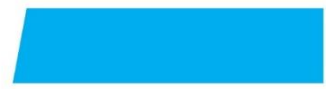




Mediation
Buckinghamshire



A P O S I T I V E C H O I C E

Child & Young Person Protection Policy & Procedure

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1. Policy Statement

Mediation Buckinghamshire (MB) is fully committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of all children. We recognise our responsibilities to take all reasonable steps to promote safe practice and to protect children from harm, abuse, and neglect.

MB acknowledges its duty to act appropriately with regards to any allegations towards a member of staff or volunteer, or towards any disclosures or suspicion of abuse.

MB recognises its duty of care to safeguard children as detailed under the Children Acts' 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children.

MB believes that: The welfare of all children is paramount. All children, whatever their age, culture, ability, gender, language, ethnicity, religious or spiritual beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse. All allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to in a swift and appropriate manner.

MB will ensure that:

All children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity

The welfare of each child will always be of highest priority.

Bullying (in any form) is neither accepted nor condoned.

Action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour.

There is a clear line of accountability with regards to safeguarding concerns.

Staff and volunteers will be kept updated with regards to changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children and young people.

Staff and volunteers will undertake relevant and appropriate development and training in relation to safeguarding children.

All staff and volunteers within the organisations are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguarding and their duty to the children and young people in their care, and that they fully understand the correct process for reporting concerns.

2. Roles & Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers working within MB must:

Understand the different categories of abuse and neglect, and how to recognise the signs.

Recognise that some parents/carers may require additional support in raising their children, for example as a result of mental health issues, learning disabilities, substance misuse or domestic abuse.

Understand their responsibility to report any concerns that a child is being, or is at risk of being, abused or neglected. This includes reporting any concern they may have regarding another staff member or volunteer's behaviour towards a child or children.

Understand the line of accountability for reporting safeguarding concerns and be fully aware of the organisation's safeguarding lead and their role within the organisation.

If appropriate; liaise with other agencies, contribute to safeguarding assessments and attend child protection meetings / core groups / conferences.

3. Recognising the signs of abuse/Safeguarding Concerns

Below is a breakdown of the different categories of abuse, along with a clear definition for each. These definitions are taken from Working Together 2018 aAct

Abuse: A form 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 others.

Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

Physical Abuse:

A form of abuse which 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:

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

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It may involve conveying to a child 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 a child's developmental capacity, 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, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

Neglect: 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 misuse or failure to attend to health needs.

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.

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

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behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. A child does not need to be aware that the behaviour is abusive.

Child Sexual Exploitation:

This is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity: (

- a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator.

The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Child Criminal Exploitation:

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into any criminal activity:

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or
- (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or the threat of violence.

The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child criminal exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

Extremism:

Extremism goes beyond terrorism and includes people who target the vulnerable - including the young - by seeking to sow division between communities on the basis of race, faith or denomination; justify discrimination towards women and girls; persuade others that minorities are inferior; or argue against the primacy of democracy and the rule of law in our society. Extremism is defined in the Counter Extremism Strategy 2015 as “the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also regard calls for death of members of

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our armed forces as extremist. Young people may be subject to exploitation and groomed to become involved in extremist activity. Radicalisation can be described as a process, by which a person to an increasing extent accepts the use of undemocratic or violent means, including terrorism, in an attempt to reach a specific political/ideological objective. Vulnerable individuals being targeted for radicalisation/recruitment into violent extremism is viewed as a safeguarding issue.

County Lines:

As set out in the Serious Violence Strategy, published by the Home Office, County Lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one or more importing areas within the UK, using dedicated mobile phone lines or other forms of 'deal line'. They are likely to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store the drugs and money, and they will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and befriending, financial abuse and peer pressure.

4. Safeguarding Lead

MB takes its responsibility to safeguard children and young people very seriously. Should you have any concerns you must raise your concerns with our Safeguarding lead who provides a direct point of contact will provide all staff and volunteers with support, record any concerns clearly and securely, and ensure that the appropriate action is taken.

They will also ensure that the Child Protection Policy is being fully adhered to.

MB Safeguarding lead is: Rita Jackson

They can be contacted on: jacksonrita6@gmail.com during office hours or on 07903 374 935 at other times. If you are emailing please do not put the names of the client and relevant others in the email and please mark it urgent safeguarding query.

If the Safeguarding Lead is not available (due to annual leave, sickness etc.), staff and volunteers should report to the Deputy Safeguarding Lead who is Anthea Beeks

They can be contacted on: anthea.beeks@mediationbucks.org.

If neither the Safeguarding Lead nor Deputy Safeguarding Lead is available, advice should be immediately sought from: The First Response Team on 01296 383962 (outside of office hours call: 0800 999 7677) email: secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk NB.

