BRIDGE TO UNITY
Bringing communities together

Safeguarding Policy (Children)

Policy	Safeguarding Policy (Children)
Version	1.1
Issued	October 2026 (interim update)
What changed	Safeguarding Lead changed to Jordan Burne-Cronshaw, a trustee. Route added for concerns about the Safeguarding Lead (Chair of Trustees). Contact details updated.
Approval	Originally approved by the Board of Trustees in January 2025. This update is to be ratified at the next Board meeting.
Next full review	January 2027

Worried about someone's safety?

If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.

Otherwise, contact our Safeguarding Lead, **Jordan Burne-Cronshaw** (Trustee):

Phone or WhatsApp: **07925 462476** Email: **info@bridgetounity.co.uk**

If your concern is about the Safeguarding Lead, contact the Chair of Trustees, **Chris White**, on the same phone number or email and ask to speak to him directly.

Purpose

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children at risk of harm.

‘Safeguarding’ is the term used to describe the responsibilities and activities undertaken by statutory bodies and organisations working with children to prevent or stop children being abused or ill-treated. The agencies with a statutory duty to protect children in this way are the children’s social care departments of local authorities (referred to in this document as children’s services or social services), and the police. The key piece of legislation relating to safeguarding is the Children Act 1989. Section 47 of this Act states that social services departments have a legal duty to investigate any situation where there are concerns about the welfare of a child or young person up to the age of 18 years. Social services may choose to do this with the help of specialist police officers.

This policy defines how Bridge to Unity operates to safeguard children at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

As an organisation we have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of children at risk who access any of our activities. This policy exists to protect them and to support our staff who work with or come into contact with service users at risk of harm.

Bridge to Unity recognises that under the Children Act 2004 it has a duty for the care and protection of children who are at risk of abuse. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, preventing harm and responding effectively if concerns are raised.

Bridge to Unity is committed to inter-agency collaboration and recognises its duty and responsibility for making arrangements to ensure all its functions and activities have regard to safeguarding children at risk of abuse. This policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a

risk that it may occur.

For the purpose of this policy, and with respect to the law, children are defined as anyone under the age of 18.

We believe that everyone working for and with Bridge to Unity has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to practise in a way that prioritises protection at all times. All staff will ensure that children and young people are protected equally regardless of race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation and refugee status.

As an organisation Bridge to Unity recognises the barriers and additional needs of children with refugee status or seeking asylum, especially around communication and accessing services. This policy works to ensure individuals can access help easily and readily when required.

Accountability

Bridge to Unity's Board of Trustees is accountable for ensuring that the organisation abides by its safeguarding requirements, as set out in this policy. The Board of Trustees accepts responsibility to ensure that:

- The policy is adhered to
- The policy is applied to all practice at all times and is legally compliant and compatible with the breadth of work that Bridge to Unity carries out
- The Safeguarding Lead remains up to date with safeguarding training (level 3 and above for adults and children)
- The policy remains up to date and is regularly reviewed

Who this policy applies to

- All staff, paid and unpaid, including volunteers
- All service users
- All visitors and contractors

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All members of staff (paid and unpaid) are required to report any suspected abuse and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding. It is important that staff are also aware of the Government's Prevent strategy. The aim of this is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism in all its forms. This can also be a safeguarding issue but has different reporting mechanisms: www.counterterrorism.police.uk/what-we-do/prevent

There can be no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and young people at risk from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment.

All staff must be made aware of the policy and procedures for the safeguarding and protection of children at risk through appropriate safeguarding training, supervision and support, and through an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in meeting their safeguarding role.

Before starting work with Bridge to Unity, all staff are given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with safeguarding responsibilities and the procedures to follow if anyone has any concerns.

A clear line of accountability for the provision of safe services exists. The Safeguarding Lead for Bridge to Unity is **Jordan Burne-Cronshaw**, a trustee of the charity. If a concern involves the Safeguarding Lead, it must go to the Chair of Trustees, **Chris White**. All staff will be made aware of how to contact the Safeguarding Lead by phone and by email.

