lines of, "If I tell you something, you won't tell anyone else will you?" - should be met with a firm but gentle explanation, for example "I can't promise that I won't share this with anybody else, if I feel that there is a situation that may put you or anybody else in danger. What I can!!! promise is that I will not do so without letting you know" The child or young person may then choose not to tell, but usually they are looking for someone to help them break out of their secret. For children and young people who do not tell, the Staff / volunteer should make sure the young person knows of organisations that may operate in confidence. (E.g. chid line, incest survivors groups).

Purpose:

The purpose of child protection is to ensure that appropriate action is taken when a young person up to the age of 18 is suspected by a worker/ volunteer of being abused, being at risk from parents/guardians, carers, adult visitors to their home, other staff or other responsible adults. Similar action should be taken in the case off a young person suspected of being abused by another young person, including within a young person's own relationship abuse from carers, between siblings etc.

Disclosures from young people:

The staff member or volunteer may be the first person the young person has discussed the abuse with. The worker's response to the young person at this stage is crucial.

It is important to tell the young person that you will do something about it. They must be assured of support in getting information and helping to stop the abuse.

CHILD PROTECTION-INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURED FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS.

IF YOU HAVE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A CHILD MAY HAVE BEEN OR AT RISK OF BEING ABUSED, YOU SHOULD:

- Firstly and before any other action, try to ensure the child is safe.
- Obtain **FACTUAL** information about the child and the circumstances by using sensitive and tactful means.(this should include the child's name and their address)
- Do not frighten or question the child (Be aware of the child or young persons reactions at all times). Don't "put words in their mouths" or ask questions that could be interpreted as such.
- If you feel that the situation should be reported, telephone BYC's designated staff member with responsibility for Child Protection.
- The Child Protection Officer will then make a further decision whether or not to contact the local Social Services Department or the police.
- Although no further action may be required by you after this stage, you may be required to attend a meeting with the local Social Services Department on the incident if required.
- In the case of allegations of suspected abuse committed by a member of staff or volunteer please also contact the BYC's designated staff member(s) with responsibility for Child Protection on 02072508381 Jo Hobbs with details of your concerns/allegation, the name of the member of staff and any children who you may feel are involved.

YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED, FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT AND FOR THAT OF THE CHILD/CHILDREN CONCERNED THAT YOU DO NOT DISCUSS THE INCIDENT WITH ANYONE OTHER THAN THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER

If a child shares concerns with you....

What to do

- √ Listen to the child
- √ Take what the child says to you seriously
- √ Watch and notice any changes in behaviour
- √ Reassure the child; let the child know that what has happened is not their fault
- √ Tell the child what you will do next (e.g. talk to a senior officer)
- √ Be careful of your own reactions; watch your body language
- √ As soon as possible, after talking to the child; write notes of what the child said using the child's actual words
- √ Watch "touch" "cuddles" etc, it may be inappropriate with a child who is talking to you about abuse as it may trigger undesirable emotions

What not to do

- ✗ Don't interrogate. Evidence could be lost if you prompt the child or put words into the child's mouth
- ✗ Don't show anger toward the abusing person . The child may feel it is directed at them, or they may have very mixed emotions about the abuser. They may not want to be separated from a person who could be their prime carer but they do want the abuse to stop. Children can sometimes feel a strong sense of loyalty towards people who have abused them
- ✗ Don't promise confidentiality. The Child Protection Procedures do not allow us to keep disclosures confidential. Remember there could be, and probably are, other children involved that we may not know about
- ✗ Don't make false promises that you may not be able to keep. It is a deep human instinct to protect and reassure children and this may lead to you promising a child that an abuser may be imprisoned or punished when this may not be the case

REPORTING IS THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT THE CHILD WHO IS AT RISK OR EXPERIENCING ABUSE