5. Disclosure of abuse:

If a child or young person discloses to you that abuse or inappropriate behaviour has / may / is taking place, you should:

- ◆ Listen to the child. Allow them to tell you what has happen in their own way, and at their own pace. Do not interrupt a child who is freely recalling significant events.
- ◆ Remain calm. Be reassuring and supportive but try not to respond emotionally.
- ◆ Do not ask leading questions. Only ask questions if you are seeking clarification about something they have said. Use TED; Tell, Explain, Describe.
- ◆ As soon as you are able to, make an accurate record of what you have been told, taking care to note any times, dates or locations mentioned. Use the child's own words where possible. Do not substitute anatomically correct names for body part names used by the child or your own interpretation of what has been said
- ◆ Reassure the child that they did the right thing in telling someone and you are glad they told you. Reassure the child that they have not done anything wrong.
- ◆ Do not promise to keep their disclosure a secret but reassure the child that you will only share the information with the right people who will be able to help them. Explain what you will do next.
- ◆ At your earliest opportunity, speak to your Safeguarding Lead regarding the disclosure. If your Safeguarding Lead and deputy Safeguarding Lead are not available, ring First Response for advice.

First Response Team
Telephone: 01296 383 962
Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5.30pm
Friday 9am to 5pm

If you need an urgent response outside of these hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0800 999 7677.

If there is immediate risk of harm to a child DO NOT DELAY, ring 999

6. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the confidential nature of child protection information.

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Child protection concerns, disclosures from children or safeguarding allegations made against another staff member or volunteer MUST NOT be discussed across the workforce as a whole

This information should be shared solely with the Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead (and/or with First Response / the LADO as appropriate)

Personal information which is shared by the child on a 1:1 level, such as sexual orientation or gender identification, should not be disclosed to the workforce. If staff and volunteers wish to discuss situations in order to gain a wider perspective from colleagues, this should be done on an anonymous basis, with names and identifying information relating to the child and their family remaining strictly confidential

Information Sharing is vital to effective safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

7. Safe recruitment

We apply a fair and consistent approach to recruitment to draw our workforce from the widest pool and select the best people on merit. As an organisation committed to safeguarding children and adults at risk we have robust recruitment policies to minimise the risk of engaging anyone, as a staff member or volunteer, who may pose a risk to children

8. Training.

We will ensure that all volunteers and staff receive appropriate training which includes:

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

Safeguarding Children & Young People

Freedom to speak up – Whistle blowing

Domestic Abuse awareness training

As appropriate

If neither the Safeguarding Lead nor Deputy Safeguarding Lead is available, advice should be immediately sought from: The First Response Team on 01296 383962 (outside of office hours call: 0800 999 7677) email: secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscc.gov.uk NB.

9. Allegations against Staff or Volunteers

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The Buckinghamshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for overseeing the management of all allegations against people in a position of trust who work with children in Buckinghamshire on either a paid or voluntary basis

MB will offer appropriate support throughout this process. Should any allegations lead to a breach in disciplinary procedures or criminal action MB will invoke MB Disciplinary procedures

10. Transfer of Risk

Should an individual staff member or volunteer be involved in child protection, other safeguarding procedures, or Police investigations in relation to abuse or neglect, they must inform the Service Manager. MB will need to assess whether there is any potential for risk of transfer to the workplace and the individual's own work/volunteering role.

11. Additional Safeguarding Measures

To ensure best practice and to safeguard our volunteers All of our volunteers work in pairs and are required to undertake an enhanced DBS check

12. Related Policy and Procedures

- Freedom to speak up -Whistle blowing
- Lone Working
- DBS
- Confidentiality
- Privacy
- Data Protection
- Recruitment and Selection of staff
- Recruitment and Selection of volunteers
- Volunteer training and supervision
- Use of internet

13. Statement relating to appropriate use of images of children.

As confirmed in the Data Protection Act, MB will ensure written consent is sought from the parent or carer of any child under the age of 18 using our service before any photographs are taken. If consent is given,

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MB will make a clear agreement with the parent or carer as to how the image will be used (for example, in brochure or on a website) and how widely

Due consideration will be given to the appropriateness of clothing and posture, and details such as the child's name or age will not be shared unless integral to the use of the image (such as the acceptance of an award), in particular when additional identifiers (i.e., a school or uniform logo) are also being shared

14. Abbreviations & Acronyms

LADO - The Buckinghamshire Local Authority Designated Officer

15. Review of Effectiveness

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy and the requirements that stem from it will be monitored by the Trustees at least annually, to identify any trends which may need further action.

The Service Manager is responsible for ensuring appropriate reporting to the Trustee Board and will recommend and implement any improvement actions required.

16. Supporting Documents

Report a Concern Form – Bucks

Contact Details for other Local Authorities

MB Guidance on Informing the family that a report will be made to Children's Services

17. History and Approvals

Revision History

Date	Document Version	Document Revision History	Document Author / Reviser
31/12/2021	V1.0	Full Reviewed and updated	Anthea Beeks
09/02/2022	V1.01	Further amended	Anthea Beeks

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Approvals

Date	Document Version	Approver Title	Approver Name & Authorisation
27 TH January 2022	V1.0	Chair of Trustees	Phyllida Middlemiss
09/02/2022	V1.01	Chair of Trustees	Phyllida Middlemiss