Although our staff and volunteers may not have direct working relationships with children, they may regularly come into contact with them, for example when visiting adult members of families in their homes or when parents or other family members bring children to Bridge to Unity events.

Legal definitions

Child abuse is a term used in situations where a child or young person under the age of 18 experiences ill-treatment or impairment of development through a failure on the part of the parent or carer to ensure a reasonable standard of care and protection.

This may include things that a parent or carer does (such as hitting the child) or things that the parent or carer fails to do (such as starving or neglecting the child). Sometimes children are abused by adults who are trusted by the child or placed in a supervisory position in relation to the child, for example a teacher, foster carer, staff member at a children's home, detention or other residential setting. A 'carer' could be any of these or a member of the extended family, the child's refugee community or a neighbour with whom the child is living in an informal arrangement.

This policy acknowledges that it is not only adults who abuse children and that children may abuse children through bullying, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation and humiliation.

There are many types of abuse including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission

More information about the types of abuse and their signs and indicators can be found at: www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/introduction/types-and-indicators-of-abuse

We ask that all staff (paid and unpaid) read the above and familiarise themselves with it. This is a mandatory part of working with Bridge to Unity.

Recognising and reporting abuse

Recognising abuse

Recognising abuse and exploitation can sometimes be difficult. We ask that staff are alert to changes in a service user's behaviour, for example in certain circumstances or in the presence of certain people.

Reporting abuse

All staff who suspect abuse or exploitation, whatever the suspicion, should share this with the Safeguarding Lead immediately by phone and in writing by email. This must be recorded in a way which gives precise details of the concerns. The Safeguarding Lead will then refer to the necessary agencies as appropriate, including but not limited to the police and children's services.

When a service user discloses information about abuse, we must treat them with sympathy and respect. Please don't ask leading questions; record a statement of the facts as they are told to you.

You are required to explain to the service user that Bridge to Unity's Safeguarding Policy requires you to inform the Safeguarding Lead, who may then discuss the issue with outside agencies. It is also important to record if there are children at home in the context of abuse of an adult.

Although it is always best practice to obtain consent for sharing information, in some circumstances that may not be possible and it may be in the person's best interest to share concerns and override consent, for

example if you suspect a significant risk to an individual without capacity or a risk to the public.

If you suspect a threat to life or a risk of serious injury, including suicide, emergency services must be contacted immediately.

An investigation focuses on the safety of the child and will usually involve:

- Talking to the person who has expressed concern (the referrer)
- Talking to the child
- Talking to the parents or carers of the child
- Liaising with other agencies who have knowledge of the child and their family and circumstances

Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on social services to investigate if they ‘have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm’. This might involve close monitoring of the parent or carer’s ability to care for the child, or it might involve placing the child in emergency police protection and possibly ‘in care’ over a lengthy period.

Allegations against a staff member or service user

All our staff members have a responsibility to report concerns about other members of staff. Any concerns must be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead, or to the Chair of Trustees if the concern involves the Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure it is investigated immediately. This may require a temporary suspension of the staff member’s work.

Safeguarding checks such as seeking references and obtaining Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where appropriate will be carried out before an individual starts work (paid or unpaid). Substantial unsupervised access to clients is not allowed until DBS checks are received.

Allegations against a Bridge to Unity service user are taken very seriously and should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead, who will ensure immediate investigation and that safeguarding measures are put in place.

Contacts

For more information about safeguarding, or if you have any concerns about the welfare of a service user, please contact:

Safeguarding Lead: Jordan Burne-Cronshaw, Trustee
Phone or WhatsApp: 07925 462476
Email: info@bridgetounity.co.uk

If the concern is about the Safeguarding Lead: Chris White, Chair of Trustees, on the phone number or email above.

In an emergency: call 999.